

Discourses of Neo-Liberalisation in New Zealand: From the 'Managed Economy'  
to the 'Mum and Dad Investor', Prime Ministers' Speeches of 1987-2011 (a Critical  
Discourse Analysis)

By

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## **I. Abstract**

In this project I aim to challenge the conception of neo-liberalism as a monolithic ideology and theory of state practice. To achieve this, I use Norman Fairclough's 'order of discourse' model of critical discourse analysis to examine seven speeches delivered by New Zealand Prime Ministers of 1987 to 2011. Using these speeches I chart a number of breaks, shifts, contradictions, and instabilities between both Prime Ministers and Governments, which are often specific to New Zealand. The analyses of the seven speeches highlight the contradictions and tensions inherent in on-going processes of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand. Among other instabilities and contradictions, I examine David Lange's conflicting articulations of economic management in market-led governing. I note the role of technocracy under Geoffrey Palmer, and the inconsistencies in his push to institutionalise the Treaty of Waitangi while decentralising the role of the state in governing. I outline the specificities of New Zealand as a colonial settler society through the signifier "battler" deployed by Mike Moore. I also sketch the functions of Jim Bolger's communitarianism, and the way it flanks the market logics deployed by Minister of Finance Ruth Richardson, between 1990 and 1993. The effect and significance of Jenny Shipley's 'Code of Social and Family Responsibility' is examined, noting the way it crystallises the role of social capital in practices of governing. The impact of Helen Clark's Third Way and 'inclusive' neo-liberalism are then charted. Clark's use of diverse ideological forms suggests a mobile and mediating moment in neo-liberalism, which attempts to overcome some of the problems generated by earlier speakers. I finally cover the way that John Key's anti-ideological position results in what is labelled the 'market ideology', crystallising market logic as a rubric for governing through terms like the "mum and dad investor", and the "kiwi". I then offer some concluding comments and note the project's limitations, before offering some tentative prospects of neo-liberalism's fortune in a post-2008 crisis world.

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## **1. The Neo-liberal Term and Turn: Theoretical and Methodological Considerations**

In this chapter I introduce some ways of understanding neo-liberalism before advancing a research design and a summary of the following chapters. I begin by noting some key moments in the development of neo-liberalism as a model for structural adjustment. I then outline some foundational and ideological properties of neo-liberalism. A section is then devoted to delineating the broad and often totalizing nature of neo-liberalism as an ideological model, attending to neo-liberalism's often messy, contradictory and spontaneous nature. I argue for a nuanced and subtle examination of ideological structures within neo-liberalism.

I will then advance critical discourse analysis as a framework for investigating neo-liberalism in New Zealand. This draws predominantly on the 'order of discourse' approach by Norman Fairclough (1998), but also takes technical cues from the work of Ruth Wodak (2001). The research material is made up of speeches delivered by the last seven Prime Ministers of New Zealand, beginning with David Lange and ending with John Key. The research design addresses three levels of discourse analysis. It begins by noting the broad conditions of possibility for discourse at the time the speech was delivered. This is followed by an investigation of discursive phrases or key words at the meso level, and ends by describing the grammatical strategies which represent markets and people in particular ways.

Due to the divergent and contradictory nature of neo-liberalism, I also draw support from Foucault on governmentality (1991) and power (2008); Gramsci (1992) on hegemony and common sense; Althusser (1971) on the ideological state apparatus, as well as Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and Habermas (1981) on discourse. Finally, I address some limitations of the research design before offering a summary of the chapters ahead.

## 1.1 What is Neo-liberalism?

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. (Harvey, 2005, p. 2)

I use neo-liberalisation rather than neo-liberalism to describe on-going processes of social change associated with free markets. This highlights the emergent and unstable nature of neo-liberalism as an ideological assemblage, rather than a stable essentialist ideology. (Phelan, 2012)

Since the 1970s in most states there has been a dramatic turn away from the post-war Keynesian model of economic management. This was characterised by price controls, state supported social welfare and full employment. Due to steady inflation, increasing unemployment and economic stagnation, Keynesian policies have been increasingly replaced by a market oriented approach organised around privatisation, market deregulation, and the removal of state guaranteed social security (Gray, 1998; Harvey, 2005). This shift was particularly apparent within the United Kingdom, United States and other western states, but in one way or another affected the entire capitalist world. In New Zealand, the voluntary embrace of neo-liberalisation was swift and deep, and would be adopted as a dominant social order after a number of events and crises aligned.

These new organisational forms were based on the monetarist and anti-inflationary doctrines of economists like Milton Friedman (1962), backed by critiques of state by Freidrich Hayek (1960). These critiques denoted a “preference for market over state, individual over collective interests, and economic freedom over political freedom” (Friedman, 1962; Hayek, 1960 in; Phelan, 2007, p. 10). Initially treated as a throwback to laissez-faire economics, these ideas were taken up with speed and vigour, partly due to their flexible nature.

Flexibility is perhaps the most identifiable tenet of neo-liberalisation. A watch-word not only for markets, as Harvey (2005) notes, but also for the construction of family arrangements, identities, and state structures. While flexibility is romantically construed as enhancing choice and freedom, it is also tied to flexible accumulation and labour conditions resulting in “lower wages, increasing job insecurity, and in many instances loss of benefits and of job protections” (Harvey, 2005, p. 76).

The structural adjustment of New Zealand is sometimes recognised as the “least impure” (Jessop, 2002, p. 457) example of neo-liberalisation in state practice. After the election of 1984 and well into the 1990s, it seemed that a market led approach could provide answers for nearly every aspect of governing. Few institutions were spared de-regulation, far exceeding most other voluntary pursuits of the free-market.

After a snap election in 1984 the New Zealand dollar was devalued by 20 per cent, other price control and stabilisation mechanisms were removed soon after. Further de-regulation was undertaken by the fourth National Government after the 1990 election; the Employment Contracts Act of 1991 wrote unions out of the law, allowing aggressive wage negotiations by employers. By the late 1990s a free-market society was partly realised, complete with an ‘underclass’ of the economically marginalised who found themselves between the government’s abandonment of full employment and simultaneous roll-back of the welfare state (Kelsey, 1995).

Women were particularly affected, with 40 per cent of female Service Workers Union members experiencing a drop in income between 1991 and 1993 and still more women losing key sources of financial support during benefit cuts in the same period. Neo-liberalisation can thus be argued to generate a power imbalance where those in control of the state apparatus get more for less responsibility, while the marginalised and those concentrated in the working class bear much responsibility for comparatively little gain (Harvey, 2005).

The founding figures of neoliberal thought took political ideals of individual liberty and freedom as sacrosanct—as the central values of civilization. And in so doing they chose wisely and well, for these are indeed compelling and greatly appealing concepts (Harvey, 2007, p. 76).

Alexander (1995, p. 73) notes that ideals like progress and freedom of expression are reflected with passion and intensity in the civil rights movement of the United States and in the associated reactions against collectivism; “It is about Tom Sawyer, and Huck Finn, about the yeoman farmer, and Horatio Alger”. These ideals would emerge in the protests of 1968 as a strong resistance to intrusive state practices and would eventually be folded into the resulting logics for governing throughout the 1980s. As Harvey (2005) notes, ‘big government’ and ‘mass society’ would be increasingly recognised as undermining freedom and opportunity, framing core public services as monolithic and inhuman.

It is possible to see why neo-liberalisation as an ideological assemblage, representing flexible sets of interdependent ideas and concepts, came to be recognised as increasingly coherent, by explaining a changing world in simple and effective terms. In New Zealand during the 1980s and early 1990s the ideas of freedom and progress relied heavily on the discredit of the former bureaucratised state, which had served the needs of a post-war population through stability and employment, but appeared increasingly heavy handed and invasive (du Gay, 1996).

Despite the apparent coherence of neo-liberalisation, the problematique of a distinct neo-liberal ideology can be noted in a tension between ideology and outcome. In an effort to curb the excesses of state spending and enhance productivity and freedom of opportunity, government structures around the world have often only succeeded in moving towards a market state rather than a minimal state, a state which turns to “re-shaping social institutions on the model of the market - a task that cannot be carried out by a small state” (Gray, 2010). This contradiction leads to a number of questions around how neo-



liberalisation unfolds, how its ends are pursued despite inconsistencies in its ideological premises.

While some authors (see Clarke, 2008; Larner, 1998, 2005, 2009; Nadesan, 2011; Nairn & Higgins, 2007; Peck, 2004) investigate neo-liberalism's specificities and contradictions at specific times, they tend to avoid broader trends and contradictions in its history. In New Zealand this leaves a dearth of literature on both the historical context of neo-liberalisation and its unstable and emergent nature. In New Zealand neo-liberalisation concerns ethnicity and colonisation through the Treaty of Waitangi; it contains entrepreneurialism and social capital through the work of Jenny Shipley, communitarianism through Jim Bolger and shibboleths like the "mum and dad investor" by John Key, to name but a few possibilities.

#### *What is, or isn't, neo-liberal?*

Neo-liberalism has become something of an academic catch phrase over the last 40 years. In seeking to explain new forms of social organisation the term has acquired a "negative normative valence", it has become a social theory "with which no-one wants to be associated" (Boas & Gans-Moore, 2009, p. 138). The examination of neo-liberalisation in critical studies utilizes its central tenets in ubiquitous ways, conflating its logics with evil. It has been constructed as "backward, greedy, anarchic and impoverishing" (Alexander, 1995, p. 78). While not without justification, this position risks obfuscating some of the nuanced and subtle characteristics of neo-liberalisation.

In this project I seek to challenge monolithic conceptions of neo-liberalisation. I propose a more subtle treatment of its logics, positioning its effects at specific moments in New Zealand's history to show how it is deployed by key actors in unstable and often contradictory ways. However, not all features that flow from market led projects can be construed as neo-liberal in themselves. There is little in the present which neo-liberalisation cannot be held responsible for: in New Zealand one could speak of unemployment, crime, recession, policy reform, privatisation, targeting, economic policy, profits and sustainability

(Clarke, 2008). This is not exhaustive and leads to a questioning of what is, might be or isn't neo-liberal. Such an extensive reach over social life has led Bondi and Lauri (2005, p. 399) to assert that "there is no uncontaminated form of, or space for, political resistance" that exists "wholly outside neo-liberalism".

The ideological assemblages deployed by actors within neo-liberalisation often suggest evidence of social ills, such as poverty and exclusion (Kelsey, 1995). However, labelling phenomena as pejoratively 'neo-liberal' conceals two important insights: the "most obvious one is that this site, practice, or process is the effect or consequence of neoliberalism: it would not exist without neo-liberalism. The second...identifies the neoliberal articulation of a pre-existing site, process, or practice" (Clarke, 2008, p. 139). Thus, a number of social forms which appear within neo-liberalisation can be said to exist before or because of it. The forms are not a crystallisation of neo-liberalisation itself. This project thus seeks to partly fulfil a need to understand neo-liberalisation in multiple ways rather than in simple axiomatic terms, while retaining a degree of critical evaluation of those who work within it.

A number of approaches to neo-liberalisation have begun to question the differences within its structure, a body of literature which this project adds to. Differences in time (Larner, 2000) emphasise alternations in phases of political projects. Differences in place (Dezaley & Garth, 2005) highlight "on-going local variation and mutation" (Craig & Cotterell, 2007, p. 498). Some theorists have sought to understand neo-liberalisation as a series of regulatory trends, reflecting specific modes of de- or re-regulation as destructive and creative, or as creative destruction; the construction of new forms through the destruction of old ones (Harvey, 2007; Peck & Tickell, 2002).

The body of literature to which this project contributes revolves around the critical analysis of discursive and linguistic structures within neo-liberalisation. I set this project apart from others in the field of discursive study through its focus on Aotearoa New Zealand's political transition since the 1980s, and an engagement with multiple levels of discursive action. I consider macro, meso and micro levels of discourse (these are unpacked later), and thus the way an 'order' of discourse (Fairclough, 1995) occurs at different moments in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand. I seek to examine the types of conjunctures and breaks which occur within this and to understand how they might relate to one another.

## 1.2 Methodology

This section outlines the underlying methodological assumptions of the project. I will explain and justify the selection of critical discourse analysis as the methodology. The methodological backdrop also draws general guiding support from Foucault on power and governmentality (Foucault, 1991, 2008), Gramsci (1992) on hegemony and common sense, and Althusser (1971) on the ideological state apparatus. I also deploy work from Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and Habermas (1981) on discourse. Finally, a research design is offered and a number of limitations explained.

### *Critical Discourse Analysis*

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has previously been operationalised in relation to racism, xenophobia, sexism, violence, crime, and other social problems. While some studies have focused on the underlying assumptions, messages, and representations present in political speeches in relation to neo-liberalisation (van Dijk, 2000), none to date have focused on charting the contradictory and unstable discursive patterns of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand.

There are a number of existing approaches to CDA all of which take existing social problems as a point of departure. Those deploying CDA attempt to go beyond:

description or superficial application, critical science in each domain asks further questions, such as those of responsibility, interests, and ideology. Instead of focusing purely on academic or theoretical problems, it starts from prevailing social problems, and thereby chooses the perspective of those who suffer most, and critically analyses those in power, those who are responsible. (van Dijk, 1986, p. 4)

After nearly 30 years of market led reform in New Zealand, a number of prevailing social problems are clear. Central to many aspects of neo-liberalisation has been the creation of a competitive and stratified society with structural unemployment and high rates of inequality. Among other adjustments, this was realised through increasingly militant wage bargaining by employers, made possible by the Employment Contracts Act 1991. A loss of collective bargaining power meant that wages for much of the working class fell or failed to rise with increasing living costs. Women, who were concentrated in secondary labour jobs, were disproportionately affected by labour market reform when male-dominated unions “militated” against a push to re-introduce the Employment Equity Bill which would have legislated for a degree of pay equality (Kelsey, 1995, p. 286; O'Brien & Wilkes, 1993). A key enquiry for this project is the ways these changes and many others were achieved democratically and consensually, through a degree of discursive and ideological manipulation.

Three main models of CDA have been developed: a socio-cognitive approach, a discourse-historical, and order of discourse approach. Each builds on the work of the Frankfurt school, adopting a cultural-Marxist stance grounded in an understanding of power, dominance, ideology and discourse as a social practice transmitted and constituted in part by language (Jürgen Habermas, 1981).

The socio-cognitive model of CDA (van Dijk, 1998, 2001) emphasises the cognitive aspect of discourse. Van Dijk (1998) suggests that those who are able to dictate the various dimensions of discourse are able to dictate the conditions for its reproduction and thus the conditions for discursive action. Van Dijk's assumptions of power, which are reduced to “mind management”, diverges significantly from other approaches to CDA, which see it as a productive social force in the vein of Foucault. This is significant because a Foucauldian view of power recognises that power can be disseminated in discourse, simultaneously constraining and empowering social action.

The discourse-historical approach to CDA (Wodak, 2009, 2012) revolves around immanent critique (exposition of internal contradictions), socio-diagnostic critique (exposing coercive discourses through personal experience), and prognostic critique (supporting social change), each oriented around prejudicial discourses. The discourse-historical model lends

significant weight to historical context but gives comparatively little attention to hegemony or conditions of social change. However, Wodak's (2001) work provides a useful technical cue in a framework for representing social action. It suggests a micro analysis of the way social action is constructed through grammatical choices. This is important because grammatical choices can represent particular views of reality, informed by ideology and historical context. I draw on this in the research design which is outlined at the end of this section.

### *Fairclough's Order of Discourse Model*

'Order of discourse' refers to the discursive constitution of a social domain and the relationships between different discourses within it, a "structured totality" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 105). These relationships are not clear cut; they overlap, interact, are contested and strengthened as conflicts and struggles for discursive control develop. The order of discourse is divided into three levels for analysis. Each level identifies key features of an order of discourse, identifying trends, contradictions, and constrained choices made by the author of the text. These levels appear in their original form as follows:

1. Analysis of texts (spoken, written, or involving a combination of semiotic modalities, e.g. televisual texts);
2. Analysis of discourse practices of text production, distribution, and consumption;
3. Analysis of social and cultural practices, which frame discourse practices and texts

(Fairclough, 1998, p. 144).

A predominant focus of this method is intertextuality: "how in the production and interpretation of a text people draw upon other texts and text types which are culturally available to them" (Fairclough, 1998, p. 143). The 'order' is constituted by "a structured

configuration of genres and discourses associated with a given social domain” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 145).

I argue that the order of discourse approach is the most appropriate for this project. The three state mode of analysis leaves open the possibility for the adoption of further methodological frameworks like those drawn from Wodak (2001). In the research design this lends the design a degree of flexibility to explore the emergent and contradictory features of neo-liberalisation.

#### *Foucault: Power and Governmentality*

The condition of possibility of power...should not be sought in the primary existence of a central point, in a unique space of sovereignty whence would radiate derivative and descendent forms; it is the moving base of relations of force that incessantly induce, by their inequality, states of power, but always local and unstable (Foucault, 1998, p. 122).

CDA recognises power in the way that texts are articulated, consumed and redeployed by authors in structured yet unstable ways. Authors of speech or text are constituted by the conditions under which they are created. The omnipresent nature of power partly determines how discourses are deployed. However, I hedge against a complete adoption of Foucault’s conception of power, maintaining that one can distinguish between discourses which are stabilized and those which are not, leaving open an understanding of the way common sense and hegemony (examined shortly) operate.

Governmentality (Foucault, 1991) can be characterised as an enquiry into the conditions required for government, the realization of power in action. This is important for a critical understanding of neo-liberalisation because:

The neo-liberal forms of government feature not only direct intervention by means of empowered and specialized state apparatuses, but also characteristically develop indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals without at the same time being responsible for them...As the choice of options for action is...the expression of free will on the basis of a self-determined decision, the consequences of the action are borne by the subject alone, who is also solely responsible for them. (Lemke, 2001, p. 201)

Self-responsibility can be linked to the rise of entrepreneurial discourses where responsibilities for production, welfare, and political life are relocated from the state to individuals or communities (Bondi & Lauri, 2005; Gamble, 2001; Harvey, 1989; Swales & Rogers, 1995). Rose suggests that an intellectual and practical break can partly explain this. People who were to be governed, in all their divergent subjectivities, were to be considered as individuals:

Their responsibility was no longer to be understood as a relation of obligation between citizen and society enacted and regulated through the mediating party of the state: rather, it was to be a relation of allegiance and responsibility to those one cared about the most and to whom one's destiny was linked. (Rose, 1996, p. 330)

In New Zealand, shifting views of society's construction since the early 1980s reflects the "governmentalization of the state" (McKee, 2009, p. 470) through the growth of non-state actors in the state apparatus. For example, District Health Boards are allocated funds for which a certain amount is deployed for 'community' services through not-for-profit organisations. Some previously centralised health services are now delivered through a range of contractual relations with providers which take community as their point of departure. This suggests that communities can best decide which services are appropriate to their needs. This has its intuitive merit, but the implications for democratic accountability are less clear. The impetus for improvement, sustainability and quality of the services remains within the purview of state interest, yet beyond popular control.

While Foucault's theories provide some useful insights for the critical examination of discourse, the degree to which his ideas are incorporated into research design is open. In CDA governmentality offers an explanatory framework for power. By laying bare the relations of structural domination, power and governmentality show how actors within neo-liberalisation move from a citizenship based state to one in which subjects are decentralised and constituted through networks of family and community relations. However, neo-liberalisation is implicit in a variety of economic injustices which power relations alone cannot explain. The economic determinism of neo-liberalisation demands a critique of the means and way it produces particular types of subjects and conditions. I argue that this can be explained by concepts of ideology and hegemony.

### *Ideology*

Ideologies "arise from and are transformed as parts of the more basic condition of the production and domination" (Mannheim, 1936, pp. 247-248). Drawing on Marx's conception of ideology as a superstructure disguising the exploitative nature of capitalism, Mannheim demonstrated that whatever humans believe they know about the world is dependent upon their position in society. This position is structured according to the means of production, leaving the question of the subject as a productive agent untouched. "The subject was doomed to remain at the point of programs and prolegomena [critical introduction]"; resistance to capitalism is thus rendered futile (Shills, 1974, p. 86). The question for Mannheim then revolved around which social standpoint vis-à-vis history give the best chance of understanding the constitution of 'truth'.

In this project I recognise ideology as a constraining force; it limits which discursive practices are possible through established norms and conventions (Fairclough, 1995). By extension, ideology also has a place in the articulation of discursive action itself. It provides resources and conduits for the transmission of ideas. This broadly follows Fairclough's (1996) somewhat abstract positioning of ideology as simply immanent within discourse.



The demarcation between ideology and discourse is concerned with representation. A fruitful approach is to note that ideology has a degree of social currency not necessarily expressed directly. To recognise ideology in communication marks something of an epistemological shift through a “displacement of the real in favour of the representational” (Holbow, 2012, p. 23), noting speakers’ constrained choices in representation, rather than taking them at their face value. Ideology is thus recognised as something to be traced within discourses.

This basic view of ideology complements governmentality through its position as a distorted way of viewing and re-articulating the world within certain boundaries. However, governmentality and ideology fail to adequately account for their own perpetuation through history. Together they explain why neo-liberalisation may appear a certain way, but do not alone explain how it came to be dominant. This gap can be filled by Gramsci’s (1992) notion of hegemony.

#### *Hegemony, common sense and the state apparatus*

Hegemony is the power over society as a whole of one of the fundamental economically-defined classes in alliance with other social forces, but it is never achieved more than partially and temporarily, as an 'unstable equilibrium' (Fairclough, 1992, p. 92)

Fairclough’s description of hegemony suggests that some ways of constructing discourse are dominant while others remain peripheral, alternative or oppositional and that there is always struggle between them to a greater or lesser extent. This is useful because it reveals the roots of instability apparent within the speeches I examine and the way combinations of discourses are articulated in a struggle for hegemony. Here I am referring to interdiscursivity; the extent to which discursive practice draws on other fields of social relations for coherence. When combined with intertextuality (the extent to which a text draws on other texts for coherence), one can begin to construct a framework for

understanding the unstable equilibrium of hegemony, and thus the perpetuation of different types of neo-liberalisation.

Through the lens of hegemony, the ideological functions of neo-liberalisation take on the guise of a tool of oppression implemented by the ruling elite. The processes of hegemony can be viewed as part of a political project to “re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites” (Harvey, 2005, p. 19).

Gramsci's conception of common sense, the ‘sense held in common’ (rather than good sense, a critical engagement with problems), offers a framework for understanding how hegemony operates. The value of Gramsci's notion of common sense lies in its ability to address the seemingly apolitical spaces generated by neo-liberalisation. Such spaces are represented as democratically unaccountable, answerable only to the abstract market forces through which they are sustained. Gramsci's common sense is constituted by the false consciousness of the working classes, identifying their own good with the good of the market and thus the bourgeoisie.

