

# He pēwhea te āhua o ngā whakamārama mō te whānau i tēnei ao hurihuri?

## Whānau/Family in Aotearoa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**Paul Spoonley & Malcolm Menzies**  
**Evidence to Action 2018 Conference**  
**Wellington 10 April 2018**



# Family/Whānau

- Transformative changes

- Societal
- Cultural
- Demographic
- Economic

*The 21<sup>st</sup> century will bear witness to a sea change in population growth, composition and dispersal*

Sarah Harper  
Demographic Trends  
and Implications for Employers,  
Mercer, 2013

- Implications for our conceptual, political and policy understandings/practice?

# Conceptual Frameworks – Limited and Out-Of-Date



- Reflect traditional roles rather than current roles
- Need to generate new concepts for relatedness, roles (replacement, socialisation, integration, transfers/exchanges), structures
- Move beyond binary, role definitions and assumptions about biology

*“For families, [this] lexicon  
remains cramped”*

Andrew Solomon, 2017

# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #1 New Family Forms/Relationships

- Biological vs non-biological parenting (“tyranny of biological relatedness”)
- Same sex marriage/civil unions
- Blended families/parenting
- Surrogate parenting
- Transgender parents/children/siblings
- Household composition
- Separation/re-partnering

***“We need to acknowledge that families come in multiple shapes and sizes, that love is not a finite asset, and that care giving involves more than genetic imperative”***

Andrew Solomon, 2017

# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #2 Te Ao Māori

- Whānau – multidimensional and multiple understandings (Boulton & Gifford, 2014)
- Te Hoe Nuku Roa/Te Kupenga (whānau self-defined)
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Whānau ora



# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #3 Fertility (reproductive polarisation?)

- Sub-replacement fertility
- Delayed births (2017 – largest nos. of children born to women 30-34 yrs)
- More sole children, no children (couple-without-children will increase by 244,000 by 2038)
- Assisted reproduction/surrogacy

### Europe needs many more babies to avert a population disaster

Across Europe birth rates are tumbling. The net effect is a 'perfect demographic storm' that will imperil economic growth across the continent



▲ Birth rates are falling across Europe leading to a 'perfect demographic storm'. Photograph: Bernd Vogel/Corbis

Source: The Guardian, 2015

# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #4 Beanpole Families

- Longer thinner families (fewer siblings, more generations present)
- Childless couples/ 1 child families growing
- Presence of older generations (50% of adults over age 24 have grandparents/now care roles)



# % Of Children (0-4) in Extended Family Households



Ethnicity	2001 %	2013 %
Pākehā/European	7.5	10.8
Māori	20.7	25.3
Pacific Peoples	33.8	40.3
Asian Peoples	27.5	29.3

Source: StatsNZ



# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #5 (Hyper)Diversity

- Heterogeneity in family formation/structure (multiple generations, non-biological caregivers, co-housing)
- Ethnic/cultural/immigrant diversity (superdiversity/new complexity/legal entities)



# A Future Superdiversity



	2013	2038
European/Pākehā	75%	66%
Māori	16%	18%
Asian	12%	22%
Pasifika	8%	10%

# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #6 Transitions

- Delayed (and fuzzy) transition to adulthood (living with parents longer, delayed house ownership – and no ownership – partner arrangements, first birth)
- Delayed (and fuzzy) transition from employment to retirement



# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #7 Mobility

- Geographically mobile and scattered
- NZ diaspora (1 million?)
- Transience and vulnerability  
(Transients 1.7%, Vulnerable Transients 4.4%, Jiang, Pachecco and Dasgupta, superu, 2018)



# Demographic Drives/Changes

## #8 Baby Boomers vs Millennials

- Different milestones/transitions (birth of children)
- Security (housing, employment)
- Digital behaviours/impacts (online networks, networked families)



Source: The Guardian, 2014

# Demographic Drivers/Changes

## #9 Longevity

- Living alone (no. of adults without children will double by 2030)
- Multigenerational households
- New familial responsibilities
- Care and service provision

### The Observer view on the future facing Britain's ageing population

With imagination, we can all benefit from the baby boomers' talents



Observer editorial

The Observer, Sunday 9 November 2014

 Jump to comments (56)



Britain's ageing population has talents that can be utilised to their own, and society's, benefit. Photograph: DCPhoto / Alamy/Alamy

# Policy Challenges and Issues

## A. Conceptual/Evidence Lag

- Where does new thinking and policy development come from?
- Issues of dealing with orthodox public understandings
- Political and public conservatism

Image source: Redline



Labour MPs Sonja Davies and Fran Wilde, Gay Task Force leader Bill Logan and liberal theologian Lloyd Geering: the self-limiting strategy of 1986 was an indication that the original militant struggle for gay liberation had been abandoned

# Policy Challenges and Issues

## B. Family friendly policies and approaches – what do they look like?

- Are policy makers still bound by out-dated models of what families are, and what they do?
- Culturally and institutional diversity
- Individualism/independence vs collectivism/interdependence
- Workplace practices and policies (too light touch?)





# Policy Challenges and Issues



## C. Role of state?

- Need a new welfare contract and approach?
- Pressing issues: Child poverty; Supporting tamariki Māori to thrive; Children’s rights ( Judge A. Becroft, forthcoming)

*“...whether [these changes] is a matter of choice or of necessity dictated by unemployment or the cost of childcare or both, what is lagging desperately behind is the ability of the modern state to define what role it should play in supporting the family faced with this accelerating change”*

Guardian, June 2013

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