

CRITIQUE OF THE 'AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND DRAFT HISTORIES CURRICULUM'

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1) In the publicity leading up to this Curriculum the Government has made it abundantly clear that its objective has nothing to do with history, or indeed with the passing on of knowledge. Its stated objective is to inculcate its preferred ideology to small children using selective "history" as a legitimising tool. It is social engineering to meet purely political ends using history as a stalking horse.
- 2) This Curriculum, where it is comprehensible, confirms that intention.
- 3) That (small) part of the Curriculum that refers to actual "history" is almost entirely factually incorrect. It is cartoon history, mired in the classic "goodies versus baddies" stereotype. It is therefore highly offensive to most New Zealanders and unhelpful to the harmonious future of this country.
- 4) At the same time as it is offensive to all other citizens, it is paternalistic and patronising to Maori – a classic characteristic of "colonialism", which, ironically, I gather this initiative is trying to correct.
- 5) According to this document all New Zealand history is "Maori history". Paradoxically, although everyone other than Maori is denied a part in New Zealand's history, the curriculum implies they are single-handedly responsible for all evil in New Zealand.
- 6) It is often claimed that Maori "history" cannot be expressed in a Western style and furthermore that whatever the Maori equivalent of history is it cannot be understood by non-Maori. This Curriculum is entirely at odds with that premise and therefore culturally insensitive.
- 7) That (major) part of the Curriculum that relates to "outcomes" is so generic as to be meaningless, making it incapable of being rolled out at the tactical and operational levels. It would have to be totally rewritten to be meaningful to those charged with implementing it.
- 8) The object of education is teaching children how to think, not what to think. Teaching children what to think is called brainwashing and is associated with regimes such as Stalinist Russia. It is a form of child abuse.
- 9) This Curriculum is a hopelessly naïve initiative which cannot fail to cause huge harm to race relations and the future of this country. All it proves is that, contrary to the Curriculum's specious assertions that we must "learn from the past", the Government has learnt precisely nothing from the past.
- 10) History is a specialty subject and one capable of doing great harm. It requires maturity and the skills of rational thinking on the part of the student and should not be taught any

earlier than secondary school. Incredibly this curriculum STOPS at Year 10 – the very place it should start.

- 11) Whoever developed this document clearly has no knowledge of children – it requires a level of mental gymnastics that is beyond most adults.
- 12) I would imagine the reaction of any New Zealander to any political faction that would stoop so low as to advance their cause by brainwashing political ideologies into 5-year-old children, who are barely capable of toileting themselves, to whom the height of reality and intellectual sophistication is [Peppa Pig](#), and to whom Father Christmas is a real person, would be one of repulsion.
- 13) This Curriculum is a post-truth document that promotes State-mandated racism. It brings this Government, and by extension, this country, into disrepute.

CURRICULUM CRITIQUE – a selection of statements of concern

PAGE 2

The tagline head of Page 2 reads:

[“If we want to shape Aotearoa New Zealand’s future, start with our past”](#)

This is a variation on one of the many hackneyed history themed clichés that people nod sagely at, but which do not stand 10 second’s scrutiny.

First the object of teaching history is to teach history – it has nothing to do with shaping anything. History is history. History has no agenda. Conversely, if it does have an agenda it is not history, it is advocacy. In this context, and to an unquestioning audience, as it must be when the audience is school children, advocacy is another word for propaganda. Propaganda fed to our school children is not something we associate with New Zealand. It is most typically associated with countries such as Soviet era Russia or North Korea. You can call it what you like but I call teaching political ideologies to 5- 6- and 7-year-olds child abuse.

Secondly, this statement is entirely specious and illogical - no country, company or individual ever shaped their future without letting go of the past. To do so would be ridiculous. As individuals we move forward by letting go of our baggage, not by dragging it around with us and picking at the scabs of the past.

Another equally nonsensical and specious tagline is...

[“Learning that cannot be left to chance”](#)

The implication of this message is that there is some life and death information that every child must have that only our school system can be trusted to impart.

There is only one thing worse than not knowing something and that is knowing something that is incorrect. And, as we shall see in the discussion below, this is precisely what this Curriculum

will achieve. There is also another saying – one that is true – “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing”. As a general subject at primary and secondary level “a little knowledge”, even if it is correct knowledge, is all you can possibly get. I cannot think of any other subject that can cause as much harm as history. You learn history properly or not at all.