The advantage of Gramscian constructions of common sense and hegemony is that ideas are constantly made and remade to reflect the prevailing modes of discourse and production. Common sense can be understood to reflect historical sedimentation, complete with the inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in market capitalism. In the context of this project common sense and claims to apolitical ends are relatively easy to observe. As Rupert (2003, p. 185) notes, “Gramsci's political project thus entailed addressing the popular common sense operative in particular times and places, making explicit the tensions and contradictions within it as well as the socio-political implications of these”. Given that CDA often explores fairly obvious social problems, the insertion of hegemony can highlight the banal features of political projects which often have unequal or coercive outcomes, making taken-for-granted political structures a target of investigation.

However, neo-liberalisation is more than a simple mode of rule. If Althusser (1971) is correct in holding that individuals' desires, choices and judgements are a consequence of social practice, then the conditions for production and identity are not *a priori*, but

bounded within limited frameworks determined by ideological hegemony. The 'ideological state apparatus' (ISA) (Althusser, 1971) perpetuates the conditions necessary for subjects to learn their identity through ideological activity, inculcated through the news media, the family, education and other established institutions connected to everyday life. The ISA creates "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their conditions of existence" (Althusser, 1971, p. 162). For Althusser, there is not a system of real relations, only their representations and materiality, obfuscating the exploitative and coercive features of capitalism.

Hegemony and Althusser's ISA thus provide useful plugins to this project:

While the interpellation of subjects is an Althusserian elaboration, there is in Gramsci a conception of subjects as structured by diverse ideologies implicit in their practice which gives them a 'strangely composite' character, and a view of 'common sense' as both a depositary of the diverse effects of past ideological struggles, and a constant target for restructuring, in ongoing struggles. (Fairclough, 1995, p. 76)

The composite nature of hegemony and common sense overlaps with power and governmentality, positioning struggle as simultaneously repressing and enabling subjects in social action, though not always in ways consistent with their wishes or needs.

### *Discourse*

The way authors of discourse address neo-liberalisation, interpret and draw on it are requisite in its perpetuation and entrenchment. While ideology provides guiding structures, discourse provides the linguistic resources necessary to perpetuate and understand neo-liberalisation.

Theories of discourse can be deployed in a range of ways to understand political problems in everyday life. Implicit in this work is Habermas' (1981) Theory of Communicative Action (TCA). Habermas explains the relationships between power, action and language, attempting to lay bare democratic ideals for communication. This suggests a concern for the effects of power and that an awareness of assumptions and distortions are a necessary condition for overcoming oppression.

The TCA entails a number of assumptions about the nature of truth and the material world. Our experiences as active subjects can be shaped by the concealed actions of power:

Distorted communication in discourse occurs where people or organizations pursue their strategic interests rather than seeking understanding and 'the best solution' through reasoned debate. Identifying instances of distorted communication or strategic action within texts can indicate the use of power and persuasion in language (Bierre, Howden-Chapman, & Signal, 2010, p. 24)

Thus, a speech which might appear as communicative action seeking consensus can be "covertly strategic action" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 214).

Another key aspect of discourse is the role it plays in the construction of hegemony for which Laclau and Mouffe (1985) have developed a metalanguage. Some of this I have used already: 'Articulation'- establishing relations between things to construct their identity; 'moment'- the positions articulated within discourse; 'nodal point', constituting the partial fixation of meaning within discourse to which other things can be related for meaning.

In CDA the construction of a nodal point is as much about what it is linked to as what is not. The detection or explanation of moments or elements of discourse that could be present, but are not is also central. This is important because every expression of discursive action can be seen as a reduction in the possibilities for meaning. The fixation of meaning is increasingly embedded in social relations across time, complete with original contradictions, nuances, inclusions or exclusions, forming an unstable hegemony.

To summarise, I adopt a framework of discourse based on political struggle. Discourse is a conduit for ideology which is in turn seen as a mechanism for constructing hegemony. The way this is deployed by actors is a function of Foucault's power and governmentality, creating conditions of possibility for unstable neo-liberalisation. Critical discourse analysis forms a framework for the analysis of different moments in neo-liberalisation as unstable, shifting, and ultimately contestable.

### **1.3 Research Design**

This section advances a three stage model of CDA, broadly based on Fairclough's order of discourse outlined earlier (Fairclough, 1995, 1998). I re-arrange Fairclough's model to reflect the broad structure of discursive practice, informed by both macro social processes and meso discursive practice. I also draw on Wodak's work for an analysis of speakers' representational choices, which are assumed to be an outcome of ideology (Wodak, 2001). This framework enables a relatively flexible approach that charts a number of emergent discursive and ideological features of speeches and also attends to their historical contexts.

The data in the following chapters is made up of seven speeches delivered by the Prime Ministers of New Zealand between 1984 and 2013; David Lange, Mike Moore, Geoffrey Palmer, Jim Bolger, Jenny Shipley, Helen Clark and John Key. Each speech was delivered in an election year where crises and ideological concerns were more likely to be highlighted. The substantive chapters are broadly divided according to Governments rather than Prime Ministers. This is predominantly for structural simplicity, but also hints at a number of breaks and shifts in neo-liberalisation between governments as well as between leaders.

The focus on political leadership assumes that the political elite have privileged access to discourses concerned with democratic processes and the structural adjustment of the state apparatus. While hedging against a Hobbesian view of power, I suggest that this privileged access results in a degree of coercion, informed by Prime Ministers' ideologies. As experts

in the exercise of sovereignty, political leaders have privileged access to the discourses of rule when compared to the majority of citizens.

I begin the analysis at a broad level with an examination of the discursive order itself, the identification of broad themes within the text and how these fit with recent shifts in social structure. I ask questions about the function of the speech at the time of delivery - particularly, what historical processes limit some utterances and but encourage others? How might these processes be explained in light of the hegemony, governmentality or other concepts of sociological relevance? What is the author's context and how does it affect the text? What is it about their discursive context that compels authors to speak in this way? What broad trends or ideas are being represented here and are they necessary to the wider social order?

Secondly, I examine the discursive practice of the speakers, identifying key passages and phrases. What do these phrases refer to? How do they mirror government policy (if at all)? What do they say about a distinct moment in neo-liberalisation? To what extent does the author draw on other texts? What are the examples of this and how to they direct the text? To what extent does the text incorporate themes and ideas from other fields of practice? To what extent does this indicate social change or stability? Why are these phrases important? What do they say about neo-liberalisation and political history in New Zealand?

The final level of analysis involves a close examination of some technical components of each speech (Wodak, 2001). This level is descriptive and based on Halliday's (1967-8) transitive theory. Drawing explicitly on the work of van Leeuwen (1995) and Hopper and Thompson (1980), transitivity is a framework for understanding the ways social action is represented in texts. I describe how the actions of people, groups, and markets are represented as active or passive and what this might say about the speakers' ideological positions. Representational choices are important in neo-liberalisation because they lend speeches their 'effect' by constructing particular views of reality, which is informed by ideology. This section of the analyses is of course not exhaustive. For the sake of brevity I examine just a few excerpts from each speech to support the other two levels of analyses.

A final part of each analysis will be devoted to a short section evaluating the overall effect of the text, charting its position in neo-liberalisation and its possible relationships to the other speakers in the broadest terms.

It should be noted that these analyses do not claim a complete knowledge of neo-liberalising discursive practice. This is not an exhaustive analysis and merely points to a more nuanced and detailed consideration of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand. I seek to resist a monolithic treatment of neo-liberalisation while simultaneously suggesting a degree of resistance to its outcomes. While providing a useful departure, this cannot be achieved through discourse analysis alone.

### *Limitations*

The key conceptual weakness faced by the orders of discourse model is in a separation of discursive and non-discursive action. Lacalau and Mouffe's (1985) theory of the social understands all action as discursive, while Fairclough places an ambiguous distinction between social and material actions. How to go about unpacking these distinctions within social relations is just as unclear as how one might attend to the relations between them. One cannot easily demonstrate that these relations influence each other, or that they exist.

The distinction between material and discursive action is manifested through the representation of broad social trends as the background to discursive action. This is overcome in some ways by the implicitly comparative nature of the project, showing how the struggle for control over discourse is an on-going process, fraught with instability and contradiction. The problem can also be overcome by treating the distinction between discursive and material as analytical. Research pointing to distinctions between discursive and non-discursive moments simply yields different results. The outcome of this can be reflected in analytical choice rather than theoretical logics.

The second problem is the extent to which people have control over their use of language and thus the formation of subjectivity and agency. This is reflected in a lack of attention to the consumption of texts, with CDA focusing overwhelmingly on their production. In some ways this does limit my conclusions, based around the social practice of discursive production. To be re-articulated and understood, texts must first be consumed.

## **1.4 Summary of Analyses**

The following chapters examine seven speeches delivered by New Zealand's last seven Prime Ministers. Through a critical examination of these speeches I argue that neo-liberalisation in New Zealand does not constitute a monolithic ideology or a set of stable political practices. Though there are some consistencies, there are also contradictions, conflicts and other unexpected breaks. There are some interesting and poignant moments to be examined, which set this work apart from much of the existing literature on the structures of neo-liberalisation. While many of the conclusions are tentative and open to argument or interpretation, I hold that each of the seven speeches examined are indicative of specific moments in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand.

### *Fourth Labour Government: 1984-1990*

The fourth Labour Government was elected off the back of widespread discontent surrounding Prime Minister Robert Muldoon's leadership. There were crises within a Government already located at the fringes of Keynesianism and a number of economic controls had already been removed by the 1984 election. The most obvious features of the fourth Labour Government's policy were organised around monetarist economics. This phase in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand can be partially characterised as a roll-back (Peck & Tickell, 2002) approach to neo-liberalisation. The removal of farming subsidies, foreign exchange controls and import tariffs indicated a push to remove key components of state control over markets. While the bulk of the fourth Labour Government's reform



remained outside the welfare state, many of the structural adjustments had distressing impacts on the poor and marginalised.

David Lange's 1987 speech reveals the relatively unstable nature of neo-liberalisation. This is apparent in the ways he mixes discourses of economic management with those of the free market. There are a number of contradictions where 'no alternative' to market led policies are represented, yet the very conditions of possible substitutes become evident with his articulations of fairness and economic management.

A speech delivered by Geoffrey Palmer positions him as the technocrat of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand. Palmer was largely responsible for the legislative program behind the policies deployed by Minister of Finance Roger Douglas under David Lange (Hayward, 2004). Palmer's technocratic approach has the effect of shifting discourses of democratic process from lay to expert knowledge. There are also some contradictions surrounding the positioning of the Treaty of Waitangi and the institutionalisation of ethnicity. Palmer's wish to institutionalise Treaty grievances sits uncomfortably with a wider push to decentralise the state in many areas of public administration.

Mike Moore was only in power for a few weeks, yet his speech reveals some features worthy of note. He articulates a discourse of health and illness in relation to economic performance in its completeness. The suggestion of 'no pain, no gain' is examined, revealing a number of tendencies to naturalise market forces which occurs with increasing frequency throughout the following speakers. Moore also articulates the "battler" as an idealised citizen, raising some interesting questions about New Zealand's position as a settler colony and an entrepreneurial society.

The 1990s in New Zealand were dominated by the fourth National Government's distinctive approaches to social policy. The outgoing Labour caucus was increasingly characterised by internal contradiction. Dissent and disagreement tore the Government apart, leaving Geoffrey Palmer in a caretaker's position, only to be rolled by Mike Moore two months before the election. Still recovering from the effects of the 1987 share market crash, the National Government continued to roll-back core state services. Financialised mobile capital and social spending cuts filled out an election manifesto which promised to restore the "decent society". The sale of state owned enterprises and assets dominated while Treaty of Waitangi issues continued to plague the Government after an end all 'fiscal envelope' package was rejected by iwi negotiators.

Jim Bolger's position within neo-liberalisation is marked by his fallout with Finance Minister Ruth Richardson over the adoption of further market led reforms (pejoratively labelled "Ruthanasia"). Bolger's articulation of the "decent society" is examined, noting his communitarian turn. The appearance of communitarianism reveals an interesting relationship with market logic, proving remarkably compatible with prevailing political trends of the time.

The 1997 speech delivered Jenny Shipley reveals a strong discourse of entrepreneurialism, suggesting a number of assumptions around the competitive nature of society. Shipley also deployed the Code of Social and Family Responsibility which placed an emphasis on social capital as an aim of economic development and the responsabilisation of families, reflecting the liberal dilemma of the family as both a public and private space. The Code is also implicit in the decentralisation of the state as a guarantor of social security and an increasingly apparent attempt to balance the needs of the population against the needs of the market.

### *Fifth Labour Government: 1999-2008*

The fifth Labour Government can be broadly characterised by a ‘constructive’ or ‘inclusive’ moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand. This is organised around the adoption of frameworks of inclusion (such as education) within *a priori* markets logics. The central tenets of the market are taken for granted and citizens are increasingly encouraged to participate in these frameworks through state supported schemes. The removal of interest from new student loans, an increase in minimum wage and the extension of ICT technology to rural areas are examples of this. This is broadly labelled the ‘Third Way’ through an attempt to transcend left and right political logics (Giddens, 1998). The Third Way style of the fifth Labour Government appeared to soften neo-liberalisation by attempting to ‘equip’ people for a harsh globalised world. However, the structural adjustment of the last two decades were regarded as inevitable and unchallengeable and were thus entrenched in both state and private institutions (Roper, 2011).

Helen Clark was New Zealand’s first elected female Prime Minister and strongly aligned with the Third Way. Clark’s articulation of the “job-seeker” as an entrepreneurial subject, the “knowledge economy” as an imaginary construct, and “human capital” as a factor of production are each investigated. The Treaty of Waitangi and “closing the gaps” between Maori vis-à-vis others is also examined in some detail.

### *Fifth National Government: 2008-2013*

The fifth National Government emerged from the financial problems generated by the 2008 global recession. While Labour’s handling of Treaty related politics had been undermined, the collapse and costs of financed capital made inclusive neo-liberalism increasingly unpopular. The National Government’s first term was predominantly organised around international financial affairs. Unpopular cuts taken elsewhere in the world were publically resisted by the government which emphasised responsible fiscal management. The language of credit rating agencies also entered the political lexicon in

2011, marking the private regulation of public markets and the development of markets as a stable logic for governing.

The National Government's second term paved the way for a flattening of tax (spearheaded by an increase in GST), the partial sale of state owned enterprises, and cuts in many areas of government spending. The 2008 recession enabled a largely popular government to engage in the types of policies it would probably have pursued regardless. Widespread cuts to state spending were justified against an attempt to get "back in black" and "build a brighter future", while promoting compulsory drug testing and optional (though encouraged) contraception for female beneficiaries and their daughters.

The fifth National Government's approach to rule is represented by Prime Minister John Key as anti-ideological. Key claimed openly that he is "not interested in following a particular ideology". I examine the limitations of his position, noting its implications for wider government policy. The term "mum and dad investor" and "kiwi" are also examined, noting the way that share market investment is positioned as social security, suggesting the development of a market ideology as a rubric for governing.

The following chapters flesh these summaries out in detail, noting where and why significant moments might occur. Overall, I argue that neo-liberalisation in New Zealand is diverse, shifting, contradictory, and resistible. Despite claims to the contrary, there are alternatives. These are to be noted in the very tensions I set about exposing.

## **2. The Fourth Labour Government, 1984-1990: Instability and Contradiction**

The fourth Labour Government is commonly positioned as the initiator of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand. While some structural adjustments had been made prior to 1984, the Labour Government followed the monetarist agenda put forward by Minister of Finance Roger Douglas, who drew readily on the market led theories of Milton Friedman (Smith, 2005). After a snap election the Government immediately reduced the value of the New Zealand dollar by 20 per cent. Exchange controls were removed and the dollar floated in quick succession (Kelsey, 1995).

The Reserve Bank Act 1989 formed the lynch pin for price stability, allowing those in control of the Reserve Bank to pursue anti-inflationary measures outside democratic controls. The following analyses juxtapose this approach with the fourth Labour Government's more contradictory features, showing the unstable and contradictory nature of neo-liberalisation.

### **2.1 David Lange: The Shape of the Future, 1987**

This speech is a sequel to others delivered in 1985 and 1986, noting key policy changes for the term ahead. The Government went into the 1987 election with a broad promise to balance the radical monetarism of the previous term with an attention to social policy, after strong public reactions and threats of dissent within the party. Lange charts some specific Government policy, including the separation of commercial and non-commercial functions of state owned enterprises, the decentralisation of employment relations, and a broad continuation of existing unemployment support. There are also some general remarks which separate social and economic change. This is significant because it represents part of a break with previous goals of full employment and social security.

Lange mainly concentrates on the economic reforms which his Government engaged in over the last term. The order of discourse is dominated by the sweeping failures of the Muldoon Government and the inevitability of change, thus rendering a globalised and monetarist approach to government beyond democratic control:

Acceptance of the need for change was widespread...Because change had been so long delayed, New Zealand would have to put what should have been two or three decades of gradual adjustment into the space of three to five years

Lange speaks most significantly about the 'roll-back' (Peck & Tickell, 2002) features of Government policy. He articulates them in terms of New Zealand's future of entrenchment in international networks of competition and calculable exchange, rather than the controversies which result from rolling-back the state:

Export volumes are forecast to grow by 2.5 per cent this year and continue to grow in 1988...Many bureaucratic controls and restrictions which have hampered performance in the past will be gone. The emphasis will be on results rather than on detailed rules of governing how they are achieved

While articulations of globality and competition might have been recognisable at the time (Thatcherism and Reaganomics were recent developments) they are far from stabilized, which can be read as leading to more general statements of a "fair society" based on choice and freedom: "The Government will continue to pursue a policy in 1987 which identifies constraints and removes them and puts resources into helping people take advantage of opportunity".

The framing of "opportunity" reflects a tension between freedom and equality where market competition sits uncomfortably with quests for inclusion and social cohesion. For

Lange this tension is linked to the removal of bureaucracy. It is positioned as negative freedom, freedom from the state apparatus and freedom to pursue one's goals over pursuing equality *per se*.

Elsewhere in the speech, issues of welfare, employment, and disadvantage in relation to ethnicity and age are further framed in terms of individual "opportunity" rather than collective equality. This is somewhat at odds with Lange's concern for the "little guy", noted during the 1984 Leaders' debate with Robert Muldoon (NZ Onscreen, 2010).

In a further contradiction, Lange recognises the fourth Labour Government's approach to reform as "a steady and consistent course of economic management", positioning market led economics as a type of management in itself despite his push to remove bureaucracy. This can be taken to reflect the relatively recent uptake of market led approaches to government and the partial construction of an unstable hegemony where contradictions in meaning are folded into emergent discursive action.

This partly mirrors the 1987 Treasury briefing paper for the incoming Government titled "Government Management" (Treasury, 1987). The paper is fairly radical in its suggestions for governing. For example, giving the public sector "freedom to manage" the labour market results in a recommendation for further market de-regulation, though the shape that policy should take was not given (Treasury, 1987, p. 172).

Lange's speech occupies a pertinent moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand. It falls at the end of an era of managed economic affairs and near the beginning of 30 years of market led government. The range of ideas that Lange deploys in his 1987 speech reveal some contradictions. A separation of equality and opportunity and the simultaneous articulation of free market logics in frameworks of management mark some of these. Such articulations are absent from future speeches, suggesting a degree of discursive instability. However the basic frameworks of emergent market led government and its discursive apparatus are present.

There are a number of discursive practices of note in this speech. I focus on Lange's articulation of 'TINAisms' ('there is no alternative') and the concept of "management" in a free market framework. These support the interpretation of Lange's uptake of market logic as relatively incomplete and sometimes contradictory.

Throughout the speech Lange suggests that structural adjustment is inevitable, supported by the representation of change itself as inevitable: "Because the price signals of external markets were hidden from New Zealand producers for so long, the need for adjustment is all the more pressing". This statement reveals a degree of slippage between "description and prescription" (Fairclough, 2011, p. 13). The first part is a representation of world 'as it really is' and the second is 'this is what we must do'. The strategy of representing a state of affairs as a policy objective gives grounding to the performative nature of neo-liberalisation and the way market logic can be seen to "bring into being the very realities it describes" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, in Fairclough, 2011, p. 14). This suggests that Lange represents an ideological position as reality.

The descriptive nature of the world as it is and the prescriptive policies that result from it can be related to the relationship between the universal and the particular. Lange's way of textualising this relationship, against the widespread "acceptance for change", stands in contrast with ways in which "the relationship between universal blueprints and the radically diverse contexts is experienced" (Fairclough, 2011, p. 16).

Fairclough (2011, p. 16) notes that the slippage between prescription and description lends ideological meaning to political problems, which in turn affects their discursive framing; "advocacy of universal panaceas without analysis of differences of circumstances which may affect their appropriacy and impacts can be profoundly damaging". The effects of such articulations are well documented. Harvey (2005) argues that the practice of representing policy objectives with no alternative as congruent with a given state of affairs is implicit in the construction of consent, and thus the construction of neo-liberalisation as a natural regulation of the social order.



A similar slippage can be detected in relation to employment policy. The first statement represents conditions ‘as they really are’ and the second provides a policy response:

It is clear that economic change has influenced and generally strengthened the attitude of employers towards wage bargaining.

This very process of change increases the need for trade unions to restructure so they are able to compete effectively

Lange’s articulation above is a partial contradiction of the promise to restore compulsory unionism going into the 1984 election. While compulsory unionism was re-introduced in 1985, the Labour Relations Act 1987 changed the way that unions were structured and operated in relation to their members. New minimum membership requirements decreased the number of smaller unions, while those with 10,000 or more members increased in size and number. This meant that advocacy on behalf of specific issues became more difficult and some unions were seen as less accountable to members (Kelsey, 1995). Many weaker unions had folded by the time Lange delivered his 1987 speech and still more were required to restructure, merge or otherwise rationalise. While this may not have been the complete overhaul desired by some, it exacerbated a climate of fear surrounding job security and tipped bargaining power in favour of employers (Kelsey, 1995).

Slippage between the descriptive and prescriptive is not constant throughout the speech, perhaps reflecting the relatively recent uptake of neo-liberalising discourses. Similarly, Lange’s articulation of market de-regulation as “management” in itself can be read as a contradiction, reflecting the relatively recent transition to market led governing.

The discourse of “management” in Lange’s speech parallels those of Treasury briefing papers released earlier that year. The overlap in discursive action between the two articulations is significant, though not identical, further suggesting instability. For example:

Unless the regulatory framework is flexible and permissive enough to allow adaptation to changing conditions, the consequences will be felt in continuing high levels of unemployment...and poor economic performance. (Treasury, 1987, p. 270)

A regulatory framework, rather than a lack thereof, is recognised as key to the decentralisation of markets. While Lange suggests that:

When the Government committed itself to a new approach to economic management it also committed itself to a thorough going process of administrative reform which would enhance performance in the economy...Many bureaucratic controls which have hampered performance in the past will be gone

Lange's quote above and others like it throughout the speech represent contradictions within a market led approach to governing, resulting in the representation of a market state rather than a small state. The articulation of "management" in connection to the removal of bureaucracy is an uncomfortable one, which would eventually be exposed in an ideological split between Lange and Minister of Finance Roger Douglas, leading to a leadership crisis and the loss of the 1990 general election. In general, the social reality promulgated by Lange is one where particular representations of universal change create a range of seemingly inevitable policy prescriptions. This is partly achieved through rigid articulation of relationships between the universal and the particular.

*David Lange; Transitive Order*

This section gives some tentative indications of how selected features of Lange's speech combine to represent market led structural adjustment as a matter of urgency and necessity. The way markets and people are positioned supports this, eliding human resistance in favour of overwhelming market forces: "The Labour market is made up of a series of transactions which determine people's livelihoods"

This is but one possible representation of how the "labour market" is constructed. The actions of that constitute the labour market - "transactions" - lacks participants other than those who are reliant on them "for their livelihoods". The human action "labour" which make up "transactions" are hidden within the folds of "the labour market". The lack of agency is somewhat telling. There is no action carried from one actor to another, no question of volition and no obvious transitional phase between inception and completion of actions; "transactions" simply occur without human interaction. The actions of people in "the labour market" and their "transactions" are thus de-activated; they are represented as if they are statistics or 'things' rather than dynamic actions.

Not only does this position people as part of “the labour market” as relatively powerless, but also backgrounds the very democratic processes by which labour market “transactions” were supposed to have taken place. Under this framework all “transactions” are given the same value and meaning, which as the Employment Relations Act 1987 (noted earlier) shows, was not always the case.

Further to this, the way Lange focuses on “transactions” as the founding component of “the labour market” represents a particular kind of generalisation, made possible by the lack of agency and powerlessness outlined above. The establishment of transactions as a temporal (rather than spatial) activity of the labour market requires a classification between calculation (transactions) and human behaviour (production). The classification of “transactions” only goes so far; it does not reveal how or why transactions function, nor indeed the ways in which they can be said to determine peoples’ livelihoods. This suggests that some aspects of action are being represented at the expense of others. The shifting power relations between employers and employees are hidden behind an agentless framework of heterogeneous transactions, without any obvious resistance or empowerment.

Further to the statement above, Lange asserts: “That does not mean that the labour market should float helplessly on the economic current”. This suggests that the Government still has a role to play in regulating the employment market, yet it does little to challenge the naturalisation of market forces, achieved through “float helplessly”. The naturalisation of “float” is linked to “discourses of rise and fall, ebb and flood” (van Leeuwen, 1995, p. 99) which are characterised by a lack of control. Similarly the action of “helplessly” is limited by its incomplete and totalising nature, one cannot say “helplessly” and one is not voluntarily or only partly helpless.

These features combine to lend Lange’s statements an air of inevitability, supporting the Government’s policy prescriptions of imposing market oriented regulation on parts of the state apparatus. A key observation here is that the air of inevitability excludes alternative action; there can be no question of resistance to the re-regulations which Lange’s Government imposes because they are represented as reacting to apparently inevitable forces.

### *Discussion and Summary*

The discursive order of Lange's 1987 speech "The Shape of the Future" is situated in the midst of rapid and radical economic reform. Lange is authored by these changes to a relatively high degree, recognising the position of international networks of competition that New Zealand is in as a result. However, this is somewhat offset in its totality by Lange's suggestion of "management" in market led economic affairs, a theme notably absent from future speeches in this project.

Lange's discursive practice is primarily marked by a slippage between the description of states of affairs and a resulting policy prescription. This creates a framework which offers no alternative ways forward other than those he suggests. I also traced the way this framework operated through some of Lange's transitive representations. I noted that Lange tended to represent market forces as inevitable, foreclosing a range of possible policy responses to material problems in favour of a market led approach.

These observations give some indication of how discourses of neo-liberalisation gained traction. Apart from the speed with which the fourth Labour Government initiated structural adjustment, the discourses associated with these changes allowed alternatives to be neutralised, subsumed, or hidden. The 'no alternative' framework has received much attention, particularly surrounding Margaret Thatcher (Hall, 1989). However, Lange's speech contains some distinctions, positioning regional and local development as they key to economic growth. This represents a strong contrast with future speakers, particularly Jim Bolger, who controversially positioned New Zealand within an Asian trading bloc and later John Key, who pursues an "ambitious free trade agenda" with an international focus. The 'no alternative' discourse is bound to remind of Fukuyama's (1992) infamous 'End of History' thesis, signalling the death of ideology. Yet, the instabilities of the 2008 financial crisis and the benefit of hindsight suggest that 'no alternative' approaches like Lange's remain relatively incomplete, reliant on the ruins of the state structures he builds upon.

The deregulation of the labour market, for example, relies on a discursive apparatus that takes the foundations of embedded unionism as a point of departure. Compulsory unionism was removed in 1983, replaced again in 1985 and then adjusted in 1987, framed each time in terms of inevitability and for the greater good of the New Zealand economy.

Another notable contradiction within the fourth Labour Government's employment market reform concerned the position of women. Lange speaks readily about the bargaining position of people as individuals, as entrepreneurial subjects able to negotiate employment under market conditions. However, such a position undermines the bargaining positions of women, who were over represented in low pay and low status jobs. Lange's universal representation of the labour market as simple "transactions" are marked by a contradiction of inclusiveness and coercive market logics, reflected in the relatively late adoption of the Employment Equity Bill in 1989. The bill would have legislated for a degree of income equality, but gave little enforceable leverage and was repealed soon after the National party won the 1990 election (Kelsey, 1995).

These examples are important because they form a material backdrop to Lange's speech. Neo-liberalisation has long been criticised (Harvey, 2005; O'Brien & Wilkes, 1993) for producing gaps between rhetoric and practice. The 'no alternative' position articulated by Lange is no exception. I argue that the contradictions and incompleteness within the speech suggests that real alternatives did exist (by exploiting the suggestion of "management" for example), also necessarily incomplete in nature, but diverging from the monetarist logics often proposed under Lange's leadership.

There are also a few theoretical remarks which can be made surrounding Lange's speech and its relation to the trajectory of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand. One possible connection to make is between Lange's articulations and Boltanski and Chiapello's (2005) 'The New Spirit of Capitalism'. This suggests that a 'justificatory regime' began to emerge sometime in the 1980s as part of a change in the 'spirit' of capitalism. This emphasises the stimulating, secure, and fair parameters of capitalism which is particularly notable in Lange's framing of "opportunity" over equality.

Through concepts like "opportunity" a general standard is established, against which people are evaluated according to their flexibility, adaptability, face to face interaction, and "capacity to generate enthusiasm" (Fairclough, 2011, p. 3). This is reliant on a previous set of principles of equivalency (rigidity, tradition, inflexibility and so on), and so a framework of "no alternative" begins. If one is not new, enthusiastic and ready to grasp "opportunity", one is old, inflexible and inefficient.

The fact that such a pattern emerges off the back of several years of rolling-back the state apparatus suggests that there is indeed something 'new' about the spirit of capitalism that

Lange evokes. This asserts something more about ideology than a simple superstructure to capitalism, which is responsible for identifying the well-being of the bourgeoisie and the exploitation of working classes as one and the same.

The ‘new spirit’ which Boltanski and Chiapello posit does more than simply identify these benefits as equivalent. It provides space for dissent and critique. Under Lange’s positioning of opportunity subjects have the opportunity to pursue their own ends, free from state and collective interference, encouraging the internalisation of entrepreneurialism. The ‘spirit’ which invokes a certain degree of excitement, security, and fairness, can also be noted in the work of later speakers, especially in the suggestion by Jenny Shipley in 1997, of the country that “likes to win”.

Entrepreneurialism would be increasingly appealed to as part of everyday life, as Nairn and Higgins (2007) reveal in their study of young New Zealanders who were born in the late 1980s. Such features of the ‘new spirit’ are increasingly complete in discourses deployed under ‘creative’ regimes of neo-liberalisation, like those of Helen Clark, where frameworks for participation and engagement are rolled-out in the form of education and interconnected technology

The content of Lange’s speech is predominantly focused on questions of economic growth, price stability, and anti-inflationary measures. This overwhelming focus would undermine his relationship with his cabinet, eventually leading to his downfall.

## **2.2 Geoffrey Palmer: Statement to Parliament, 1990**

In this speech Geoffrey Palmer’s technocratic leadership style is highlighted. The general thrust of the speech is concerned with technical features of government and the legislative changes he oversaw while a Member of Parliament.

Interestingly for a valedictory at a time of crisis within the Labour Party, Palmer makes no direct reference to the types of radical market-led politics adopted by his colleagues and predecessors, the legislative programme for which he was largely responsible. He instead

focuses on drawing a line between politics and the practice of governing, seeking to establish a position free of ideology. He creates what Greisman and Ritzer (1981, p. 35) call a “completely functional and antiseptic place” where rules and structures are beyond democratic control. He would later note that:

Ideology...is frequently irrelevant in the operation of the main political parties, except perhaps in the sense of trying to maintain some sort of primitive tribal loyalty... pragmatism was always much more powerful (Palmer, 1992 in; Hayward, 2004, p. 181)

Some of the more significant discursive elements that Palmer deploys, particularly around institutionalising the Treaty of Waitangi, are at odds with the market led reform he supervised during his time as Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. For example, the introduction of the Reserve Bank Act 1989, allowing the reserve bank to act autonomously and the sale of Telecom to a consortium of local and overseas purchasers signalled every intention to continue the reforms initiated by David Lange’s cabinet.

#### *Geoffrey Palmer; Discursive Order*

Instead of reproducing a discursive arrangement that had developed around monetarist economics (as Lange did), Palmer represents his political career as a form of technocratic management. The deployment of rigid rules and regulations can be argued to normalise expert knowledge, positioning market logic beyond democratic control.

The late 1980s and early 1990s provided a rich lexicon for political action, following two terms of radical reform and social change. Palmer however appears unable to draw on this for the sake of the leadership controversy he was captured within. This involved the fracture of a largely dysfunctional cabinet who were divided on the monetary reforms

initiated by Roger Douglas. Palmer instead represents the changes of the last few years as a matter of technical concern.

It is true that the standard of debate has declined in recent years because issues are not joined...The question of Government is one thing; the question of politics is another.

The isolation of politics from legislative practice can be read as part of a conceptual apparatus where the establishment of government as a matter of technical expertise reflects the decentralization of democratic process; a move from popular to expert political participation and state to market led government (Crozier, Huntingdon, & Watanuki, 1975).

It can be argued that Palmer plays a part in this movement. Palmer's position as deputy Prime Minister under Lange was one of managing the trajectory of reform; he was largely responsible for bringing Roger Douglas' vision to reality in legislation. I argue that by not openly attending to the ideological processes of market re-regulation since 1984, Palmer inadvertently perpetuates market logic as an increasingly hegemonic rubric for governing.

Palmer is one of two leaders in this project to mention the Treaty of Waitangi and the only to represent it as a matter of justice:

One of the great difficult issues of New Zealand politics in the past decade has been...the issue of how to deal with the Treaty of Waitangi and issues relating to Maori that come from that. Those issues cannot be ignored; institutional means have to be found to address them, and justice has to be done.

The attempt to incorporate Treaty issues and ethnicity into the state apparatus have been argued to secure the neutralisation of Maori grievances (Kelsey, 1991), a move which also sits uncomfortably with broader moves to decentralise the state in many areas of



government. The liberalisation of markets and the increasingly rigorous focus on resolving historic treaty claims were irreconcilable, revealing contradictions in the colonial project itself, where Maori grievances were discussed but not solved (Kelsey, 1991).

The institutionalisation of the Treaty also supported the establishment of a number of pro-market organisations like Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust and other entities representing the interests of well-established iwi:

For some, these urban Maori authorities were the prototype of a new form of de facto tribal establishment. For others, they were simply an extension of that vein in Maori society that was endlessly adaptable to changes in the environment.

(Moon, 2009, p. 27)

As well as the establishment of pro-market organisations, the institutionalisation of the Treaty also concerned the adoption of Maori customs, knowledge, and workers into the state apparatus through the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 and the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal (Kelsey, 1991). This would later be folded into contemporary interpretations of rangatiratanga (self-determination) and rebound in favour of self-governance and community ‘partnerships’ under Helen Clark’s Third Way. For Palmer though, institutionalisation remained a relative impossibility through an ideological clash with a push for state decentralisation.

Palmer’s speech is thus constrained and enabled by several years of radical reform and its legislative backdrop of rules and regulations. The emergence of the Treaty of Waitangi as a significant item on the Government agenda (Barrett & Connolly-Stone, 1998) also reveals some contradictions within the program of marked led structural adjustment.

Palmer articulates a range of technocratic functions of government, which suggests a high degree of interdiscursivity. Palmer constructs much of his speech by formally referencing other texts (predominantly regulations) and drawing on a discourse which originates in positivism (McKenna & Graham, 2000). As author of some of these regulations and steward of others, he is able to construct and mediate them in particular ways, revealing his privileged access to discourses of government.

Palmer's position as an authoritative speaker is supported by a number of established technical frameworks, such as: "Imperial Laws Application Act, the National Development Act Repeal Act, the Economic Stabilisation Act Repeal Act, and the Public Safety Conservation Act Repeal Act".

Representing these ultimately political regulations under their technical labels elides their ideological origins. The "Economic Stabilisation Act Repeal Act", for example, repealed the ability of cabinet to stabilise economic affairs. This was used primarily as a post-war price stabilization mechanism where wages and other indicators were structured institutionally. While used to freeze wages, its wider economic controls reflected the Keynesian condition of post-war politics. The aim of the repeal act was to remove such decisions from political (and thus democratic) control.

The political backdrop of regulations like the Stabilisation Repeal Act is well documented, as are their effects on the New Zealand population (see Kelsey, 1995; Roper, 1992, for example). But the identification of a technocratic discourse like Palmer's is important for three reasons.

Firstly, Palmer has privileged access to the technical discourses of government, more so than the people who would be affected by such technicalities. His articulations are drawn from his extensive involvement in law and regulatory practice, which can be argued to

construct unequal access to discourses of governing, excluding by default those beyond networks of technocratic knowledge.

Secondly, I suggest that the deployment of a technocratic discourse manipulates the position that Palmer's speech occupies in the discursive order. Palmer's leadership was a somewhat chequered one, leading a largely dysfunctional party towards a controversial election. Articulations like the ones analysed here have the effect of representing "highly contentious" statements as 'uncontentious'—often, indeed, as fact" (McKenna & Graham, 2000, p. 248), with the effect of foreclosing resistance or argument.

Finally, technocratic language is by nature imbued with a high degree of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Palmer specifically articulates a number of regulations which are formed by rigid rules. These are arguably grounded in aspects of scientific discourse, of "the lexico-grammars of managerialism, the military, and of religion, in particular, that of the scholastics" (Philip Graham, 1999; McKenna & Graham, 2000, p. 486). The scientific structure of Palmer's regulatory articulations further contributes to their distance from popular participation.

Palmer stresses his pragmatic position in relation to caucus colleagues and other politicians, but the overview I have provided here suggests another reading. As Harvey (2005) has shown, discourses of positivism and claims to an ideology free space (as technocratic discourse does) are central to the dissemination of market logics.

#### *Geoffrey Palmer; Transitive Order*

The transitive components of Palmer's speech are quite predictable. The absence of human agency throughout his articulation of Government action can be argued to have the effect of "naturalising human conceptions about economy and society, while at the same time dehumanising the language." (McKenna & Graham, 2000, p. 36). If we take a quote from

earlier for example: “There is a structural pattern in a lot of the constitutional legislation that I have sponsored...Constitution Act 1986, Imperial Laws Application Act, the National Development Act Repeal Act”. There is no evidence here of action other than “I have sponsored”, containing only one participant and thus no transfer of agency and no effect on another actor, which suggests a lack of popular participation and debate in the construction of government regulation

By locating the Acts this way, Palmer begins the construction of a type of taxonomy, the naming of Acts by their technical title - “the National Development Act Repeal Act”, for example - removes them from the articulations of lay actors (such as ‘law’, ‘rule’ or ‘regulation’). This kind of nominalisation is significant because the Acts themselves replace the complex and often significant political processes that create them. Entire terms of parliament, social changes, resistances, debate, and controversies are folded into self-evident ‘things’. While maybe not Palmer’s primary intention, this has the effect of closing off debate, presuming a range of causal and relational processes that would be evident otherwise (McKenna & Graham, 2000).

Palmer’s speech also contains some transitive features of interest surrounding the Treaty of Waitangi and Maori: “...the issue of how to deal with the Treaty of Waitangi and issues relating to Maori that come from that”.

The lack of agency from “Maori” is perhaps the most obvious point to highlight. The primary function that the omission of Maori agency fulfils can be argued to be one of control. The “Treaty of Waitangi” and “Maori” are represented as things to be dealt with and worked on rather than discussed or consulted in good faith.

The lack of agency is achieved primarily through the mass reference of “Maori” as a homogenous entirety rather than suggesting a specific iwi or issue concerning other sub-tribal groups. Similarly, the action of “deal with” has yet to occur, excluding any settlements to date and the types of negotiations which may have occurred within them.

I argue that the features surrounding Palmer's treatment of the Treaty combined with his technocratic approach to government represent an overlap of bureaucratic action and ethnicity. These overlaps are significant because the way technocratic discourse is drawn on to make governing decisions can be observed in action. While Palmer's aims to confront historic injustices are laudable, it can be argued that the proposed institutional resolution fails to fully attend to Maori interests. This is apparent in the way that institutional legislation is represented as a tool through which "social levers" (McKenna & Graham, 2000, p. 238) might be pulled in order to "deal with" an emerging problem.

This approach to historic grievances occupied an ambivalent position in the trajectory of neo-liberalisation in 1990. The entrenchment of the Treaty as a concern of government proved contradictory to the prevailing decentralisation of the state apparatus. The institutionalisation of ethnicity, and thus expansion and reconfiguration of the state, was largely irreconcilable with a market led approach to governing.

### *Discussion and Conclusion*

While one could hardly accuse Geoffrey Palmer of being bent on market logic, some of his articulations support the market prioritisations set out under David Lange. Much of the technocratic language that Palmer deploys take market logic as an axiom in the representation of de-regulation as banal regulation, appearing to offer little platform for resistance.

By drawing on a discourse connected to positivism, the articulation of events, debates, and controversies as Acts of Parliament elides much of the resistance and debate generated by their ideological backdrop. This can be argued to constitute part of a drive towards the anti-ideological position which John Key openly articulated 21 years later.

I argue that these observations, which are not alone in their conclusions (see Fuller, 1995; P. Graham & Rooney, 2001), are important because the adoption of a technocratic mode of discourse advances the interests of market led governing. This takes on a double meaning in Palmer's case. Not only did many of the regulatory frameworks that were enacted under Palmer's guidance remove resources from public control (Kelsey, 1995), but the way he frames these manoeuvres draws on discourses of law, to which he has privileged access.

Importantly for this project, the establishment of expert knowledge as a medium for governing can be tied to the 'market ideology' articulated by John Key through the use of share markets and rating agencies as a rationale for governing. However, Palmer's technocratic mode should not be mistaken for a fully-fledged hegemonic discourse of technocracy, which "emphasises technocratic values such as the technological and expert knowledge and scientific management of knowledge for business and policy" (Grewal, 2008, p. 91). As Jurgen Habermas (1992) notes, discourses alone do not rule. The discourses that Palmer re-articulates are dependent on the policy backdrop with which he was involved. Discourse is not the cause of policy change; it is policy dependent, reliant on existing institutional pathways to construct and "reframe cultural norms rather than only reify them" (Grewal, 2008, p. 92).

### **2.3 Mike Moore; Parliamentary Statement, 1990**

Mike Moore was Prime Minister for seven weeks and Labour party leader for three years. An increasingly vocal group of female Members of Parliament, Ministers, and party officials influenced his political work. Moore was the first Prime Minister in waiting to sustain a serious leadership challenge from a female colleague (Helen Clark). During the leadership challenge, Moore implied he was under attack from the "lesbian left", while his supporters labelled the challenge "Mike vs. the Dyke" (Mitchell, 1996, p. 49). Ultimately, Moore's somewhat erratic approach to leadership combined with the political landscape generated by the following National Government, paved the way for Helen Clark as leader of the opposition and then Prime Minister in 1999 (Hayward, 2004).

Moore's speech is based around his successful challenge to the post of Prime Minister. He begins by briefly paying tribute to Palmer's time in parliament. He then outlines the political backdrop he is working from before attempting to juxtapose Labour's and National's policies, citing the "traditional" targets of Labour policy as the poor, the sick, and "our country", somewhat at odds with the monetary policies and actions deployed under Lange and Palmer.

*Mike Moore; Discursive Order*

The structural adjustments which took place between the Muldoon Government and 1990 when Moore took office were profound, informing the discursive articulations of each leader hence forth. Moore is no exception, his attempt to contrast the policies of the Opposition with those of Labour are marked by many of the contradictions commonly cited within projects of neo-liberalisation: the disparity between equality of opportunity and equality of outcome or the monopoly of power vis-à-vis market failures, for example (Harvey, 2005).

Moore's history of health problems also contributes to the structure of his speech. His use of "battler" could be thought of as a term to make sense of his own health problems, something that gave Moore the 'common touch' in his political work with vulnerable people (Hayward, 2004). However, the discursive order from which the "battler" is drawn can also be argued to reflect a much longer history of culturally constructed attitudes towards life in New Zealand; "I have been a battler, and I know that this country is full of battlers who want to fight for it. I relish the opportunity to do so".

This could be argued to describe the idealised citizen, a self-sufficient, provincial, and hardworking 'everyday New Zealander'. This can be linked to a colonial history of settlers overcoming adversity, not only through a struggle to found communities in difficult

topographical conditions, but also through the incorporation of Maori into the settler colonial project, and the struggle to establish Pakeha norms.

This interpretation of the “battler” can be supported on a number of levels by some of the literature surrounding colonial settler societies. The Hegelian master-slave dialectic deployed by Bell (2004) points to the way that recognition over the ‘other’, constituted through language, is realised by an on-going and structurally unequal struggle (not dissimilar to the establishment of a hegemony). This leads to a “distorted conversation” (Bell, 2004, p. 163) between the two struggling parties (Maori and Pakeha) and has the effect of masking the violent relationship between ‘lordship and bondage’. In New Zealand, this is characterised by a disavowal of colonial violence against both land and indigenous people, where violence is cast in romantic ways, emphasising a heroic and resourceful struggle over a domineering one. This is not to suggest that Moore’s “battler” has racist or colonial intentions folded within it, but that it can refer to a purportedly ‘authentic’ approach to life in New Zealand. I will explore this more in the following section. Suffice to say the “battler” can be argued to support self-sufficiency, competition, and the establishment of ‘equal opportunity’, each of which can reflect different neo-liberalising discourses.

Moore also makes a direct appeal to the historical changes his party has witnessed, emphasising his intent to hold fast to Labour’s roots:

A Government that will ensure that all the people share the gains from the pains of the past few years; a Government that reflects the New Zealand and Labour Party values of fairness, equality, tolerance, and respect.