Now let us move to the “Three big Ideas”.

The “Three Big Ideas”

Big Idea 1

“Māori history is the foundational and continuous history of Aotearoa New Zealand”

If it is possible to find a more confrontational, arrogant, divisive, unhelpful, and offensive statement I would like to hear it.

Here, literally, on line 1 of page 1 of the draft curriculum, it is not so much betraying as screaming the prejudices that underpin not just “Big Idea 1” but by extension the entire Curriculum. At Line 1 of Page 1 we know that whatever we may read in the subsequent 10 pages, no matter how innocuous or even-handed they may appear at face value, that when the Curriculum is translated into practice in the classroom, Big Idea 1’s overriding message will dominate.

With “Big Idea 1” you may as well be shouting from the rooftops:

“No one matters but Maori. Any other of the scores of ethnicities that make up the bulk of New Zealand’s population have made no contribution to our history. They are second-class citizens.”

Yes, Big Idea 1 is THAT subtle.

For the past 200 years New Zealand has had a shared history involving people from many nations. Arguably, since this has had the single greatest impact on the Maori people in their 800 years existence in this country, and that it is the single part of New Zealand History to which all Maori complaints are directed, this shared history is a pivotal part of New Zealand history. Therefore, why has this Curriculum redacted the contributions to history of the most populous group in New Zealand? Why is it denying 84% of the population of New Zealand the ownership of their own history by saying it is just the later part of “Maori History”?

It is currently fashionable, as well as politically convenient, for some Maori to claim not to recognise the concept of history in the Western sense. It is not for me to say what the Maori equivalent of “history” is – only Maori can say that – but it has been made abundantly clear that whatever it is it is a world view/discipline/knowledge system that is off-limits to non-Maori, and that for a non-Maori to suggest he/she might comprehend it is inappropriate. This means it is culturally inappropriate (as well as paternalistic) to teach a child of ANY ethnicity a Western version of what Europeans might refer to as “Maori History”. And since whatever the Maori

equivalent of history is cannot, we are told, be understood by anyone who is not a Maori, this means that all non-Maori are eternally doomed to total denial of any knowledge of the Maori past. It means that whatever Maori "history" might be, it can only be taught to Maori people in a Maori manner. This leaves your altruistic mission to teach "Maori History" to children of every race and creed in a bit of a cultural pickle. So, I would ask two questions - what exactly do you mean by "Maori history"- and - how do you rationalise the cultural appropriateness of teaching it in a western way to non-Maori children?

Finally, I question the appropriateness of the word "continuous". According to the Curriculum, it appears that Maori history ends the day after the first Maori set foot on New Zealand and begins again the day Hobson set foot in the Bay of Islands. Apparently, there is a 550-year period, representing 80% of Maori "continuous history", where precisely NOTHING HAPPENED. We might reasonably ask - did they all fall asleep? Was there a cataclysmic space/time continuum time warp that erased 550 years? So much for continuous history.

Big Idea 2

"Colonisation and its consequences have been central to our history for the past 200 years and continue to influence all aspects of New Zealand society"

New Zealand has been colonised internationally twice (by the Maori and by the European). Internally it has been colonised many times - the South Island, for instance, has been colonised at least five times - first (as far as we know) by the Waitaha, second by Kati Mamoe, third by Kai Tahu, fourth by Ngati Toa, and fifth by Europeans. Some would add two additional colonisations – that of Hawea and Te Rapuwai - but that, like all Maori prehistory – is pure conjecture.

So, it would be more correct to say that...

"Colonisation and its consequences are central to our history"

...or better still, to omit it entirely, since New Zealand history is no more than a continuous string of colonisations that blur into each other.

"Colonisation began as part of a worldwide imperial project".