Aside from the dualism of pain verses gain (analysed later), Moore is authored by his party’s history. The discursive resources of the Labour party, organised around “fairness, equality, tolerance and respect”, must be reproduced in order for Moore’s position to be rendered coherent against the backdrop of two terms of rigorous market led reform and social change. The party had already lost two Prime Ministers and a Finance Minister through the marketization of the state apparatus. The articulation of “fairness, equality,



tolerance, and respect”, while contradictory to the market led project, can be argued to hedge against the monetarist extremity deployed by Moore’s colleagues.

Moore is thus positioned at a point in history where the profound impacts of opening up New Zealand’s markets to overseas trade and investment could not easily be undone. Terms like “economic closet”, “share the gains from the pains” and “opportunity” are salient. However, Moore’s working class background as an active trade unionist contradicts his arguably pro-market articulations. This might partly reflect his fairly erratic style of leadership, but also points to the more contradictory and spontaneous ways in which neo-liberalisation emerges at certain conjunctures (Larner, 2009).

Moore’s speech functions as something of a placeholder for the unstable nature of neo-liberalisation under the Fourth Labour Government. There is little evidence of reference to other texts beyond Moore’s articulation of party history and only some interdiscursivity, as in the “battler”. It does however represent a significant moment in the trajectory of neo-liberalisation. The very fact that Moore took office at all suggests that the tensions of the reformist Lange Government were keenly felt. This conjuncture of neo-liberalisation can be argued to represent an attempt to grapple with the broadly destructive (Peck & Tickell, 2002) period of reform leading to Moore’s short lived time as Prime minister.

#### *Mike Moore; Discursive Practice*

The key discursive element of the “battler” identified earlier, suggests a number of interesting meanings and interpretations. The “battler” is sometimes deployed in the name of moral appeals to voters, as a tool to gain the support of a constituency, which fits Moore’s use rather well: Politicians...are very fond of talking, usually with a catch in their throats, about ‘hard-working Kiwis’, ‘Kiwi battlers’ or the nauseating cliché ‘Kiwis of Main/Struggle Street’ (Bunting, 2011, p. 4).

Further, a cursory glance at news print archives reveals that the “battler” is commonly deployed in journalistic practice in relation to illness, particularly concerning young people who are affected by cancer, whether or not they make a recovery. It has been taken to refer to an ‘ordinary’ person “who has few natural advantages, but works doggedly and with little reward, struggles hard for livelihood, and displays enormous courage in doing so” (Sekiya, 2008, p. 22).

While this is almost certainly within the purview of Moore’s use of the term, engendering friendliness and solidarity, it can also carry a more historically pertinent reading. In New Zealand the “battler” can be entangled with ethnic relations, as van Beynen’s (2005, p. 11) later articulation shows; “[Don] Brash, like the clever dentist he could have been, excavated the cavity harbouring Kiwi battler discomfort about apparent preferential treatment for Maori”.

The “battler” in this context is part of a national narrative constructed by settler colonialism. This is supported by Bell’s (2004) identification of an essentialist view of settler life in New Zealand through the lens of Hegel’s master-slave dialectic, noted earlier. The “battler” constitutes part of the settler condition, romantically suggesting that all is fair in the struggle for nation building and reconciliation between people and land. This can be constructed as a reduction in difference between the settler and ethnic others through “epistemological violence” (Bell, 2004, p. 253), we are all “battlers” as Moore suggests.

Veracini’s (2010) contention that the settler narrative is by nature ‘linear’, supports this view. Most colonial narratives are tied to a state of origin in which return is possible; the colonial subject embarks on a journey eventually to return home. Colonial settlers of New Zealand had no such option. Settler narratives are thus organised according to on-going processes of establishment or “battling”:

Displacement in the wilderness, a frontier phase made up in succession by entrance into a district, battling the land, community building, and, eventually by the ‘closing in’ of the frontier (Veracini, 2010, p. 99)

Similarly, throughout the 1980s, as mass transport became more accessible and barriers to international trade and migration were lifted as part of the structural adjustment process, people immigrated to New Zealand, leading diasporic lives in increasing numbers. The diasporic condition in itself can constitute a battle, for recognition, for resources, and for citizenship. More recent immigrants do not get the same chance to set up an “exemplary model of social organisation” (Veracini, 2010, p. 4) as those of settler colonialism. I refer here to the relatively recent increase in migration from many Asian states. This has been popularly received as both an enhancement to New Zealand’s economic fortunes and as a drag on the labour market and public services, not to mention in terms of a number of pejorative discourses surrounding cultural norms of the ‘immigrant other’.

The “battler” as a discursive resource thus has a number of appeals folded within its meaning. While Moore’s articulation asserts each of these (self-sufficiency, independence and the establishment of social norms) to a degree, it would be premature to regard his “battler” as essentialising epistemological violence. However, the “battler” arguably rebounds in favour of the market logics deployed by the following fourth National Government in the name of self-sufficiency where the family or community rather than the state are supposed to provide the security and rights previously associated with citizenship.

Another example of Moore’s discursive action can be noted in his naturalisations of market logic. In this 1990 speech Moore takes the majority of the socio-political conditions in which he is situated for granted: “A Government that will ensure that all the people share the gains from the pains of the past few years”

Boers (1997, p. 232) argues that ‘pain versus gain’ forms part of a discourse based on “health, fitness and racing” which naturalises free market logic. Terms such as ‘financial injection’ and ‘economic revival’ (among many others) are commonly deployed to frame the action of markets. These types of metaphor can be argued to support market imperatives through an asserted need to be fit and healthy in order to pursue market shifts.

The assumption that economic gain requires pain is debatable, and forecloses a number of alternative approaches economic development by representing market forces as natural and inexorable. The fact remains that the pain of reform, necessary or otherwise, was spread unevenly across the New Zealand population, and would continue to be so through the 1990s under the leadership of Jim Bolger and Jenny Shipley.

*Transitive Order; Mike Moore*

I have already touched on the way “share the gains from the pains of the past few years” appears to naturalise the free market logics of the fourth Labour Government. A closer inspection of the transitive components surrounding this articulation reveals the somewhat contradictory manner in which Moore embedded himself in the order of discourse of the time.

For example, the use of “battlers” points to the volitional action of people in the market place: “This country is full of battlers who want to fight for it”.

However, despite the apparently potent agency of battling, there are neither objects which can be battled against nor any specific participants, precluding human impact on market forces. The action of “battlers” is thus semiotic rather than material. If the action were material it would feature both an object of action and an outcome - “battlers who fight for their jobs and livelihoods” - for example. This is significant because it distinguishes between an action that will have an effect of the world and one which will not, prioritising market forces over human agency. Further, the way “battlers” replaces specific people as actors further reduces human agency. This conveys meaning that cannot reach beyond the context of the speech, lending “battlers” a degree of discursive flexibility to be deployed in other contexts.

The term “battlers” in its grammatical network can be constructed as an abstraction of real life, supporting the romantic interpretation of self-sufficiency outlined earlier. The effect of generalizing a group of people through the reference of “battlers” has the effect of not only hiding the nature of the people who do the battling, but also the actions that make up the battling itself. None of these readings of Moore’s articulation locate actors in a position of power in relation to market forces, showing the effect that abstractions can have on representing reality.

### *Discussion and Summary*

Mike Moore's position within the discursive trajectory of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand is somewhat difficult to pinpoint. His history within Labour's networks of trade unionism supports his assertion of returning to Labour's roots of "fairness, equality, tolerance, and respect". These seem somewhat incongruous with the positioning of opportunity over equality, the professed necessity of pain as a component of economic gain and the abstraction of the "battler". Moore's somewhat contradictory logics can show that "neoliberal discourses and techniques do not always emerge in the sites we assume, travel in the forms we expect, or move in the directions we anticipate." (Larner, 2009, p. 1577)

Moore later stated that "there is no contradiction between a lifelong adherence to the principles of internationalism and worker solidarity, and believing in the worldwide benefits of the free flow of trade and ideas" (Moore, 2003, in Larner, 2009, p. 1583). While this is reflected to a degree in the transitive and discursive features of Moore's speech, it would be simplistic to suggest that Moore has his ideological bents mixed up. Moore's emphasis on fairness and equality can be related to what he sees as 'good governance', as a desirable aim of organising free trade.

In sum, Moore's speech is constructed around his rise to Prime Minister, which he held for just seven weeks in the lead up to the 1990 election. Though he embeds himself in the traditional aspects of the Labour party's history of social democracy, his representation of economic gain requiring an element of pain, his framing of opportunity, and his use of the "battler" as an idealised citizen, are somewhat at odds with each other. Moore's represents market forces as inevitable and - somewhat contradictorily - as compatible with some aims of social justice.

## 2.4 Conclusion: Fourth Labour Government; 1984-1990

The speeches of each of the fourth Labour Government's leaders reflect in one way or another the contradictions and specificities of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand.

In Lange's speech emergent market logic appears in the representation of neo-liberalisation as inevitable and the articulation of "management" as a driver of reform. I linked this to the relatively recent uptake of market led structural reform, revealing traces of Robert Muldoon's embedded liberalism. The 'no alternative' position which Lange articulated revealed a degree of slippage between the description of affairs and the policy prescriptions which address them. This has the effect of eliding controversies, resistances, and contradictions in the formulation of structural adjustment. This was particularly apparent through an examination of the way that Lange constructed the labour market.

In the case of Geoffrey Palmer, contradiction is found between his articulation of a technocratic discourse surrounding economic affairs and the suggestion of institutionalising the Treaty of Waitangi. The representation of market led reform as a self-evident 'thing' through technocratic discourse hid a number of ideological assumptions and events which excludes reform from popular participation. This contributed to an overall approach to market led rule which sat uncomfortably with the institutionalisation of the Treaty of Waitangi. This proved irreconcilable (contributing to Palmer's ousting from leadership), indicating the unstable position of market led governing.

The specificities of Moore's speech, which were noted predominantly in the "battler", are supported by some of the literature surrounding the contemporary conditions of colonial settler societies. It was argued that the "battler" forms part of a romantic interpretation of self-sufficiency, arguably reflecting a history of disavowed violence in the settler colonial condition. Moore also deployed a discourse based on health and illness, suggesting that the "pain" of reform is a necessary part of the subsequent economic "gain".

These seem like a somewhat disparate group of conclusions to reach for a Government that appeared so driven by economic determinism. To be sure, these conclusions are but one reading of many. The moments of neo-liberalisation outlined in this chapter indicate but a few possible conjunctures of the Labour party's rule. Their significance is that they

indicate the tenuousness of treating neo-liberalisation as a monolithic narrative; it is not without struggle, resistance, and contradiction.

The “battler”, for example, can expose the role that settler narratives play in the establishment of market logics, rebounding in favour of the self-sufficiency and self-government pursued by the fourth National Government. Similarly, the institutionalisation of the Treaty of Waitangi by Palmer proved irreconcilable with the structural adjustment of the 1980s. However, it would be taken up in ways congruent with market logics through an exploitation of rangatiratanga (self-determination) by Helen Clark nine years later as part of an aim to “close the gaps” between Maori and Pakeha, promoting self-sufficiency and community over state intervention.

Further tentative links could be drawn between Lange’s somewhat incomplete articulation of the inevitability of market forces and the more complete articulations of John Key, responding to the 2008 financial crisis, which appear to stabilise the ‘everdayness’ of markets by offering solutions to recession organised around a ‘market ideology’. Palmer’s technocratic discourse also bears some consistencies with Key’s inclusion of credit rating agencies in his 2011 speech, when he positions the expert knowledge of non-state actors beyond democratic debate. Whichever reading one gives to the features outlined in this chapter, the contradictory and unstable nature of neo-liberalisation under the fourth Labour Government is quite clear.

### **3. The Fourth National Government, 1990-1999:**

#### **Communitarianism and the Moral Code of Responsibility**

The fourth National Government came to power off the back of the Labour Government's largely dysfunctional caucus which had succumbed to the fallout of its radical financial reforms. Jim Bolger, National party leader and a farmer from Taranaki, held the seat of Prime Minister for seven years. He governed for a little over two terms, before being deposed by New Zealand's first female Prime Minister, Jenny Shipley.

The reforms set in motion by the fourth Labour Government were repudiated in the lead up to the 1990 election, as Bolger's speech shows. However, Minister of Finance Ruth Richardson continued the monetarist agenda. The biggest changes occurred in the provision of welfare and the labour market. Inflation adjustments for benefits were withdrawn; the age for youth wages was increased by 5 years to 25; and the 'stand down' period for those considered to be unemployed 'voluntarily' was increased from six weeks to six months (Kelsey, 1995). In 1991, the Employment Contracts Act came into effect, allowing individuals and non-union groups to negotiate with employers. These adjustments (among many others) fell disproportionately on women, the young, the working poor, and the long term unemployed (O'Brien & Wilkes, 1993).

As with the reforms of the fourth Labour Government, there was a concentration of power between the Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, and the Treasury. Treasury briefing papers again provided a criticism of Government action, suggesting that state intervention through social welfare worked against the poor by generating a lack of incentives to achieve "dignity security and participation in society" (Kelsey, 1995, p. 229). These themes mirrored many of those deployed by Bolger and Shipley. However, there are also some contradictions to this moral authoritarianism. Bolger's articulation of communitarian values, for example, takes the community as a point of departure for the utopian creation of a "decent society". This connotes a cooperative population characterised by solidarity and marks something of a reaction against the extremity of Labour's reform. This represents a contrast with Shipley's articulation of competition and the 'responsibilisation' of families through the Code of Social and Family Responsibility



(Department of Social Welfare, 1998). While not covered in either of these speeches, the ‘Code’ represents a key moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand, arguably paving the way for the ‘Third Way’ approach to governing deployed by Helen Clark.

### **3.1 Jim Bolger; General Debate, 1990**

Bolger’s 1990 speech provides a basic outline of the National Party’s concerns for the following year and the 1990 election. Bolger would win office by repudiating the now dysfunctional fourth Labour Government and the anxiety generated by the financial ‘revolution’ (Johansson, 2004). Bolger’s campaign narrative was organised around a promise to restore the “decent society”, with paid work and community relations providing the foundations.

The “decent society” (deployed 18 times in this speech) reflects the Bolger Government’s commitment to a number of contradictory political strategies. During the first term this was to the spread of market logic driven by Minister of Finance Ruth Richardson, who moved monetary reform into areas untouched by the market for several decades like the conditions of labour and health services. A near loss in the 1993 election revealed a significant public backlash over Richardson’s reforms. She lost the finance portfolio and Bolger continued his more moderate communitarian approach to government.

Communitarianism constitutes subjects through the community, to which they owe a “debt of respect and consideration”; there are no “unencumbered selves” (Heywood, 1998, p. 148). Bolger’s communitarianism can be read as a concern that the relatively extreme reforms carried out under the fourth Labour Government had not “fostered a family friendly environment” (Davey, 2000, p. 126). Bolger thus advocated breaking the cycle of “dependency” on the state which he claims is characteristic of a lack of social cohesiveness.

The discursive order of politics in late 1989 and 1990 New Zealand was framed by the last ten years of reform and social change. The discursive limits of these changes are revealed through Bolger's strong reference to global economic indicators and measures of success: "The Minister of Overseas Trade and Marketing could not identify a single company among the 30 major companies interviewed that had positive plans to invest in New Zealand". The way out of economic strife is recognised through global business engagement, rather than the regional development suggested by Lange. Similarly, Bolger's positioning of New Zealand within a trading block constituted by Asia and the Pacific as a strategy for economic growth was particularly controversial, but this would become increasingly stabilised as reform progressed.

Bolger also articulates some points surrounding the functions of the "decent society":

To achieve a decent society it is essential to have a growing and prosperous economy so that people can participate; so that they have the opportunity to use their individual talents in a job...so that they know that when they start a family they will be able to provide for that family, that when they are sick the hospitals will be there...Those are the components of a decent society.

While Lange also frames "opportunity" over equality as a key aspect of improving life in New Zealand, Bolger dictates this in quite specific terms. Bolger's appeals to "family" and entrepreneurial ideals of "opportunity" can be read not only as reflecting his own communitarian values but also the values of the National party's genesis, centred on farming and agriculture in provincial New Zealand (Gustafson, 1986).

Later in the speech, a reaction to the failures of the Lange Government is marked by Bolger as a pragmatic one, which provides part of the basis for the construction of social capital as a logic for governing that is increasingly apparent under Jenny Shipley and Helen Clark. Social capital in this context refers to the economic benefits gained from

cooperation between individuals. This is realised by Bolger through the communitarian construction of individual duty to the community:

New Zealanders, in a calm, pragmatic, but completely and eminently sensible response, said that they should, when possible, do something worthwhile, not just be paid to stay at home to do nothing

This is significant because it can be argued to perpetuate the decentralisation of the welfare state, though perhaps not in ways which Bolger predicted. The kinship based discourses deployed by Bolger framed the roll-back of state welfare services, such as the reduction of the unemployment benefit by \$14 a week and the decrease (of between 9 and 16 per cent) of the widows and domestic purposes benefit “as an ‘incentive’ to become self-supporting” (Kelsey, 1995, p. 243). However Bolger’s communitarianism also suggested a number of universal rights, such as state funded tertiary education and a strong justice system, which sit somewhat ambiguously with a push to shrink state spending and intervention. Neither the resources nor recognition to support these goals were forthcoming (Bolger, 1998).

Bolger’s order of discourse can be argued to supplant the problems associated with Labour’s monetarist economics with a morally constructed discourse organised around the nodal point of the “decent society”. A number of issues coalesce around this, such as the references to unemployment, healthcare, and education, noted above. Minister of Finance Ruth Richardson’s policy prescriptions generated ideological contradictions early on in Bolger’s first term, limiting his communitarian position and eventually prompting her dismissal after National’s poor performance in the 1993 election.

The most obvious discursive form in this speech is the “decent society”, noted earlier. In the context of this speech it appears as a utopian signification - a cooperative community supported by a range of basic but universal rights and ties of kinship in place of intrusive state intervention. It also brings to mind a radical centrist democracy, with high degrees of political engagement, social cohesion, self-sufficiency, and community networks which promote economic stability.

The backdrop of the “decent society” was marked by a somewhat incongruous set of policy moves. Ruth Richardson’s strong hold on cabinet ensured that the market led economic reforms begun under Lange would be carried into labour, health, and welfare policy. Trade unions were effectively written out of the law by the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act 1991, ending compulsory unionism and tipping bargaining power in favour of employers. Health care moved closer to a user pays system through the establishment of a purchaser-provider split, forcing primary health organisations to compete for money from bulk funded regional health authorities. Welfare entitlements were tightened and the universal family benefit was abolished, removing the sole independent family income for many women (Kelsey, 1995).

Thus “the opportunity to be involved” in the “decent society” is realised in relatively harsh terms, forcing citizens from state social security into community or individual support mechanisms. The framing of opportunity in place of equality represents a common thread throughout projects of neo-liberalisation, particularly under the Labour party’s Third Way from 1999. Bolger’s articulation of “opportunity” is perhaps the most salient of this project as the first to take social policy as grounds for the dissemination of market logic. The “decent society” as a discursive resource can thus be construed as a segue towards a creative moment in a broadly destructive period of structural reform, compelling certain types of behaviour and partially creating frameworks for popular engagement in the market.

One possible source for the relatively flexible content of the “decent society” (including, but not limited to education, unemployment, family relations, criminal and social justice, and health services) can be traced to a number of links to conservative parties internationally. The National party of the mid 1980s was engaged with an “international alliance of anti-socialist political parties” (Gustafson, 1986). Party representatives and organisers met on a regular basis with the goal of sharing “policies, techniques, strategies and organisational structures” (Kelsey, 1995, p. 39). Thus, the “decent society” highlights a discursive strategy arguably marked by a degree of intertextuality, indicating social change (Fairclough, 1992).

As a political strategy the “decent society” not only worked in favour Bolger’s policy backdrop of state spending cuts, but also against him in its repudiation of Labour’s market led policies. It arguably acted for and against market logic simultaneously. For many, the “decent society” signalled not a greater emphasis on equitable and harmonious social organisation but a contradictory “overwhelming focus on price stability” and the “questionable wisdom in pursuing the goal of fiscal balance in the midst of a serious recession” (Boston & Dalziel, 1992b, p. ix). This contradictory and abstract interpretation of the “decent society” reveals a significant moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand. Bolger marks a possible starting point for a ‘post fourth Labour Government neo-liberalisation’, perpetuating a deeper and more socially pervasive current of structural and social adjustment. Bolger’s communitarianism shows a somewhat creative reaction against the extremity of the fourth Labour Government’s reform while arguably supporting its outcomes.

### *Jim Bolger; Transitive Order*

Bolger’s repertoire for interpreting political themes in favour of market techniques spreads beyond the articulation of a “decent society”. A number of grammatical features reveal the prioritisation of the fiscal bottom line and market forces in favour of other policy approaches to meeting the needs of society. While this is limited in its conclusions of Bolger’s overall ideological position, it can be argued to reflect the discursive conditions in

the late 1980s and early 1990s, oriented around the widespread dissemination of market logics as a way of organising the welfare state.

Bolger's speech contains a strong emphasis on the moral aspects of government, apparent in his articulations of family values (noted earlier) and a strong police force: "A decent society must be built upon people knowing that the police and those in authority will protect them from muggers, thieves, and rapists".

These articulations can be recognised as a repudiation of the fourth Labour Government's failure to attend to diverse public opinions, rather than a coherent ideologically driven imperative in themselves (Boston & Dalziel, 1992a). This can be seen in the contradictory ways that Bolger represents public reactions to the previous Government's unemployment policies, actions of the fourth Labour Government itself, and public reactions to market forces:

New Zealanders, in a calm, pragmatic, but completely and eminently sensible response, said that they should, when possible, do something worth while....that is a total endorsement of one key plank of the National Party's decent society.

In this quote "New Zealanders" not only represent an outwardly visible existence as a group, but also have the active emotional capacity to make informed decisions. The attribution of reactions like these is not spread evenly across actors through the speech. Bolger dwells on the rational reactions of the population and those of the National party, contrasting them with the incongruent actions of the opposition who "handcuff the police". This reveals a prioritisation of the moral dimension of Bolger's "decent society" over the economic reforms of the Labour Government, which are simply represented as having a series of unintended consequences.

In a similar vein, the reactions of New Zealanders in the quote above are represented dynamically, as movements in thought based on real world events. By contrast, the actions associated with the economy later in the speech are objectivated through a series of

nominalisations, positioning the economy as an object devoid of human agency and thus beyond regulation. This most obviously noted in Bolger's phrase: "The economy is not recovering".

While this approach to representing the economy is a contrast with the statements around "New Zealanders" above, it is consistent with representations of action in scientific reporting, naturalising the inexorable nature of the economy. In scientific reports, natural processes of growth and change (or a lack thereof) are represented metonymically rather than by the agency of those manipulating a variable. The same is true of the economy in the example above. The agency of those responsible for economic recovery is elided behind "not recovering" as a self-evident process. Had this been recast as a matter of agency, as in "this Government has managed the economy incorrectly", then the outcome is slightly different and thus a concern of policy formulation rather than a matter of involuntary action.

The distinction between rational reactions to social policy and automated agent-less responses to economic issues supports the contradictions of Bolger's communitarianism outlined earlier. Actors are positioned simultaneously as powerful and powerless, positioning social security as a matter for popular participation and the economy as an inexorable force. These representations can be read as a microcosm of Bolger's wider approach to rule, characterised by a simultaneous reaction against the previous Government's reform while allowing similar changes to occur within the welfare state.

### *Discussion and Summary*

Bolger's 1990 speech is organised around the narrative of creating the "decent society", the National party campaign slogan for the 1990 election. While it is difficult to disagree with such a proposition, this analysis has noted that the "decent society" is a signifier with little *a priori* meaning or stabilized content and is thus open to manipulation in a number of ways. The corresponding National party policy release for the 1990s oscillates between the

“decent society” and the “enterprise society”, which might have given an indication of what was to come (National Party of New Zealand, 1990, p. 21). The “decent society” projected an image of community characterised by a high level of cohesiveness and thus little need for state intervention beyond a basic set of rights such as healthcare, education, and a strong justice system.

The content of this speech broadly reflects the initially indicated policy backdrop of Bolger’s fourth National Government. I argue that the policy outcomes looked quite different to most indications of a “decent society”, as demand for welfare services increased, the “welfare that works” (National Party of New Zealand, 1990, p. 10) was not working at all. Incentivising beneficiaries into work by removing benefits simply resulted in more poverty (Davey, 2000). This unpopular move was at least partly achieved through the concentration of power between the Minister of Finance, Prime Minister, and the Treasury, as well as by discursive framing

I noted at the beginning of this section that Bolger develops the concept of “opportunity” over equality as a “key plank” for policy development, framing human behaviour as entrepreneurial. This contributes to dismantling of citizenship rights, which had already come under strain through the economic reforms of the fourth Labour Government. Entrepreneurialism overlaps with Bolger’s communitarian turn, suggesting that work and businesses constitute vital inputs into cohesive communities through financial and social capital. The focus on “opportunity” can be argued to support a type of methodological individualism, where the basic unit of policy reference is an individual person embedded in a network of social relations constituting a community. This was revealed most obviously in the Employment Contracts Act 1991, which would “give New Zealanders the chance to negotiate their own hours and pay” (National Party of New Zealand, 1990, p. 5).

The second key discursive articulation of the “decent society” pointed to a tension between a conservative and market led approach to rule, noted particularly in Bolger’s simultaneous repudiation and support of market logic. However, an increased Government focus on families and the resulting switch from a joint income couple to the “core family” as a unit of assessment for state support is not completely contradictory to the tightening of welfare targets (Boston, 1992). Of the four possible permutations of the core family an unattached



adult without children was one, allowing the tightening of welfare rights on the grounds of family relations (a family can consist of just one person) and cutting payments to individuals on the basis of perceived need (families are suggested to need more).

Bolger and his cabinet minister's attempts at deepening the reforms set in motion by the fourth Labour Government thus tipped the 'moral balance sheet' (Muller, 1993) of society in favour of a more destructive mode of neo-liberalisation, dismantling key aspects of the welfare state. The transitive order that I outlined earlier supports this through a moral application of agency to actors in some situations while simultaneously eliding agency behind natural events in others. As Boltanski and Chiapello (2005, p. xi) note, this can be seen as part of a condition where "a universal 'domination', presented as an iron law, is exercised, while at the same time seeking to advance the work of individual liberation, conceived as an emancipation from external powers and intervention". In this way it is possible to view Bolger's ideological position as more coherent than might first be noted, market logics need not preclude all communitarian values. The moral positioning of "New Zealanders" and an emphasis on families partly supports a move to roll-back welfare services.

Bolger's discourses of rule are thus messy and sometimes contradictory, which leads to a question over the stability of his ideological position. Boltanski and Chiapello (2005, p. 103) suggest that due to the gradual but relentless restructuring of capitalism since the 1960s, by 1990 there was a need to generate "some new general representation of the economic world". The narrative of the "decent society" and all that it entails thus fulfils part of a utopian vision of community cooperation against a backdrop of widespread discontent, deploying a set of rules and codes (such as the lack of agency in the economy for example) which could then guide further action. This action would come in the form of Bolger's removal from office and Jenny Shipley's somewhat timely adaptation and crystallisation of Bolger's "decent society" in the Code of Social and Family Responsibility (Department of Social Welfare, 1998).

### 3.2 Jenny Shipley: *The Way Ahead*, 1997

Shipley's leadership of the National party and as Prime Minister emerged from the tensions generated by MMP and the resulting balance of power held by Winston Peters after the 1996 election. Bolger's position as Prime Minister was also challenged by the tensions in his cabinet as Minister of Finance Ruth Richardson deployed a set of harsh policy reforms which rolled-back core parts of the welfare state. When Bolger's position failed, Shipley emerged as New Zealand's first female Prime Minister, and to date the only female leader of the National party.

Shipley's social policies broadly revolved around a push to make people "responsible for themselves and their families in a low tax environment, rather than depending on the state for healthcare and welfare needs" (Hayward, 2004, p. 262). This was marked by the recasting of the unemployment benefit as a 'community wage' in 1998, where beneficiaries were to work in return for state support or face benefit withdrawal. Other categories of support, including the invalids, sickness, and domestic purposes benefits were also subsumed under the 'community wage'. Support for the predominantly market led policy environment was underpinned by relatively conservative interpretations of family and individual relations, with an increasingly apparent emphasis on including people in employment markets through state intervention in the development of social capital.

To this end, an analysis of Shipley's speech broadly reflects the policy backdrop of her Government: the development and entrenchment of a flexibility ethos that lay behind the Employment Contracts Act 1991 and the reform of education denoted by the adage of 'backing winners', particularly in the tertiary sector where the commercialization of knowledge was seen as playing a key role in economic growth. The concept of 'social capital' was increasingly apparent as an operational basis for welfare provision backed by the "responsibilisation" of individuals and families, and the continuation of a user-pays philosophy alongside targeting strategies" (Peters & Fitzsimons, 1999, p. 32). This was crystallised in the Code of Social and Family Responsibility (CSFR). The CSFR was in part a discussion document that aimed to clarify the relationship between the state and citizens in relation to social welfare and the governing of families. Over one million discussion booklets on which the paper would be based were distributed, prompting 94,303 responses

(Davey, 2000). The CSFR is a significant document which reflected yet another radical move in New Zealand politics: “the idea of having a code...to define what can be expected of people in relation to what Government does through its social policies” (Davey, 2000, p. vii). However, this would reveal a number of tensions between conservative imperatives to intervene in family life and a continual push to shrink the state apparatus.

*Jenny Shipley; Discursive Order*

Shipley’s speech covers the basic policy framework that the National Party would pursue under her leadership for the three years. These generally continue the trends of the last two terms, focusing strongly on the construction of a ‘consensus’ on economic development:

So the arguments of left and right in terms of economic policy are much less relevant than they were in yesteryear....Most countries know that productivity means that you stay competitive with those whom you are selling against.

Following the trajectory of 13 years of economic reform, Shipley is partly authored by what she sees as a consensus in market led governing. This can be read as reflecting a growing trend of market logics being treated as common sense. The claim that politics in economic policy is now “much less relevant” represents a cautious articulation compared to those by Helen Clark in 2002 (that neo-liberalism is over) and John Key in 2011 (that he does not follow ideology). The attempt to distance ideology from government can also be factored into the emergence of the Third Way, a profession to go beyond left and right political divides (examined in the following chapter) (Giddens, 1998).

Shipley also reinvents Bolger’s communitarianism in more specific terms of ‘social capital’, emphasising the benefits that result from social cohesion and cooperation:

Currently there is no consensus around the issues of responsibilities and obligations that lie between Government, communities, families and individuals. To do well New Zealanders need to look after themselves and each other.

The central tenets of this statement are later reflected and crystallised in the CSFR which attempted to formalise the obligations that Shipley asserts above. The code was developed off the back of Bolger's communitarianism, which had by this point proven inconsistent with the largely anti-social reforms of the previous seven years, though Shipley's attempt at reconciliation was eventually proven just as unstable.

Shipley's position as New Zealand's first female prime minister is also significant. While no explicit passages in this speech reveal gender politics, Shipley reflected libertarian values on abortion and gay rights, yet supported universal health care and free tertiary education (Hayward, 2004). This speech, however, reflects traditional moral values to a stronger degree than Bolger's, something that did not go unnoticed by her supporters: "We must consider further our obligations: as parents to our children as children to their families as individuals to our communities and as Government to New Zealanders". Indeed, one could argue that many of her wider policy aims for welfare provision on the grounds of competitive advantage obstructed or hindered the position of women, noted in her involvement with Bill Birch in the removal of the Employment Equity Act in 1990 and cuts in early childhood education funding (Hayward, 2004).

In this speech, Shipley moves away from the order of discourse articulated by Bolger around communities, and builds on more mobile and expansive discourses of social capital. This is constituted by a stronger emphasis on the nodal points of family and individual as signifiers for the politics of welfare. For example, the passage below openly reveals a commitment to competition as a basis for social organisation:

New Zealanders like winning. We all want to succeed as people, as families, as communities and as a nation. We all want to have the opportunity, through freedom and choice, to be able to lead satisfying and fulfilled lives.

Shipley's utterances around competition and the welfare state are of course limited and framed by MMP which had generated a new structure in the cabinet and Government. This was organised to complete the 'unfinished business' of welfare reform set in motion early in Bolger's term. However, Shipley's coalition partners in New Zealand First were increasingly resistant to perpetuate the very policies they had gone into politics to resist, particularly in health reform (Fitzsimons, 2000). Many of the policies that they reacted against were built on the premise that social capital was supposed to transpose a trickle-down effect of stability from economics to social capital, which further exposed the inequalities generated by market logics. The limits of social capital and competition can be thought of in some ways as resulting in Labour's Third Way (examined in the following chapter) as the next step for the politics of welfare and market logics in New Zealand, marked by the production of mechanisms for engaging previously marginalised people in the employment market.

*Jenny Shipley; Discursive Practice*

The most obvious discursive elements deployed by Shipley in this speech are those of competition and inclusion, drawn on as an element of state sanctioned social organisation, a general theme that is carried forward to Helen Clark's discursive practice:

New Zealanders like winning...We want New Zealanders to feel rewarded for their effort. We want New Zealanders who need help to have someone to walk beside them.

This passage points to an approach of providing universal access to knowledge with a heavy emphasis on winners and meritocracy, thus inviting self-improvement. It could also be argued that an implicit assumption is that inequality is an inevitable though not necessarily completely desirable trait of a healthy society. To have winners one must also have losers. The discursive limits of attempting to formulate people as competitors can be

linked to a number of material concerns; Shipley's policy environment produced worsening living conditions for many and generated a political counter current organised around preserving the welfare state (Crothers, 2000). This culminated in the 1998 'Hikoi of Hope' organised by the Anglican Church, drawing 30, 000 people to its cause on the way to parliament and gaining the attention of both the Government and opposition.

The emphasis on winning and opportunity suggests that people should increasingly "see themselves as active subjects, responsible for their own wellbeing" (Larner, 1998, p. 16). This is more than a simple moral justification for a decade of reform which undermined social solidarity. The passage above and the references to family responsibility elsewhere in the speech can be argued to indicate a presence of the 'liberal dilemma' (Angus & Brown, 1998). This dilemma is characterised by a tension between autonomy and privacy. In Shipley's speech, a focus on freedom is contradicted by state intervention into family life. This tension would be highlighted again in the CFSR, which exposed a level welfare support which failed to provide the basic conditions necessary for responsible parenting; "as one response had it; "If the Government wants us to pull up our socks, first it has to make sure we have socks"" (Angus & Brown, 1998, p. 46). As a result, Shipley's mode of Government was recognised by many at the time as a simple "exercise in social engineering" (Angus & Brown, 1998, p. 2).

Another concept salient to Shipley's discursive practice is the notion of common sense. Unlike John Key, Shipley does not overtly claim to follow a framework of common sense in governing, instead alluding to a stabilising consensus on economic issues, suggesting that there is only "much less debate" around economic affairs. She further hedges against a total acceptance of common sense by pejoratively noting the "pragmatic" line taken by the opposition. However, the success of Shipley's policy prescriptions surrounding fiscal responsibility partly rested on their consolidation with a "consensus" on the relationship between the state and citizens. This is partially negotiated by drawing an implicit link between the human needs of individuals and the management of state finances on terms agreeable to international trends, which is suggested to be unsustainable in its present form.

I argue that Shipley's articulation of "much less debate" surrounding politics marks the early stages of stabilising a market led approach to governing health and welfare spending, which is increasingly focused on balancing the needs of people against the needs of the

market. This balance also suggests an attempt to balance the imperatives of the local and global. These balances had proven incommensurable under the fourth Labour Government and marginal under Bolger in the early 1990s. However, Bolger's 'Millennium Agenda' speech delivered earlier in 1997 suggested that 'glocalisation', the simultaneous expression of globalisation and consolidation of the local was "the most significant development in democracy in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (Bolger, 1997, p. 16). The balancing act of glocalisation is an important development in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand. It suggests a new 'middle ground' logic for governing welfare through the emergence of social capital between financial and social imperatives, and the 'shadow state' or 'third sector' taking up a place between private and public services (Peters & Fitzsimons, 1999).

When Shipley lost the 1999 election the balancing act of glocalisation became crystallised in Helen Clark's Third Way. It can be argued to have partly resulted in the emergence of new discourses of unemployment, seen in the "job seeker" (by Helen Clark) and discourses of public participation in the share market seen in the "mum and dad investor" (by John Key).

#### *Jenny Shipley; Transitive Order*

The transitive order of this speech reflects the tensions outlined in the previous section. This has the effect of foregrounding and foreclosing market logics as the appropriate response to a range of existing social problems. The readings of this analysis are also supported by those of a similar nature on the CSFR where the representation of individuals sits uncomfortably next to those of collectives (Tuffin, Morgan, Frewin, & Jardine, 2000). This is represented in 'The Way Ahead' through an attempt to define which issues fall within the purview of state responsibility and which do not. The analyses below present a reading of several passages from the speech that reveal the nature of 'choice' to be simultaneously enabling and constraining in favour of market logics.

There are five actions represented in the passage below, each with grammatical variations ascribed to them:

The Government will be creating opportunities next year for New Zealanders to be involved in this debate. We also need to remember that the 'Government' is you and I. And we have personal choices and political choices.

The first, “creating” is represented as having a material outcome in that “New Zealanders” are the goal of action. In this way “New Zealanders” becomes an abstract object around which political work is oriented. The second action of “involved” is directly related to the first, but there is no transfer of agency from one actor to another, positioning “New Zealanders” as a homogenous collective entity who only react to Government actions. This seems somewhat incongruous with the second statement where “remember” lends both actors (the Government and New Zealanders) a human quality. This marks a distinction between actions that have an effect on the world and those that do not. This phenomenon is apparent elsewhere in speech, where “we” (appearing 45 times in total) is associated with choice and mental or material processes attached to the Government; it is constrained in these situations by a dualism or list of abstractions that follow it, such as “personal choices and political choices”. The passage above can thus be argued to represent a view of reality where the Government frames and constrains the nature of choice. This contrasts with how other actors in the speech are represented, who carry out action only in limited and foreclosed ways, as in the case of “New Zealanders”. This contrast in the representation sits awkwardly with Shipley’s overall message of individual and family responsibility.

Similarly, a number of other passages within the speech are concerned with the tension of balancing apparently mutually exclusive economic and welfare concerns. This reveals the way human activities or needs are deactivated or activated, “represented statistically, as if they were entities...[or] dynamic processes” (van Leeuwen, 1995, p. 93). In the passage below, for example, the social practices associated with health care are replaced by their cost: “Even the Labour Opposition recognises an extra billion dollars on health is not the solution to the insatiable demand for health care”. One consequence of this representation is to lower the importance of health spending relative to other policy areas in the speech. The assumption appears to be that as demand for health care is “insatiable” there is no point in spending lots of money meeting peoples’ needs. Further to this, the representation of health care as a statistic also allows it to be labelled and classified, abstracting its human imperatives into a simple matter of funding.



Similar patterns can be detected in repayment of debt, which appears immediately after issues of health care in Shipley's speech: "Debt repayment is a key issue. We can't walk away from the debt we have accumulated over the last two decades". The cost of debt repayment is represented metonymically through volitional material actions and human agency rather than the exchange of arranged sums of money. The act of not repaying debt is replaced by action of not walking away. This has the effect of lending debt repayment a human quality, in contrast with the statements around healthcare.

I argue that the effect of substituting human need with money and money with human behaviour by metonymy is to represent issues of debt repayment on a more legitimate plane than those of health spending. Health care is represented as a simple case of money while debt repayment is suggested to contain a degree of human importance. This could be suggested to reflect the tensions around glocalisation outlined earlier.

These grammatical distinctions are significant because they frame the quality of the policy backdrop that Shipley developed. They construct a particular view of the health care and debt which is ideologically informed. Shipley's framing of health and economic affairs as a dualism in tension, in parallel with the overt construction of the personal and the political obfuscates alternative constructions of these domains. They are represented as mutually exclusive rather than overlapping and dependent on one another. This reading of tension and mutual exclusivity partly illustrates the discursive framing of the fourth National Government's application of market logic to the welfare state.

### *Discussion and Summary*

Jenny Shipley's speech covers some of the broad aims her Government would pursue in the term from 1997 until 1999, when Shipley would lose the general election. These were organised around the continuing removal of state funded welfare entitlements, underpinned by conservative conceptions of community and family life, representing a tension between state intervention and the freedom offered by markets.

The discursive order of Shipley's speech shows an attempt to shift away from the communitarian mode of government under Bolger and instead assumes a framework of responsibility based increasingly on individual relations. This is in addition to the representation of monetary policy as a growing "consensus", tentatively marking a

beginning of the representation of apolitical approaches to governing apparent under the following two Governments. The suggestion by Shipley that “New Zealanders like winning” revealed a strong construction of people as entrepreneurial subjects, supporting the assumption that competition is a necessary component of society.

However Shipley’s time as prime minister is labelled, the tensions within her rule appeared insurmountable. It is recognised that Shipley’s libertarian leanings meant that mainstream political engagement would reach lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender voters for the first time (Hayward, 2004). However, conservative articulations around family responsibility, crystallised in the CFSR, suggested a degree of state intervention and “social engineering” in family life (Angus & Brown, 1998, p. 2).

A number of theoretical observations can be attributed to both the analysis of “The Way Ahead” and to Shipley’s mode of government more generally. Her limited claims to common sense mark a decidedly Gramscian turn for the politics of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand. The articulation of market logics as a growing “consensus” could be regarded as a fledgling hegemonic form, marked by its relative lack of interdiscursivity and intertextuality when compared with the rhetoric of Lange or Bolger. Previous leaders negotiated relatively foreign ideological territory in the isolated conditions of 1980s New Zealand while future Prime Ministers increasingly grapple with how best to harness New Zealand’s market position in global networks.

The social policy backdrop to Shipley’s speech is a fairly obvious indicator that the Government was still committed to rolling-back core parts of the welfare state, continuing the destructive approach initiated over ten years earlier by the fourth Labour Government. However, Shipley’s time as Prime Minister also saw an increased emphasis on social capital. Though not referenced directly, it is implicit in the suggestion that “to do well New Zealanders need to look after themselves and each other”, as a place holder for the welfare state. The theoretical specificity of Shipley’s Government thus lies in the simultaneous destruction of the welfare state and the somewhat tendential construction of market led combinations of political logics like social capital. Neo-liberalisation under Shipley’s Government in some ways marks what Brenner and Theodore (2008) call ‘actually existing neo-liberalism’, characterised by the concurrent or even simultaneous destruction and construction of logics for governing.

### **3.3 Conclusion: Fourth National Government; 1990-1999**

The fourth National Government is sometimes recognised as marking a punitive turn in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand (Crothers, 2000; Mulgan, 2004). This followed an already painful period of structural adjustment in New Zealand's economy from the early 1980s, initiated by a mixture of international affairs and ideological imperatives in the Government and public service. Some evidence does tend to support this claim: the removal of compulsory unionism, the withdrawal of the universal family benefit, an increase in age for the youth wage, the establishment of a purchaser provider split in health care and the replacement of unemployment, sickness, invalids, and domestic purposes benefit with a 'community wage', to name but a few examples (Kelsey, 1991).

However, a closer examination of both Bolger's and Shipley's discursive action suggests that there were some contradictions to this. Bolger, for example, deploys a range of positions which take the community as a point of departure for policy formulation. While somewhat utopian, his images of the cooperative and harmonious "decent society" are supported by some strong state institutions, not dissimilar to the civilising project exalted by Adam Smith. This includes a strong justice system, free education (including tertiary), and extensive public healthcare (Muller, 1993). Bolger's communitarian approach departs from a concern that the economic pressures brought on by the fourth Labour Government's reforms were driving middle class families into hardship while poorer families could scarcely afford to exist. The communitarian response is to support parents into 'self-help' frameworks of raising families. This can be argued to rebound in favour of neo-liberalisation through an early and partially complete emphasis on social capital and self-responsibility as the currency for a cohesive society.

Shipley articulates a number of discursive resources based on competition and family relations. This marks a slight turn away from Bolger's communitarianism, deploying competition and a more complete conception of social capital as a cohesive component of society over duty and a debt to the community. However, the development of the Code of Social and Family Responsibility in 1998 marked a turning point for social capital, arguably resulting in a more inclusive approach to market led governing revolving around education

and Government partnerships with private institutions (Wolch, 1990), similar to Helen Clark's Third Way. As a result, the development of the CFSR at this juncture can be taken to reflect a couple of broad concerns.

Firstly, as Wallace (2000, p. 165) suggests, the 'Code' reflects a liberal tension between libertarian and conservative values, characteristic of broader styles of government ushered in by MMP several years earlier. This might be traced to the relatively conservative nature of Shipley's disaster prone coalition partner, the New Zealand First party, and the libertarian leanings of Shipley herself. This disjunction as part of neo-liberalisation is characterised by a desire to construct a moral order but contradicted by a reluctance to propagate state intervention into people's lives beyond market forces.

The 'Code' and its associated practices of government can also be argued to constitute a link with Bolger's communitarian articulation of 'globalisation', suggesting an emergent tension between the establishment of an increasingly global order and the subsequent adjustment of the nation state as a civil society. This was raised initially by Jim Bolger in 1997 under the title 'From Welfare to Wellbeing' (also the title of the Ministry of Social Development paper from 1994 in a similar vein) and again by Clark in 1998 (Davey, 2000). Shipley too, in her opening speech to parliament in 1999, would specifically reference Tony Blair's Government in support of a welfare regime based on support and market participation in a globalised environment:

There are very strong similarities with the work being undertaken by the Blair Government...Most people want to work. We want to help them, and we are doing just that. (Shipley, 1999)

The fourth National Government thus occupies a pivotal moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand. It spans a period of reform marked in the beginning by a strong monetarist regime and ends in an attempt to solve some of the problems the regime generated. This was done by bringing contradictions of reform and its outcomes for citizens to the fore and recasting them in terms of responsibility and obligation, creating new tensions along the way. The problems which faced the poor and other marginalised

people were examined but not solved. This left open the possibility for yet another representation of capitalism in the Third Way and an attempt to move beyond the balance of human and market needs.

#### **4. The Fifth Labour Government, 1999-2008: The Third Way and Inclusive-Vehicular Neo-Liberalisation**

This chapter examines a speech delivered by Helen Clark during the opening of parliament in 1999. While Clark asserted an end to neo-liberalism in her speech to the London School of Economics in 2002, her failure to reject the policies of past regimes means that her Government can be argued to have softened and thus entrenched the changes of the last 15 years (Roper, 2011). However, the governing of markets under Clark was carried out in a more creative manner than in the past, rolling-out new frameworks for market participation through education and technology. The analysis of Clark's 1999 speech reflects this through an examination of discursive forms like "closing the gaps", "information-based economy", "human capital", and the "job seeker".

Helen Clark was New Zealand's first elected female Prime Minister. She took power in November 1999 and governed until 2008 when she resigned as leader of the Labour party and from parliament entirely a short while later. Her time as Prime Minister marks a local example of the 'Third Way'. This is characterised by an emphasis on the central values of social democracy, such as fairness, inclusion, and security, combined with the central tenets of free trade and market logics, endeavouring to go beyond the problems of both (Fairclough, 2000). This is primarily pursued through education and training in an attempt to 'equip' people for the harsh world of the employment market, but also focuses on the adoption of new technology, science and innovation in order to create new types of economic growth (Giddens, 1998).

Clark's time as Prime Minister emerged from the contradictions of the fourth National Government. This was driven partly by the politics of MMP. Shipley failed to keep the support of her coalition partner (the New Zealand First party) and led an increasingly fragile minority Government into the 1999 general election. After the election, the fifth Labour Government engaged in a number of policy initiatives organised around promoting participation in the "information-based economy", characteristic of the Third Way. These included interest free student loans, rural access to broadband other information

communication technology, family tax credits, an annual increase in minimum wage above the rate of inflation, and in 2004 the establishment of 'Working for Families' which aimed to support low income families "into work" (Centre for Social Research and Evaluation, 2010, p. ix). Each of these aimed to include people in society through the establishment of market relations as a part of everyday life.

The fifth Labour Government's *modus operandi* of inclusion closely resembles that of Third Way governments internationally, particularly 'new' Labour of the United Kingdom. A key component of the Third Way since the mid-1990s has been the international networking of similarly positioned Governments and political actors. This has played a key role in its establishment of the Third Way as a standard for governing in the West (Fairclough, 2000). Clark and other senior Labour party members were (and still are) part of this network, attending strategic international conferences and meetings.

The notion of a Third Way ideology is a knotty one. It has been described as too diverse and fractured to constitute an ideology in its own right (Bastow, Martin, & Pels, 2002; Freeden, 2002). The Third Way approach certainly lacks a coherent 'core' philosophy, revealed in the relatively unstable nature of the ideas its proponents deploy, drawing on concepts and values from across the political spectrum. The claim by Clark (2002) to follow the Third Way as a coherent programme of government represents a course of action not dissimilar to John Key's anti-ideological stance (examined in the following chapter). A Third Way approach to politics represents an attempt to transcend the perceived dogma of left-right dualisms, or in Gerhard Schröder's (Chancellor of Germany, 1990-1998) terms to manufacture a '*Neue Mitte*' ('new middle').

Some (Bastow et al., 2002; Fairclough, 2000) have identified a 'Third Way discourse', suggesting that while the ideas and concepts deployed by proponents of the Third Way lack a coherent core, they still have a systemic base of meaning. The Third Way discourse can be argued to constitute a loose network of ideological and discursive resources, drawn from a range of political fields like social democracy and different forms of liberalism. As such, the Third Way is a challenge to analyse. Ideas and concepts are taken up in diverse ways before being abandoned or modified to meet new challenges.

McLennan (2004) adopts a ‘vehicular’ approach to understanding the Third Way, suggesting that actors deploy ideas to move from one point to another, mediating between contradictory interests before they are abandoned or changed. According to McLennan, this is a direct contrast with an ‘oracular’ mode of ideology, characterised by a single ambiguous authority, as in conservatism or libertarianism. However, “vehicular ideas have something of the principled theory or committed ideology to them...they serve as inclusive umbrellas under which quite a range of advocates can shelter, trade and shift their alignments and allegiances” (McLennan, 2004, p. 485). I wish to highlight both the network and vehicular approaches here; a series of concepts and ideas are deployed by Clark to form a loose and mobile network of meaning. These are simple enough to be opposed yet flexible enough to be folded back into the sediment of discursive action when contradictions are exposed. This is noted particularly in Clark’s deployment of “closing the gaps” in relation to Maori *vis-à-vis* non-Maori (analysed later).

These analyses broadly support present understandings of the Third Way discourse as organised around inclusion and an assumption that markets constitute a natural social order (Giddens, 1998). However, as well as attending to the more commonly accepted features of the Third Way discourse such as the “information-based economy”, “job seeker”, and “human capital”, Clark also reveals some features specific to New Zealand. These revolve predominantly around the Treaty of Waitangi and the governing of Maori by mainstreaming ethnicity through “capacity building” in the state apparatus. This can be argued to result in a framework for self-governance, overlapping with rangatiratanga (self-determination) and rebounding in favour of self-responsibility. Each of these points is implicit in the politics of inclusion, reflected throughout Clark’s 1999 speech.



#### 4.1 Helen Clark: Speech from the Throne Opening Of Parliament, 1999

This speech reflects Clark's commitment to the Third Way. It contains a number of broad statements detailing the aims that the new Government will follow. These revolve around the Treaty of Waitangi and the support she draws from the Alliance and Green parties. She also outlines some of the Labour party's more significant policies, including the establishment of Industry New Zealand. This is to provide advice on economic development and the aim "to build a modern, progressive system of employment relations which is responsive to both human needs and the demands of a rapidly changing economy". Clark then posits a shift from "competition" to "cooperation" in the funding of healthcare, vowing to remove the frameworks of commercial imperatives governing public health systems. Finally, Clark asserts strong support for the "voluntary" sector and its role in establishing frameworks of social security in place of state funded support.

##### *Helen Clark; Discursive Order*

The order of discourse surrounding Clark's inclusive and mobile moment in the trajectory of neo-liberalisation reveals a strong emphasis on education, employment, and the Treaty of Waitangi. Clark also recognises New Zealand's position as firmly entrenched within relatively open global networks of exchange, not only in terms of trade, but also immigration, education, and communication. Thus, Clark authors her speech around these developments, while also limiting utterances through references to the failures of past Governments to take advantage of global networks:

Underlying this volatility are major structural problems which have not been addressed by the radical reforms undertaken since 1984. The current account deficit is very large, reflecting both mediocre export performance and poor levels of savings.

Despite the suggestion that the reforms of 1984 were “radical”, the suggestion that the “account deficit is very large” and the exports are “mediocre” takes much of their substance for granted. Clark is also partly authored by the apparent failings of Shipley’s attempts to dictate the relationship between family and the state. The “knowledge-based” economy (below) provides something of a strategic move towards a qualitatively different mode of political production, emphasising state supported development through education:

New Zealand’s skills production in those areas relevant to the new knowledge-based industries has been inadequate. A competitive model in tertiary education has led to unsatisfactory outcomes in terms of both the quality and the appropriateness of the skills produced.

This passage also reveals some key assumptions about New Zealand’s natural place in capitalist networks of education and innovation. The “new” economy is represented as something that New Zealand has missed and must inevitably make up for. This pattern is also discernable in Lange’s articulation of structural adjustment to global market conditions from 1987, and is established through a slippage between description and prescription. A similar pattern can be observed here. In the quote above, the state of affairs is a lack of appropriate skills as a result of an inappropriate model for education, indicating a policy prescription of establishing a new or different type of organisation for education.

This is significant because the relationship between a represented reality and policy is in some ways imaginary. It “can generate imaginary representations of how the world will be or should be within strategies for change which, if they achieve hegemony, can be operationalized to transform these imaginaries into realities” (Fairclough, 2006, p. 22). The hegemonic position of the “new knowledge-based” economy is debatable. It certainly has material effects and policy outcomes, but it is far from stabilized which can be noted in its failure to reappear when Clark’s rule comes to an end.

Clark squares the assumptions of a market governed knowledge-economy with a social democratic agenda, basing quality of life on “opportunity”, on par with most other speakers analysed in this project. However, “opportunity” in Clark’s case is linked to

education and identity: “The aim is to expand job opportunities and wealth creation based on the arts as well as to promote New Zealand’s identity”.

This is a contrast with other speakers who link “opportunity” primarily to the flexibility of labour markets. The element of “opportunity” thus comes to constitute and strengthen the “information-based” economy (elsewhere in the speech) as a nodal point, the place in the discursive order where globality, education, welfare, culture, and trade come together, albeit fleetingly.

Clark also speaks at length about the Treaty of Waitangi and inequality:

Article III of the treaty implies equality in the rights of citizenship...As long as the economic and social gaps between Maori and other New Zealanders remain large, the Government of New Zealand cannot claim to have addressed the needs of all New Zealanders. My Government is committed to closing the gaps.

“Closing the gaps” for Clark’s Government is predominantly concerned with the role of education and training, thus providing the “opportunity” to work and reducing poverty. Clark’s conceptions of the Treaty of Waitangi and its significance to New Zealand are not altogether different from Palmer’s suggestions of its institutionalisation. However, the Treaty in this case becomes a nodal point in its own right, something that could not be said of Palmer’s articulation. Palmer’s arguments for institutionalising the Treaty clashed with some of the more significant market led government action at the time. Under Clark, the Treaty is equated with an overall approach to government, including social welfare, education, employment, ethnicity, and belonging, all of which fit within the inclusive approach of Clark’s Third Way.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Clark’s speech is the declaration that her Government recognises the problems surrounding the market led policy of the last 15 years, but then constructs a much wider and more general set of discourses which take these structures as a natural social order. The declaration of a commitment to “pragmatic

change in the interests of the many” reveals a shift in the direction of consensus within market logics. Through the failures and inconsistencies generated by the fourth Labour and National Governments, the mode of government can be argued to have shifted tack towards an inclusive moment in neo-liberalisation, rolling out mechanisms for induction into market functions. The “pragmatic” approach also points to the now stabilised nature of market logics, taking them one step further than Shipley’s somewhat cautious approach of “much less debate” surrounding economic development.

Clark’s 1999 speech thus represents part of a break from past leaders. Destructive neo-liberalisation encountered a number of issues under Shipley, where leadership, policy, and future aims appeared increasingly incongruous to lived experience. This was particularly apparent around the Code of Family and Social Responsibility, the moral construction of families as self-dependent and individuals as entrepreneurial. Clark’s nodal point of the “knowledge-based” economy, under which a number of further assumptions of education, welfare, and identity become possible, can be read as a response to Shipley’s moral mode of government. The elements of discourse in Clark’s speech also echo those deployed in international contexts by other Third Way actors (like Tony Blair, discussed later), though some remain specific to New Zealand in relation to the Treaty of Waitangi.

#### *Helen Clark; Discursive Practice*

While Clark draws her discursive material from mainly economic concerns, she also articulates issues related to the Treaty of Waitangi, youth affairs, education, environmental protection and management, the arts, and employment. In each of these areas, Clark suggests her Government will follow what appears on the surface to be a social democratic approach, including state intervention in a range of areas considered at present to be governed by market forces. The articulations within these areas of policy reveal Clark’s ‘inclusive’ approach at its most basic level. However, as this analysis shows the discursive resources Clark draws upon create a range of tensions and inconsistencies that do not necessarily overlap with wider commitments to social justice. This reveals the vehicular, temporary, and often mediating (McLennan, 2004) nature of Clark’s ideas. These include

terms such as “closing the gaps”, “human capital”, the “new” knowledge economy, and “job seeker”, each travelling with a range of ideological elements attached. Perhaps the most obvious effects of this are revealed by “closing the gaps”:

These measures will be structured around an overall programme of capacity assessment and capacity building which will be central to closing the gaps in a way consistent with Treaty obligations. Closing the gaps for Maori and improving the nation’s overall health status means tackling the poverty and associated illnesses

“Closing the gaps” was a phrase adopted by the Labour Party before the election. It was abandoned just one year into the coalition’s first term after attacks from within Parliament and the public: it was labelled by Winston Peters as ‘social apartheid’ (New Zealand First Party, 2000). The term gives rise to a degree of ambiguity because of the different contexts and discourses it was deployed in, intersecting social justice, the Treaty of Waitangi, and social cohesion (Humpage & Fleras, 2001). At least in its infancy it implied a socio-economic gap. But as the passages above show, the content of the term is left open and mobile, revealing a number of interpretations and limitations.

One possible understanding of “closing the gaps” is the way the gap is cast specifically as a Maori problem, as an issue of under accumulation vis-à-vis others. To this end, any policy formulation or structural adjustment is done so on the terms of the dominant group, and it can be argued that this fails to fundamentally challenge the systemic basis of inequality, based on a mixture of institutional disadvantage and normative cultural assumptions around the nature of success. The drive to induct people into health and employment systems as a way of “closing the gaps” is exemplary of Clark’s inclusive approach to government.

While the label of “closing the gaps” was dropped, the policy content remained fairly consistent. This included a greater emphasis on including Maori people, customs, and knowledge in state departments, referred to as “capacity building”. This was partly an “emphasis on strengthening governance, human capital, and infrastructure, so indigenous peoples can govern themselves and determine their own path of development” (Humpage

& Fleras, 2001, p. 49). While this could not be labelled as an overt attempt at decentralising the state, the adoption of rangatiratanga (self-determination) as a logic for “capacity building” rebounds by creating a framework of self-governance and thus a reduced role for the state.

Clark also makes references to the nature of the employment market. Once again, this marks a divergence from previous speakers through its inclusive nature and also through a casting of workers as “capital”. This marks a contrast with Lange’s attention to the “livelihoods” of people which were represented as dependent on the labour market in his 1987 speech. Clark asserts that:

Central to the new information-based economy which is emerging is the growth of human capital. We need to improve substantially both the quality and the nature of the skills that our people possess.

The concept of “human capital” emerged from the work of Adam Smith's economics as a popular object of interest for economists in the 1960s, in tandem with the rise of free market economics (Ayers, 2005). More recent utterances like Clark’s tend to link the term to the ‘knowledge economy’ (seen here as the “information-based economy”) as a means of measuring human agency against economic performance. In the simplest interpretation, “human capital” casts workers as a resource on which to draw, as “a mere factor of production” (Harvey, 2005, p. 167). In this sense, the value of a human may vary depending on the extent of their inclusion in networks of knowledge, education, and training. This is revealed in Clark’s speech through an overwhelming emphasis on the politics of inclusion (in education, healthcare, technology, and the arts, for example) rather than of poverty or exclusion (mentioned only twice). This is identifiable in the Third Way globally, through professions to go beyond a simple redistribution of resources to a recognition that redistribution has problems of itself that need to be overcome, as if the two are mutually exclusive. Generally the assumption is that the problems of redistribution can be overcome through education, so that people are simply ‘worth more’ and will not require state support (Fairclough, 2000).

This approach to governing labour conditions is reflected in several of the Labour Government's employment policies. For example, the 'Modern Apprenticeships Initiative' of 2000 assisted young people with basic trades training and qualifications. It aimed to "make it easy for employers to recruit and train talented young people and provide them with an opportunity to gain a nationally recognised qualification" (Tertiary Education Commission, 2009). Similarly, the extension of broadband and ICT resources to remote rural areas was underpinned by a desire to expand educational resources to those who previously had no or limited access to them, thus expanding "human capital" through networks of communication and knowledge.

Another concept related to "human capital" is the recasting of the unemployed as "job-seekers". The "job-seeker" sees the crystallisation of entrepreneurial subjects established under earlier speakers, like Mike Moore's "battler". It suggests a degree of self-responsibility for participation in the employment market. For example, if one's "human capital" is not sufficiently developed, then one faces the possibility of exclusion, as Harvey (2005, p. 157) notes:

If conditions among the lower classes deteriorated, this was because they failed, usually for personal and cultural reasons, to enhance their own human capital (through dedication to education, the acquisition of a Protestant work ethic, submission to work discipline and flexibility, and the like).

The "job-seeker" is thus more than entrepreneurial, and comes endowed with a number of obligations and needs to go with rights of state support:

Individual needs for job-seekers will be identified through new programmes which will ensure quality case management. It is the intention to ensure that no young person leaves school to go on the dole.

At the most basic level, this passage points to a range of assumptions that underpin the treatment of the unemployed as compelled to engage with society on an economically

productive level. People are to become entrepreneurs of their own employment to avoid going “on the dole”. In order to achieve this the “job-seeker” is assumed to have a range of duties: training, attending interviews, extolling one’s employable virtues and flexibility in relation to workplace practice, meeting with benefit case managers, and so on (Fodge, 2008). The position of the “job-seeker” is thus imbued with a degree of self-governance to the point where it takes on an identity of its own, producing a range of regulatory procedures, expectations, and practices that go beyond simple unemployment (Fodge, 2008). These readings of the “job-seeker” are supported and reflected by the wholesale rebranding of unemployment undertaken by new Labour in the United Kingdom, outlined shortly.

The recasting of unemployment in terms of job-seeking reflects a shift in the state’s role of regulating unemployment. Job-seeking is cast as the responsibility of the individual with a degree of support from the state. It follows through regulatory practice that to claim a state benefit and not engage in job-seeking practice is to reject support and to be labelled deviant (terms like “dole bludger” or “waster” are all too common in relation to unemployment). By extension, the discourse of the job-seeker can also be argued to contain some notion risk of management, where state investment in “human capital” should see some kind of return. This can be seen as a mediating factor which both minimises the impact on scarce public funds and enhances the seeker’s chance of gaining employment, thereby contributing to the economic well-being of the country. While not directly related to unemployment, this is exemplified in the fifth Labour Government’s establishment of interest free student loans for tertiary education.

The discourse of the job-seeker is not new or unique to New Zealand. It first made its appearance under Clark’s Government through a structural review of key benefits, including the re-separation of the sickness and unemployment benefits. It was also deployed by Michael Cullen (a senior member of the fifth Labour Government) in 1993, suggesting the futility of entrepreneurial action against market forces in “a fruitless round of job-seeking and door-knocking” (Cullen, 1993).

The concept of the job-seeker is also associated with Tony Blair’s ‘New Labour’ regime in the United Kingdom, which engaged in a wholesale re-branding of unemployment support.



This included the name of the benefit ('Job-Seekers' Allowance') and offices ('Job Centre Plus'). Indeed, the "job-seeker" can be recognised as a microcosm of the relative mobility of Third Way discourses globally. Interdiscursivity and intertextuality are salient here. A key characteristic that Fairclough (2000) notes of the Third Way is the extent to which policies and practices are justified explicitly against international events with similar ideological features. That is, followers of the Third Way draw on each other for ideological and discursive support. The "job-seeker" thus represents a case for a degree of change, supporting the point that Clark's articulations represent part of a wider break in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand, towards a more creative approach to government characterised by a roll-out of new combinations of political and market logics.

In sum, we might recognise Clark's articulations as distinct type of Third Way discourse. It is informed in particular by the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi, but also more generally by an emergent and mobile discourse of an international Third Way, noting the influences of Tony Blair and the Third Way 'network' (Fairclough, 2000). The relatively high instances of interdiscursivity and intertextuality, drawn predominantly from Anglophone discourses of the Third Way in the United Kingdom suggest a slight change of direction for neo-liberalisation in New Zealand. However, both "closing the gaps" and the "job-seeker" can be argued to represent a failure to fundamentally challenge the reforms carried out by prior Governments (Roper, 2011). The Third Way approach taken by the fifth Labour Government seeks to realise human needs within established market norms. There are however some contradictions to this trend, which are revealed through the analysis of Clark's grammatical representations.

#### *Helen Clark: Transitive Order*

The transitive order of this speech reveals some implicit assumptions surrounding the position of Maori and markets in relation to inequality in New Zealand. I noted in previous paragraphs that inequality was recognised through a deficit approach, as a problem of a lack of accumulation by Maori vis-à-vis others, as in the quote analysed earlier:

As long as the economic and social gaps between Maori and other New Zealanders remain large, the Government of New Zealand cannot claim to have addressed the needs of all New Zealanders. My Government is committed to closing the gaps

The effect of problematizing Maori is achieved through a range of strategies. The most obvious of these is the way “Maori” as an abstract classifying category is used to refer to people. On the one hand, it is a relatively specific referential practice, suggesting a distinct group with a coherent collective identity, while “other New Zealanders” can refer to a bewildering array of people. Conversely, a common critique levelled at the New Zealand state and Government (both predominantly Pakeha dominated institutions) is the paternalistic and homogenous approach to policy regarding often specific interests of regionalised iwi, and a failure to distinguish between different tribal and sub-tribal groups (Bell, 2004).

The construction of a Maori deficit is further revealed throughout the speech; the deployment of “Maori” never appears in conjunction with any specific person or action. Maori are simply cast passively in poverty, contracting disease, and lacking vis-à-vis others. The impetus for action is located solely with the Government, as in “My Government is committed to closing the gaps”. This arguably marks a contradiction with the inclusive approach to rule and self-governance postulated in this speech and elsewhere.

Another feature of note in this speech is Clark’s representation of the “market”. This concerns a combination of managed and free market principles. The term “market” appears five times in this speech, three times in ways fitting a managed approach and twice in ways consistent with a free market agenda:

My Government recognises that simply relying upon market forces will not deliver these changes.

Legislation will be introduced to abolish the private insurance market for statutory accident compensation provision.

It is important that we do not forget that social security was a systematic answer to the failure of purely market-based or voluntary responses.

Centres will be established to enable graduate students and staff, whose work has commercial relevance, to prepare their work for transfer to the marketplace.

These moves will, over time, reduce the pressure on the low income end of the private rental market thus reducing the rate of increase in spending.

In the first three extracts above, the “market” is recognised as something that can be affected in its totality through human intervention. “Recognises”, for example, emphasises human agency and mental processes. The “Government” is lent a human quality in order to distance it from its supposed antithesis (the market) and to give it material grounding. The action “recognises” is also volitional and active, while for other speakers many actions concerning the market are non-volitional and solely reactive. This has the effect of emphasising Government power over market forces. Similarly, in the second passage the action of “abolish” is totalizing. The question ‘why would the market do that?’ is irrelevant as the answer is readily foreclosed in the action of the Government, suggesting a degree of influence over the market.

In the third passage, the market is recognised as a deficient answer to a range of human needs. The reasons why this failure might have occurred are replaced by the noun “failure”. The market has no tangible action and the Government is represented as responding in a “systematic” (suggesting calculation and rationality) manner. This suggests that a range of interventions are both possible and desirable.

The last two passages present something of a contrast. In the fourth passage, for example, the “market-place” is recognised as an *a priori* object, a natural order for the dissemination of knowledge and research. This is achieved through the use of “transfer” as a noun; the transfer has no actual effect on the market because it occurs in a contingent space in the future (it has not actually occurred yet). What happens to the knowledge after it reaches the market is to be left to the forces which are presumed to determine its price and function. The volition of the actors who are represented (teachers and students) is limited by the market place, thus constructing the market as an abstract entity unto itself rather than the sum of its participants. Similarly, in the final passage, a distinct image of the housing market is constructed through the representation of its forces in relation to human agency. The market is naturalised by the incomplete nature of the nominalization “reducing pressure”. The action of “reducing”, apart from taking place in a contingent space where it is impossible to say what drives the reduction, is also limited; its effect on the market is not complete and can thus be taken to represent the limits of human agency against the tumultuous nature of market forces.

The transitive order of these passages represents something of a microcosm of Clark’s Third Way. The mobile nature of her ideas is apparent at the discursive and transitive levels. Within the space of a couple of paragraphs the structure and semantics surrounding the “market” shifts in different directions, highlighting first its malleability and then the inevitability of its forces. Similarly with “closing the gaps”, the ‘gap’ in relation to Maori only functions for a marginal part of Clark’s overall speech. The referential and foregrounding practices of “Maori” reveal the extent to which the ‘gap’ is less an object of social policy and more a concept used to travel a little further along the road to market inclusion on the grounds of ethnicity and market cosmopolitanism.

## 4.2 Discussion and Conclusion

The speech titled “Speech From The Throne Opening Of Parliament” delivered by Helen Clark early in 1999 marked the beginning of a local iteration of the Third Way (Giddens, 1998). This is characterised by a synthesis of market logic and social democratic values in an attempt to go beyond the problems of both. However, this approach has been criticised for taking the central tenets of free markets for granted, thus perpetuating their more pervasive effects, such as the structural inequality which results from market competition (Fairclough, 2000). Advocates of the Third Way, like Helen Clark, endeavour to overcome these problems by ‘equipping’ people for the harsh world of markets, often through education and technology.

The analysis of Clark’s speech focused on three key terms. Firstly, “closing the gaps” revealed an assumption that the “gap” (indicating an unequal distribution of money, knowledge and health) was a Maori problem of under-accumulation vis-à-vis others. This reading of the deficit model was supported in the transitive analysis through an examination of the ways that Maori are represented as passive in comparison to an active Government. Secondly, I examined the concept of the “job-seeker”, which was seen to invite a degree of self-governance, compelling particular types of regulatory behaviour in relation to employment market participation. The “job-seeker” also highlights some fairly obvious parallels with developments in New Labour Third Way of the United Kingdom.

Finally, I examined the concept of “human capital” and its relationship with the “new” type of economics which Clark avers to follow. This noted the way humans are positioned as a “mere factor of production” (Harvey, 2005, p. 167) in the “new” knowledge economy. It was argued that this in itself is not “new”, though the ways in which those deploying it actively seek to include people in the employment market marks a break from previous speakers. This was noted in the arguably destructive phases of earlier neo-liberalisations, where frameworks for inclusion, like the welfare state, were simply removed in an attempt to ‘incentivise’ people into work. Under Clark’s Third Way approach, a number of ‘creative’ frameworks replace this and governmental tools (like the “job-seeker” and a number of education and training schemes) actively induct people into the employment market.

While it is quite clear that this speech marks a departure from previous moments of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand, it is with caution that I advance any kind of unifying conclusion as to the impact of the Third Way on continued neo-liberalisation and market logic as a coherent framework for governing. The evidence from the analysis in this chapter suggests that the entrenchment and development of market logics continued under Clark, albeit in more mobile and shifting ways. A number of policy manoeuvres outlined in Clark's speech challenged some of the previous Governments' rhetoric, but did not fundamentally reshape the discursive order or the challenge New Zealand's place as a market society, as she would argue in her 2002 speech to the London School of Economics (Clark, 2002).

By way of conclusion, I offer some basic observations surrounding Clark's position in the trajectory of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand as well as some theoretical pointers by returning to McLennan's (2004) notion of vehicular ideology. As noted in the introduction, Clark's speech can be argued to mark an "inclusive" (Craig & Porter, 2003, p. 54) moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand. This is characterised by a loose aggregate of catchwords and phrases and associated ideas like "job-seeker", "human capital", and "closing the gaps". I argue that these are used for limited purposes and then either abandoned or re-worked in light of previous contradictions, which is a direct contrast with the more 'oracular' or prophetic properties of previous ideological forms (like Bolger's communitarianism or Palmer's technocracy). For example, "closing the gaps" as a narrative for social welfare was abandoned just one year into the Labour coalition's first term, though much of its policy content remained in the form of training incentives for employees and other state supported education frameworks like interest free student loans.

The vehicular nature of ideological forms theorised by McLennan (2004) are more than temporally mobile, they also mobile in their meanings. The "market", as discussed through the transitive order of Clark's 1999 speech, represents a microcosm of this and the way the Third Way in New Zealand operates more generally. The signifier of the "market" changes several times, first in a pejorative sense to describe the policies of the opposition, then to naturalise the functions of cycles of employment, and finally to describe Labour's approach to international export policies. This use of "market" extends an understanding of mobility

in limited ways. McLennan (2004, p. 485) argues that these networks of shifting and unstable meaning are somewhat self-sustaining: “it is not just that they are shaped by mobile cultural networks; the rubric and rhetoric themselves play a key role in constituting these networks”.

Similarly, through a vehicular lens, “human capital” and “job seeker” each take on a mediating role, solving the problems encountered in earlier representations of the employment market, centred as they were on the concerns of employers and market forces. The “job-seeker”, for example, can be constructed as a way of overcoming the positioning of the unemployed as passive recipients of state support, as ‘bludgers’ as the stigma would have it, instead endowing them with a degree of agency and empowerment. Similarly, the “information-based economy” can be taken to represent a response to the rapid decline in manufacturing and blue collar work experienced in New Zealand over the last 20 years and “moving things on” to suggest a different mode of production (McLennan, 2004, p. 485).

If we regard the Third Way as part of “a vehicular nomenclature” (McLennan, 2004, p. 486) rather than a systematic theory of government, the array of catch phrases and shifting ideas become somewhat clearer. Clark’s version of neo-liberalisation, under the heading of the Third Way, can be more than just inclusive. Its nature is constructed by the very mobility of the ideas deployed and its flexibility to absorb criticism back into a matrix of shifting ideological forms. One might, with a nod to McLennan, label it ‘inclusive-vehicular neo-liberalisation’.

## **5. The Fifth National Government, 2008-2013: The Private Regulation of Public Space and the Market Ideology**

This chapter examines a speech delivered by Prime Minister John Key in 2011. The ‘State of the Nation’ speech lays out the fifth National Government’s concern on a range of economic issues. The analyses note a range of features which position Key at the end of two decades of often contradictory and unstable market led rule. In addition to this, Key pursues his own distinct agenda which is often represented as apolitical, representing market forces as an ideological logic for governing in themselves, marking a break with previous speakers.

The fifth National Government was elected in 2008 with coalition support from the Maori, United Future, and Act Parties. John Key took the seat of Prime Minister under the utopian campaign narrative of building “a brighter future”. The new coalition followed the defeat of Helen Clark’s Labour Government, which had come under fire due to a large budget deficit partly bought on by the increasingly challenging conditions of international finance. By 2008, this had developed into what most agreed to be a global recession, exposing a number of contradictions, inadequacies, and flaws in market logic as a basis for public management. However, in keeping with advice from the World Bank, IMF, and OECD, the new Government allowed the deficit to reach “record levels” and thus implemented a range of policies around cutting public sector costs as an emergency measure (Roper, 2011, p. 13).

While Clark professed to end neo-liberalism in New Zealand in 2002, her Government failed to fundamentally challenge the basis of 20 years of reform. Clark’s inclusive ethos thus softened but also entrenched the diverse market logics of the last two decades (Roper, 2011). On winning the election, Key challenged Clark’s inclusive approach to rule, emphasising the importance of the private sector and small businesses for economic growth. Key’s response to the economic crisis of 2008 and thus his position in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand is a particularly important one. Through the 2008 crisis, the dominant mode of social and political organisation faced a degree of criticism and resistance (noted in the global “Occupy” movement, for example). The overwhelming



response to recession by the National led Government was to further pursue market logic as a fundamental basis for governing.

A few key policy platforms have dominated the fifth National Government's two terms as of early 2013. The increased privatisation of state-owned companies was announced early in Key's second term. This was labelled a "mixed ownership model" and involves the public sale of shares in Mighty River Power, Meridian Energy, Genesis Energy, Solid Energy, and Air New Zealand. In December 2008, a 90 day 'hire and fire' bill was implemented, allowing employers of 20 people or less to fire new employees within 90 days without notice or reason (Tait, 2008). This was represented as encouraging businesses to take on new employees with reduced risk. On October 1<sup>st</sup> 2010, the flat goods and service tax (originally introduced in 1986 under David Lange) increased from 12.5 to 15 per cent. At the time of writing, the Government was also negotiating a number of free trade agendas behind closed doors. These are labelled the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement, which aims to liberalise a number of economies in the Pacific region. The Government has also established charter schools and privately run prisons on a trial basis, and in May 2013 the youth wage is to be re-introduced at \$11 per-hour (the previous minimum was \$13.75) for workers aged under 19.

In general, the fifth National Government's approach to rule has been market led and represented as pragmatic. This was partly achieved through the discursive work of several senior members of the National party, but also through events like the return of Don Brash to politics in 2011 (Phelan, 2012). Brash, an ex-leader of the National party (2003-2006), returned to parliament by rolling the leader of the market radical Act Party, Rodney Hide, and publically repudiating Key and the National party. As Phelan (2012) notes, this enabled Key and his Government to relegate Brash's radical ideology to the periphery of politics, thus representing their own position as a moderate one. Similarly, the financial crisis of 2008 lent a degree of urgency to a number of market led policies (like increased privatisation), which aligned with the National party's existing philosophies.

This chapter examines Key's discourses of neo-liberalisation in some detail, noting their cultural and historical features as well as some of their impacts in relation to the stabilisation of market logics in New Zealand. It concludes by suggesting that Key

represents a potentially profound moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand through his self-claimed 'anti-ideological' position, arguably resulting in the establishment of a rigid market ideology as a rubric for governing.

## **5.1 John Key: State of the Nation, 2011**

This speech is delivered in an election year after a relatively stable term from 2008. The most dramatic change represented in this speech is the partial privatization of a number of state owned enterprises. The broad aims of Key's Government are organised around generating a socio-political environment conducive to private enterprise, which "ostensibly aimed at creating greater prosperity for all" (Roper, 2011, p. 13). Indeed, this speech might be better framed as the "State of the Economy", indicating the discursive effects of the 2008 financial crisis.

The speech begins by noting that Key will predominantly focus on the economy as the lynch pin for tackling existing crises in employment, wages, and property value. Before noting some of his more significant policies, Key suggests that if they are not taken up then "we risk missing the boat", referring to a fall back into recession. This marks something of a parallel with strategies deployed by both David Lange and Helen Clark in relation to their respective reforms of the employment market as having no viable alternative. Key then briefly outlines the backdrop his Government is working from, suggesting that the Treasury were "projecting no end to budget deficits" when he first took office. The speech goes on to outline a largely pro-business framework, aimed at furthering economic development and "balancing" the Government books "more quickly". This aim also precipitated the entry of credit rating agencies into the political lexicon of New Zealand, a feature on which Key's market ideology is partly based.

The overwhelming bulk of the speech is dedicated to detailing and justifying supply side economic planning:

We hauled back new budget spending allowances and reduced the size of the bureaucracy...We have progressed an ambitious free trade agenda. And we introduced a number of regulatory changes to make it easier to do business.

These utterances are partially built on the assumptions of economic success constructed during the prior 27 years of change, focused on removing bureaucracy and creating conditions conducive to profit. One could argue that following the ‘vehicular’ (McLennan, 2004) mediation undertaken by Helen Clark surrounding the problems of inequality in free markets, Key is in a position which allows the wholesale articulation of market freedom and fiscal restraint as a matter of pragmatic government. The fact that the “free trade agenda” is “ambitious” is apparently not cause for concern and marks an appearance of market logics in their most complete form of the speakers examined thus far. The passage above could be constructed as a crystallised articulation of Jenny Shipley’s “much less debate as to how modern economies work”. Similarly, David Lange spoke at length on removing bureaucracy in 1987, outlining the various ways in which this could benefit the economy. For Key, there is neither debate nor elaboration. The conditions which result from free trade and removing bureaucracy are supposed to be self-evident, arguably marking an articulation of market logics in their most naturalised form yet.

The construction of apolitical government (below) supports the stabilisation of market logics. While other authors proclaim “pragmatic” (Helen Clark) or “responsible” (Mike Moore) government, Key is the only speaker to openly react against ideology, despite his opening paragraphs declaring a utopian future of opportunity and prosperity based on production and investment: “In particular, I want to stress that the Government is interested in what works, not in following any particular ideology”.

This can be argued to reflect Terry Eagleton's (1991, p. 2) suggestion that ideology is like "bad breath"; it is always the property of the other. In this sense, Key's logic can be argued to reflect not only the tendency to represent certain policy outcomes as inevitable, but also the late capitalist condition where much broader patterns of discursive production and consumption are dominated by disavowals of ideology (Phelan, 2012). In some ways, this can be related to technocratic discourses like Palmer's. Key's disavowal of ideology is linked to an increasingly apparent influence of expert and empiricist government, noted in his deployment of the credit rating agency Standard and Poor as a justification for pursuing fiscal balance (discussed shortly).

This is a significant observation because it represents a new moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand that suggests yet another shift, both for the state apparatus and for ideology. In this speech, the shift is partly characterised by a reaction against the 'inclusive' policies of the fifth Labour Government, noted particularly in relation to a fiscal deficit. Phelan (2012, p. 16) argues that moves like this are concerned more with a "marketing" strategy or "product placement" in relation to oppositional ideological forms. For example, the 2008 recession exposed a number of problems around public spending which allowed Key to position his approach of taking "responsible decisions" and pursuing "an ambitious free trade agenda" as congruous with prevailing market conditions and that "any party that wants to ramp up spending is being economically irresponsible".

Key's apolitical and anti-ideological position is also partly achieved through the use of entrepreneurialism as a placeholder for share market participation and privatisation. Key makes clear that to be engaged in his expansion of free market activity one should join the ranks of entrepreneurialism, indicated by the well-recognised shibboleth "mum and dad investor" and the resulting deployment of market logics as a rubric for social life:

I can see a strong appetite from New Zealand investors for participation in a mixed ownership model. Between KiwiSaver, other managed funds, iwi, mum and dad investors and the Government's own investment arms – including the Super Fund – there is a very substantial capacity to invest in quality New Zealand assets.

This is arguably indicative of what Gramsci (1992) termed the contradictory consciousness, a component of the hegemonic maintenance of a balance between coercion and consent and the “illusory nature of self-determination in capitalist societies” (Roper, 2011, p. 15). Here the anti-ideological position which Key articulates takes on a much more historically pertinent meaning. In Key’s rejection of the politics of ideology he is authored almost completely by the politics of market exchange. In distancing himself from ideology in this manner, Key represents a moment in neo-liberalisation where market logics become embedded almost beyond recognition, as a prosaic formation of rules and regulations for the practices of governing.

“Invest” or “investment”, for example, are mentioned 30 times throughout the speech: they are attached to a range of interests from the attraction of foreign capital to the provision of social security through a broadening of peoples’ assets. This is particularly apparent in the context of purchasing shares in state owned enterprises and suggests a shift in the inclusive nature of neo-liberalisation. Under this change, the responsibility of the state lies not in compelling participation on the grounds of citizenship and education as it did for Helen Clark, but in developing an entire set of market inclusions for those with sufficient ability or capital to engage them. This was crystallised in 2012 when a \$1000 minimum buy-in was established for the purchase of shares in soon-to-be privatised state owned enterprises.

Similarly, the entry of international credit rating agencies into the political lexicon marks something of a shift in the government of public spaces. The role of market rating agencies (like Standard and Poor, below) suggests something of a “gatekeeper” (MacKenzie, 2011, p. 1778) role for the trade of securities, indicating a “growing trend towards private ordering of traditionally public functions” (Schwarcz, 2002, p. 2). Characteristic of the Third Way under Helen Clark was a ‘partnership’ ethos where the Government contracted public (often health) services out to not-for-profits or other para-state agencies. The deployment of rating agencies in the quote below can be read as marking a continuation of this trend. Private companies like Standard and Poor can be seen to play an increasingly significant role in the regulation of markets, and subsequently develop an influence over the functions of the state apparatus:

And it is precisely the difficulties those countries are in that has led to Standard and Poor's putting New Zealand on negative outlook. When we are borrowing \$300 million a week, have an overvalued exchange rate, and face the prospect of a credit rating downgrade, the Government believes it should be spending less and therefore borrowing less.

These articulations only play a small part in the overall construction of the speech, yet they represent a significant point in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand for the role of non-state actors and the regulation of markets. It can also be argued to represent a shift in the type of knowledge that lies behind the construction of value in the market place (Beckert, 2009). As MacKenzie (2011) argues, the development of credit ratings by agencies like Standard and Poor make previously uncertain market functions (like the repayment of Government debt, for example) a relative stability by reducing them to a grade or classification. While not unchanging, this "is stable and predictable enough to permit coordination and rational action" (MacKenzie, 2011, p. 1786). John Key's "ambitious free trade agenda" is thus partially reliant on the 'creditworthiness' of New Zealand as a whole, based on the stability of a credit rating provided by a private company. This rating then goes on to guide the way fiscal balance is pursued. The partial reliance on credit ratings marks something of a departure from articulations of education (Clark), family (Shipley), community (Bolger), and employment (Lange) as measures for the stability of society. This development is important because it represents a further entrenchment of market logic as a practice for governing through the privatisation of public space, in this case the private regulation of public markets.

The order of discourse in this speech thus represents the laws of the market as not only a natural occurrence but also as an intellectual logic for governing through the privatisation of public space. The 'anti-ideology ideology' displaces the ideologies of politics and supplants them with the rigid ideology of the market (Phelan, 2012). This is to be noted particularly in the case of private rating agencies. Key's 2011 speech can thus be argued as necessary to the wider social order to the extent that it not only justifies, but also plays a role in embedding market logics as a framework for the operation of the state apparatus.

This speech reflects the National Government's attention to economic policy - "economy" or "economic" appears 33 times. The most significant policy shift is the move to partially privatise a number of state owned enterprises, or, in Key's terms, "pursuing a mixed ownership model".

Many of Key's discursive features carry their effect through a reliance on representing market-based organisation as a natural state of affairs and a logic for governing:

New Zealand has been through a recession and a global financial crisis. We have a chance, now the economy is gathering steam again, to build a solid platform for future growth. ...Our trade is rapidly shifting towards Asia, which is growing much faster than our traditional markets

The discursive resources that are drawn on in this example are so deeply embedded in a framework of market led governing that they seem barely worth challenging. "Markets" simply shift and grow. However, as noted in the 1987 speech by David Lange, this has not always been the case, notable in his articulation of "steady management" of the economy. Even Helen Clark's aim of including citizens in market functions, which suggests a degree of state intervention, do not compare to Key's articulations of the unquestionable autonomy of market forces. This is important because the speech fell at a time when the limitations of market forces became increasingly clear through the 2008 financial crisis. As the anti-ideology noted earlier shows, the response was not to legislate for more market control, but less. This further supports the stabilisation of market logics as a rationale for governing.

In addition to the influences of international finance, a number of local specificities are deployed throughout the speech. These place the Key within the sediment of New Zealand's settler colonial history. The articulation of "kiwi" (mentioned seven times) can be understood to set in motion a discourse of nationalism and sameness paralleling market

logics. “Kiwis” in this sense represents a shared and unified imaginary community (Anderson, 1991). This is drawn at least partly from New Zealand’s historical specificity as a colonial outpost and settler society. The sameness asserted by the deployment of “kiwis” was crystallised in a speech delivered a year earlier at Waitangi:

I think it would be a betrayal of Kiwis' basic sense of decency to forget the past and the legitimate claims of iwi ...I believe it is to the benefit of all New Zealanders that we move beyond the settlement phase of our history (Key, 2010)

While this could hardly be said to constitute a deliberate disavowal of founding colonial violence as discussed in chapter two under Mike Moore, there is an obvious slippage between “Maori” and “Kiwis”. This would be reflected again in 2012 through the sale of state owned power companies when the stumbling block of iwis’ special interest in water would be represented as hindering “kiwis” access to investment. The assertion of “kiwis” as a homogenous group in relation to range of market led policies thus provides part of a link between the ideology of market led governing and New Zealand as a settler society. This link is important because it can be seen as part of Key’s overall strategy to reduce many areas of public life to logics of the market, perpetuating the representation of his anti-ideological position.

A related (but distinct) discursive feature of Key’s 2011 speech is the “mum and dad investor”. In New Zealand politics, this is unique to the lexicon of the fifth National Government:

New, quality listings on the stock exchange would give mum and dad investors the option of putting their savings into large and proven companies, rather than relying, as is so often the case, on property investments.

Key’s treatment of the family (signified by “mum and dad”) as a natural unit of society is fairly clear and reflects similar articulations around the family under Jim Bolger, who adopted the ‘family unit’ as a model for policy development. However, the “mum and dad



investor” suggests some other readings. Firstly, as noted above with the discourse of “kiwis”, it reveals a number of assumptions about social life in New Zealand. It can be linked to Lange’s “little guy”, Moore’s “battlers”, and even Robert Muldoon’s “ordinary bloke” (NZ Onscreen, 2010). These are constituted by an image of stable, self-sufficient subjects, living something of a peaceful life based on meritocratic principles and hard work; a ‘do it yourself’ lifestyle (Bierre et al., 2010). In more etymological terms, the “mum and dad investor” has also circulated in a number of Government documents since the mid-2000s, particularly in relation to housing policy and discourse (Bierre et al., 2010; Housing New Zealand Corporation, 2005).

The “mum and dad investor” is not unique to New Zealand. The ‘ma and pa landlord’, for example, circulates in American housing discourse, revealing a number of assumptions about the nature of lay market knowledge and relatively high risk involved in property investment (Bierre et al., 2010). The “mum and dad investor” also appears in the housing industry in Australia, demarcating a particular section of the market which is supposed to return stable profits from a one-off investment. In Key’s terms, the “mum and dad investor” can be taken to refer to lay investors with relatively small amounts of money tied up in investments for retirement, inheritance, or other forms of social security.

Key’s use of the “mum and dad investor” highlights a degree of interdiscursivity and intertextuality. As highlighted above, the term circulates in a number of fields internationally and locally, mainly in housing and investment but appears by extension in discourses surrounding retirement, inheritance, and other forms of social security. This is important because Key’s use of “mum and dad investor” in relation to a new and relatively controversial policy supports an understanding of social change, demanding discursive support beyond immediately available political rhetoric. In this sense, the “mum and dad investor” can be argued to support increased privatisation and an assumption that market logics are an appropriate mechanism for social organisation through the creation of savings and investment for social security.

By referring to investment as a mechanism for social security, Key attempts to paint the “mixed-ownership model” as a mechanism of market inclusion in conjunction with a sell-down of assets to reduce Government debt. This has the effect of representing

privatisation as a pragmatic approach to managing both economic and social affairs. All speakers in this project represent the organisation of markets as a matter of pragmatism and common sense reaction to some degree. However, Key's claim to follow no ideology at all marks a discursive break with other speakers. This is noted not only in the suggestion that he is "not interested in following any particular ideology", but also in the policy backdrop to his two terms (as of early 2013) as Prime Minister. The 'follow through' of the Key's market logics can be seen in the increased privatisations discussed above as well as in the reduction of the top personal tax rate (from 39 to 33 per cent) and the introduction of the 90 day working bill in 2008. While these policies were resisted in parliament and by the public, in each case they were framed by Key as much needed and common sense re-regulation to improve New Zealand's fortunes in market performance.

In sum, Key's discursive practice can be argued to represent a moment of 'common sense' neo-liberalisation. Key's deployment of "kiwis" as an imaginary and unitary community can be constructed as a way to join New Zealand's history as a settler society with market logics, as part of an intellectual framework for governing. Similarly, the "mum and dad investor" suggests an image of self-sufficient family relations and 'do-it-yourself' lifestyle. It can be argued to represent a type of lay investor, characterised by relatively high risk who is in need of state protection to secure savings for social security. Each of these features point to a mode of neo-liberalisation that is characterised by the representation of market logic as an ideology for governing.

### *John Key; Transitive Order*

Key's focus on market trends and functions leads to a markedly different account of grammatical choice and representation in comparison to other speeches in this project. The most significant transitive features of Key's speech surround the representation of market forces as a natural entity, something that expands, contracts, grows, and shrinks without human intervention. This is important because it lends support to the market ideology by creating an air of inevitability surrounding economic affairs.

The lack of volitional human action throughout the transitive order of Key's speech reveals one of the ways that alternatives to the present arrangement of market capitalism are foreclosed and obscured. For example: "That means making responsible decisions now, as the economy picks up, to increase national savings and reduce the country's debt".

There are three reactions and one action represented in this sentence. "Making responsible decisions", "increase", and "reduce" are all human reactions to the action of "picks up", which contains no human agency. While "increase" and "reduce" clearly involve human actions, they are represented as reacting to an existing and unexplainable economic force, the reasons for "picks up" are omitted. The representation of agency as solely reactive arguably compounds the effect of inevitability created by the omission of agency in the economy through its apparent ability to compel reactions.

If the economy was represented as containing specific actions giving context to "picks up", then intervention into its affairs would become more tangible, and thus a matter for policy development. For example, if we re-cast the statement as the following, then the parameters for intervention are much more obvious:

That means making responsible decisions now, as the economy picks up through increases in export activity, national savings and wages, then we can reduce the country's debt

As it stands, the action of "making responsible decisions" carries little weight in comparison to the consequences of economic recession. The action bears no imprint on the overall trajectory of economic processes when compared to the types of action that are suggested to increase economic performance (savings, production and commercialisation of new technology and export led agriculture, for example). The nominalisation of "picks up" thus constructs the economy as a force impermeable to agency, despite its apparently behavioural and human base, a contradiction recognised by theorists of neo-liberalism like David Harvey (2005) and John Clarke (2008).

Similarly, with “treasury is predicting growth” (below), there are no participants in the action of growing other than the “treasury”, who simply observe or predict growth as a quasi-natural occurrence. This is carried out in the same way one might predict the weather or the rate at which crops grow, revealed by the relatively imprecise nature of the measurement itself. This further positions the economy as a matter beyond political agency; “treasury is predicting growth in excess of 3 per cent this year, together with higher wages and falling unemployment”.

At the same time market forces are represented as having a concrete, examinable, and relatively specific impact on the day to day lives of people, in a similar manner to the losses faced by victims of natural disaster: “we face the risk of a protracted recession, with a significant loss of jobs and a fall in the value of everyone’s homes, businesses and farms”.

In each of these examples, economic processes are represented as natural and inevitable. This is achieved through a strategy which elides human agency or represents it as a matter of reaction over action, a pattern consistent through the rest of the speech. While these representational choices are only analysed briefly here, the way the economy is constructed by Key reveals a number of assumptions about the role of government and financial markets. In this way, the Government can only take action which adjusts or tinkers with market actions - their wider forces cannot be challenged. If Key’s representations are taken as accurate, then the policy responses which he suggests (privatisation, tax cuts and “an ambitious free trade agenda”) become the obvious choices to overcome the problems generated by the 2008 economic crisis, eliding a number of alternative structural changes.

## 5.2 Discussion and Conclusion

The general pattern of John Key's 2011 'State of the Nation' speech reflects, perhaps unsurprisingly, his asserted apolitical position and two decades of sometimes contradictory neo-liberalisation. The treatment of market forces as a natural and inevitable phenomenon, the encouragement of public participation in the share market, the homogenisation of the New Zealand population, a professed apolitical position, and the private regulation of public markets each point to the way market forces are represented as a logic for governing.

The first section outlined some of Key's broad ideological positions in relation to other speakers from this project, noting that his overt assertion that he does not follow "any particular ideology" represents a partial discursive break, replacing the ideology of politics with an ideology of the market, suggesting a stabilisation of markets as logic for governing. The deployment of international rating agency Standard and Poor was given as an example to support this, noting the way that a private institution has the ability to regulate the public space of the market (Schwarcz, 2002). The discursive analysis focused on the function of the "kiwi" as a cultural segue between New Zealand's history as a settler colonial outpost and a distinct type of inclusion into market-based activity. I then examined the "mum and dad investor", suggesting both a cultural positioning of everyday life arrangements, as well as its function in furthering a privatisation agenda by relating share market investment to social security. Finally, a number of Key's representations of market forces focused on the way markets are positioned as inevitable, encouraging reactions from people in specific ways, foreclosing the possibilities of active market control in favour of marked led approaches.

Key's speech is the only one of this project to mention "ideology" explicitly. Other speakers reveal a number of assumptions which hedge against a left-right spectrum, but Key is the only speaker to reject this dualism. Jenny Shipley merely admits that these divides are "much less relevant", and Helen Clark, while attempting to go beyond ideological dogma, was still squarely authored by the social democratic history of the Labour party. Key's overwhelming focus on the market and disavowal of ideology suggests that he replaces the ideology of politics with an ideology of the market as a set of

normative rules for governing. This is noted particularly in his positioning of the “mum and dad investor” as vulnerable, requiring stable market investments to guarantee social security. This is also obvious in Key’s adoption of credit ratings from Standard and Poor as a guide for regulating public markets.

Key’s attempts at following a market ideology were not always successful. This is apparent in the subsequent protests against privatisation which commonly referenced Ruth Richardson’s 1991 ‘mother of all budgets’. Ironically, the very anti-ideological projections that Key makes provide some of the most fertile ground for challenges to his market led social order. Keil (2002, p. 579) notes that as a political strategy the dissemination of market logics into everyday life and government “creates new conditions for the accumulation of capital; yet it also creates more fissures in which urban resistance and social change can take root”. This is particularly apparent in the privatisation of public space through rating agencies, where even the most embedded of market functions become subject to turning a profit at the expense of populations. This was exemplified in the reactions to the 2008 financial crisis in the United States and more recently the Greek debt crisis, where the role of rating agencies has been called into question (Financial Crisis Enquiry Commission, 2011).

Thus, neo-liberalisation under John Key is contingent on historical and cultural events which determine the way markets are contextualised, resisted, and deployed as governing logics in their own right. The ‘anti-ideology, ideology’ (Phelan, 2012) is particularly suggestive of this trend, crystallising a relatively stable but rigid market ideology. This is most obviously apparent in the responses to the 2008 financial crisis, which appeared to favour not less market logic, but more, reflected in privatisation in the name of debt reduction and social security, as well as the privatisation of public space. This is supported by the rise of the discursive and transitive forms like the “the mum and dad investor”, the inevitability of economic shifts and related placement of powerless subjects in relation to market forces. These are not unique to Key’s speeches; similar features make appearances in Clark’s, Shipley’s, and Bolger’s articulations. But for Key, the ways in which these are represented as a rubric for governing is paramount; it arguably reflects the degree to which market logics have become embedded in political and cultural consciousness.

This is particularly significant because Clark's professed end to neo-liberalism in 2002 is arguably misinformed, marking not an end, but a new direction for the entrenchment of markets in everyday life. The cultural rubrics with which social life is sustained are now informed by entrepreneurialism, self-responsibility, and public involvement in markets of diverse kinds. Key's articulations of an apolitical moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand can be argued to obscure the "politically contingent nature of the global market project" (Neilson, 2011, p. 70). This is notable particularly where the functions of the global rating agencies are inserted into Key's discursive practice, truncating the possibilities for alternative action surrounding a recession. Following Gramsci, one could understand Key's anti-ideological approach as a partial combination of "development and a world-view", the successful occupation of a historically contingent moment and simultaneously "a syncretic historical residue, fragmentary and contradictory, open to multiple interpretations and potentially supportive of very different kinds of social visions and political projects" (Rupert, 2003, p. 185). This suggests that while Key's approach to governing is dominated by an ideology of the market, it could take diverse, unpredictable, and perhaps contradictory turns, reacting to the products of the pragmatic field he works within.

While I argue that Key's historically contingent moment in neo-liberalisation to be best understood through a market ideology, it cannot ignore the role of the wider ideological state apparatus. The role of mass communication and media, for example, plays an increasingly important part in disseminating market logics, particularly in the disavowal of ideology, as Phelan (Phelan, 2012) has shown. Similarly, such ideological domination would need to take into account the:

conservative legitimating role played by cultural, educational, religious, and media institutions...the intellectual and moral leadership of contending classes, the role played in this regard by the organic intellectuals of dominant and subordinate social classes (Roper, 2011, p. 15)

While I have only examined one text in relative isolation, the conclusions drawn from the analyses above suggest that Key represents a moment of neo-liberalisation characterised by a use of market ideology as a guide for governing. It is thus with a degree of tentativeness that Key's moment in neo-liberalisation could be labelled the 'market ideology'.

## **6. Concluding Comments: Neo-liberalism and its Fortunes**

This project set out to challenge the assumption that neo-liberalism represents a coherent and monolithic social and political theory and practice. Deploying the methodology of critical discourse analysis, I highlighted a number of instabilities and contradictions that have characterised neo-liberalism in New Zealand since the 1980s. This was delivered through a critical examination of seven speeches, each delivered in an election year by New Zealand Prime Ministers. I began with David Lange who was elected in 1984, and ended with John Key, who retains a relatively stable hold on power in early 2013.

This final chapter summarises the main outcomes of the project. I begin by highlighting the research problem and why neo-liberalism in New Zealand should be analysed in shifting and unstable ways. Key elements of the theoretical assumptions and research design are then recapped. Each of the substantive chapters is summarised, noting their key points and significance within broad governing logics. A comment then proffers some limitations and departures for further investigation. I finally make some tentative projections of neo-liberalism's fortunes in a 'post-crisis' world.

### **6.1 The Neo-liberal Turn and Term**

In its most axiomatic form neo-liberalism is:

A theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. (Harvey, 2005, p. 2)



This framework has been realised through the anti-inflationary and monetarist theories of Milton Friedman (1962) and Friedrich Hayek (1960) (among others) around a “preference for market over state, individual over collective interests, and economic freedom over political freedom” (Friedman, 1962; Hayek, 1960 in; Phelan, 2007, p. 10).

Throughout this project, I have used ‘neo-liberalisation’ rather than ‘neo-liberalism’, which I argue best captures its emergent socio-political logics across different spaces and times. I wish to distance this project from a monolithic conception of neo-liberalism which is often positioned as “backward, greedy, anarchic and impoverishing” (Alexander, 1995, p. 78). I focused instead on internal and contextual features which are often unstable and contradictory. I argue that this instability and contradiction often reflects New Zealand’s history as a settler colony, the Treaty of Waitangi, ethnicity, gender, and political relationships with Asia and the United Kingdom, among other conjectures. To show this I drew predominantly on Fairclough’s (1998) ‘order of discourse’ framework of critical discourse analysis, which focuses on the micro, meso and macro components of discourse. This is supported by Gramsci’s (1992) hegemony and common sense, Althusser’s (1971) ideological state apparatus, and Foucault’s governmentality (1991) and power (2008). This framework enables an understanding of neo-liberalisation’s unstable and contradictory features.

The analyses focused on seven speeches delivered by each Prime Minister of the last 30 years. The analyses began at the macro level, charting some of the speeches’ most basic contextual features, noting broad political conditions, events, and influences. I then focused on the discursive practice of the speaker, on key phrases or concepts from each centred on their possible origins, functions, and meanings. Finally, a close analysis of key paragraphs noted the way grammatical choices frame representations of reality, revealing key assumptions about the nature of agency and market forces.

## 6.2 Summary of Analyses

This section notes some key points exposed in the analysis of the seven Prime Ministerial speeches. While not exhaustive, they indicate the contradictory and unstable nature of neo-liberalisation in New Zealand.

The fourth Labour Government was elected in 1984 after a landslide victory in a snap election. While some structural adjustments had been made earlier, a political stoush in Robert Muldoon's leadership, a currency and employment crisis combined with discontents over the Treaty of Waitangi enabled an already willing group of politicians to pursue a market led agenda.

David Lange's 1987 speech charts some of his Government's policies for the following term. The analysis revealed the instability of market led logic, noted in a slippage between the description of a state of affairs and a resulting policy prescription, representing the market led agenda as inevitable. Lange's assertion that his market led policies had no alternative is contradicted by an articulation of economic "management", while simultaneously pursuing sweeping deregulation. I took this instability to indicate the emergence of a hegemonic regime, where conditions for alternative policy arrangements exist within Lange's articulations. This also supports Boltanski and Chiapello's (2005) argument that a new spirit of capitalism of the 1980s had begun to include previously contradictory principles of fairness, inclusion, and stimulation in capitalist networks of management.

Geoffrey Palmer's 1990 speech revealed a number of contradictory features related to the institutionalisation of the Treaty of Waitangi and technocratic discourse. Palmer's technocratic approach to rule can be argued to construct what Greisman and Ritzer (1981, p. 35) call a "completely functional and antiseptic space", where rules and government structures are beyond democratic influence. This is important because Palmer's position as a lawyer, Member of Parliament and Prime Minister gives privileged access to the discursive resources of governing, enabling a representation of regulatory positions as free of ideology. Indeed, he suggested that ideology "is frequently irrelevant" (Palmer, 1992 in;

Hayward, 2004, p. 181). It was also noted that technocratic discourse has roots in positivism (McKenna & Graham, 2000), lending Palmer's articulations a 'factual' self-evident quality where tensions might otherwise be apparent.

A significant contradiction of Palmer's speech was noted in his suggestion of institutionalising the Treaty of Waitangi. This simultaneously supported the formation of pro-market organisations representing established iwi and contradicted a wider agenda of reducing the size of the state (Kelsey, 1991). While rangatiratanga (self-determination) could be worked into the individualisation of market led reform, the liberalisation of state structures and an increasingly rigorous focus on resolving historic Treaty claims proved irreconcilable (Kelsey, 1991).

Mike Moore delivered his speech in 1990 after he became Prime Minister. He articulated a wide range of discourses: Labour's history of "fairness, equality and respect" is juxtaposed with the "battler" as an idealized, self-sufficient, and entrepreneurial citizen, as well as the representation of economic gain requiring pain. This was argued to be exemplary of the contradictory and often unstable nature of neo-liberalisation. This is particularly notable in the "battler" which was argued to have multiple meanings, reflecting New Zealand's position as a colonial settler society.

In sum, the fourth Labour Government represents the unstable, contradictory, and emergent parameters of neo-liberalisation. With the institutionalisation of Treaty of Waitangi and rise of entrepreneurial subjects, the fourth Labour Government suggests a diverse range of ideological interests and actions. A number of these nuances would be noted years later, particularly through Helen Clark where the institutionalisation of the Treaty under "closing the gaps", entrepreneurialism, and equality would be subsumed into an inclusive moment in neo-liberalisation.

The fourth National Government came into power off the back Labour's leadership fallout between Lange and Minister of Finance Roger Douglas. Jim Bolger held the seat of Prime Minister for seven years before being deposed by New Zealand's first female leader, Jenny Shipley. Despite a heavy repudiation of Labour's market led policies, Ruth Richardson, the

new Minister of Finance, broadly continued a monetarist agenda, not only de-regulating employment conditions but also rolling-back the welfare state.

Despite the apparently destructive mode of neo-liberalisation that Bolger engaged with, his own articulation of a “decent society” suggested a reaction against the extremity of market led reform. The “decent society” can be understood to reflect Bolger’s communitarianism, a framework characterised by a “sense that individuals are shaped by the communities to which they belong and thus owe them a debt of respect and consideration” (Heywood, 1998, p. 148). This drew a strong contrast to the professed social democratic roots of the Labour Government and to Shipley’s later attempt to formalise the relationship between the state and its citizens. The “decent society” combined with an entrepreneurial positioning of “opportunity” projected a utopian image of self-sufficient and cohesive communities. This tendentially supported Richardson’s cutting of welfare support through a push for people to rely on family and community networks rather than the state.

Shipley’s time as Prime Minister emerged from the introduction of MMP and the balance of power held by Winston Peters after the 1996 election. Her 1997 speech revealed an emerging attempt to formalise the relationship between the state and its citizens. This gave way to the organisation of the welfare state around social capital and the reponsibilisation of families. This would later be crystallised in the Code of Social and Family Responsibility, which specifically articulated a number ‘best practice’ approaches to child care, employment, household budget management, and other domestic affairs. I argued that this marks an important moment in the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand through the ‘liberal dilemma’, a tension between libertarian (freedom from the state) and conservative (protection of family life) values. Some issues generated by the monetarist agenda, such as unemployment and increased inequality, were examined but not solved. The outcomes of reform were bought to the fore and recast in terms of individual responsibility. A lack of focus on the role of the state would eventually undermine the Government.

The National Government moved market led reform into areas untouched by Labour, restructuring healthcare, employment conditions, and social welfare. I argued that these developments, apart from accentuating some contradictions inherent in Bolger’s communitarianism, reflected a broad shift from the ‘destructive’ moment of neo-

liberalisation towards what Brenner and Theodore (2008) call ‘actually existing neo-liberalism’, characterised by a simultaneous roll-back of the welfare state and the somewhat tendential creation of new political logics for governing, like the Code of Social and Family Responsibility.

The fifth Labour Government marks a local example of the Third Way, characterised by an emphasis on the values of social democracy combined with the central tenets of free trade and market logics, in an attempt to go beyond the problems of both. Clark’s 1999 speech reflects this position, noted particularly in her focus on “closing the gaps” in an attempt to reduce the inequalities through education and inclusion in employment markets. While aims at reducing inequality were laudable, the “gap” was overwhelmingly cast as a problem of Maori under-accumulation vis-à-vis others. Though the term “closing the gaps” was dropped, the aim of including Maori in economic processes was continued, reflecting a strategy of “capacity building” that would ostensibly enable indigenous people to “govern themselves and determine their own path of development” (Humpage & Fleras, 2001, p. 49). Similarly, Clark’s articulation of “human capital” highlighted her emphasis on inclusive market led governing by positioning people as a commodity on which to draw for economic growth.

The very nature of Third Way discourse is contradictory, assembling previously irreconcilable ideological forms. Yet these are deployed with relative coherence, serving temporally limited or ‘vehicular’ purposes before being abandoned or reformulated to ‘fix’ a new contradiction (McLennan, 2004). I argued that Clark’s position in neo-liberalisation could be understood as ‘inclusive-vehicular neo-liberalisation’.

The fifth National Government won the 2008 election under the narrative of “building a brighter future”, a utopian signification of managing a financial crisis and reducing Government debt in order to stimulate market performance. The analysis of Key’s 2011 speech outlined a deep entrenchment of market logics and a disavowal of politics, resulting in a naturalised ‘market ideology’. Key’s articulation of privatisation as beneficial to “mum and dad investors” and the private ordering of public space through the rating agency Standard and Poor was argued to position market logic as a rubric for governing. I suggested that Key’s articulations mark something of a cultural as well as ideological break,

where the ‘everydayness’ of market logic has become stabilised enough to guide Government action.

### **6.3 Neo-liberalism’s Fortunes**

The analyses which I have offered in this project show that neo-liberalism constitutes more than a political doctrine or strategy of government. The premise which I departed from, that neo-liberalisation in New Zealand is often contradictory and unstable, holds true. However, in many ways, this reveals more questions than it answers. It is not obvious, for example, what it is about neo-liberalisation at different conjunctures that enables or disables stability. Yet it is possible to “highlight constitutive dimensions that are ultimately grounded in contestable assumptions and which, in the mundane flow of social life, are often rendered invisible as contingent foundations” (Phelan, 2012, p. 25).

Similarly, this project has loosely assigned each Prime Minister a position within the neo-liberalisation of New Zealand, yet the production of speech is only one part of Governing and ideological domination. I have left the dissemination, consumption, and reproduction of discourse open for investigation and challenge. This project has not addressed many of the wider conditions on which neo-liberalisation is sustained. It has not been possible to say exactly what effect events or breaks have on both speakers and people as political agents.

There are also a number of limitations in the extrapolation of meaning and signification from the apparently coherent discursive forms in the seven speeches. While I seek to undo a monolithic conception of neo-liberalism and attend to some of its nuances, I have only presented some possible readings of speakers’ discursive work. There are of course multiple, possibly contradictory readings to each of the features I have highlighted. Similarly, I departed from but one possible simplistic moment: the election of a Government. To be sure, there are other possibly more poignant events and crises to

depart from, such as the oil shock of 1979 or the establishment of the 'Washington Consensus' in 1989.

Despite these limitations, this project can provide a tentative projection for neo-liberalisation's immediate fortunes. It seems likely that despite the challenges of the 2008 financial crisis, neo-liberalisation will in some ways at least, continue for the foreseeable future. I would tentatively suggest that the cultural rubrics for social reproduction, dominated as they now are by entrepreneurial freedoms, will provide a blue print for the regulation of day to day social life in the next few years. As Jim Bolger's communitarian position has shown, the flanking of neo-liberalisation by supplementary ideological frameworks has contributed to the increasingly complex and messy nature of governing through principles of market freedom. As ever, the conditions of possibility for resistance within these combinations are evident in their genesis. The proposed market freedoms which have characterised much of neo-liberalisation's most recent development, dominated by a simple market ideology, are narrow and rigid indeed. The prospect for much wider, socially constructive and empowering freedoms rests in the truly popular control of the state apparatus.

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