This is so breathtakingly wrong it is hard to know where to start. Firstly, I think the historians of any country would be very surprised to hear that British "imperialism" was a "project" – this statement is likely to get a good laugh. But more importantly, as any of the scores of history books will tell you, the European settlement of this country had absolutely nothing to do with "imperialism" or "imperial projects". Britain wanted to be involved with New Zealand like it wanted a hole in the head – in fact it spent decades actively avoiding it. It is absolutely the last thing it wanted. "Britain" could have come after Cook's discovery in 1769. But they did not. For fifty years, a whole two generations, from 1790 to 1840 Maoris interacted freely with European individuals ranging from sealers, whalers, traders, missionaries, ex-convicts, and assorted

adventurers. Britain's final involvement – after 70 years of resisting – was done with reluctance, to protect Maori from the abuse of British subjects. The first Governors spent most of their terms fighting the colonising enterprises and mitigating, to the best of their very meagre resources, their effect on Maori. To give but one example, Fitzroy famously overturned Commissioner Spain's grant of land in Taranaki. Great Britain, as a nation, did not colonise New Zealand. Individuals, either sponsored by private companies or under their own initiative, colonised New Zealand. Britain, finding it was impossible to stop this happening because it had no jurisdiction over the actions of British subjects in foreign countries, reluctantly became involved.

["It sought to assimilate Māori through dislocation from their lands and replacement of their institutions, economy, and tikanga with European equivalents"](#)

This is yet another spectacularly incorrect statement.

Let us look at the phrase "it sought to assimilate Māori".

First you might like to define what "it" is. Is it the fabled and non-existent "worldwide imperial project"? Is it "Britain" as a sovereign state? Is it a private company like the New Zealand Company? Is it shiploads of individuals travelling under their own initiative? Whatever it is, how about identifying it instead of leaving "it" as a nameless, faceless villain.

Whatever "it" might be, it "sought" no such thing as assimilation. When two disparate cultures are forced to coexist a mechanism to do so must be found. If you put yourselves in the shoes of those who had to determine what that mechanism is you would find that the number of choices is extremely limited - the number of choices is in fact, two - to assimilate or not to assimilate. When you actually have to think about these choices, as the people on the ground at the time did, it will take you approximately five minutes to reach the conclusion that not assimilating is not an option. So yes, Grey, for instance, was a proponent of "assimilation", not because he or anyone "sought" to do it as an end in itself, but because it was, and is, the only practical way of doing what he was charged with doing – trying to balance the influx of immigrants, who arrived as free agents and who had absolutely nothing to do with Britain or empire-building, with protecting the Maori people. Our Prime Minister loves to talk about the "team of five million". She might like to reflect on how New Zealand became a "team of five million". Yes, because of assimilation. "Assimilation" is not a dirty word. Assimilation is in no way equivalent to denying members of a united team their individual identities, cultures and histories.

You may also like to consider that assimilation was the standard Maori practice prior to the arrival of Europeans. Maori assimilated their neighbours through a combination of slaughter, intermarriage and appropriation of traditions. You could ask the Waitaha, for instance, but they have been assimilated out of existence. You could also ask [Ngati Tumatakokiri](#) but they were annihilated out of existence. You could ask the remnants of Rangitane or Muaupoko how they feel about their "assimilation" by Te Rauparaha.

Now let us look at the entire phrase...

"It sought to assimilate Māori through dislocation from their lands and replacement of their institutions, economy, and tikanga with European equivalents"

This statement makes it sound as if this was some sort of evil plan devised specifically for the destruction of the Maori and that the "methods" you suggest were on some sort of Imperial "How to destroy the natives" checklist. It was no such thing. No one was "dislocated from their lands" for the purpose of "assimilation". Land was purchased because people wanted it. No one "replaced their institutions" for the purposes of "assimilation". The arrival of a new people of a completely different culture created totally new issues for which native institutions had no answer. New institutions were an absolute necessity for all parties. No one "replaced the economy" for the purposes of "assimilation". Maori were, and are, as free to go about their traditional economy as they ever were. Europeans introduced additional economies which Maori grasped with both hands and have never let go. No one "replaced their tikanga" for the purposes of assimilation. The introduction of a new culture presenting different and new choices must inevitably cause confusion and a conscious decision to abandon old choices and embrace new ones. This is called change. The world I live in now is completely different from the world I was born in.

"including privileges deriving from it and the enduring assertions of tino rangatiratanga and mana Māori – continues to evolve".

I question what exactly does this mean? I have read scores of history books and I have yet to find any reference to an "enduring assertion to mana Maori", however you might interpret that.

Big Idea 3

"The course of Aotearoa New Zealand's history has been shaped by the exercise and effects of power"

In the list of "the world's most meaningless statements" this surely must rank near the top. It is about as useful as "it gets dark at night".

Every event in world history, from the crawling out of the primordial swamp to whenever this Earth self-destructs "has been shaped by the exercise and effects of power". "The exercise and effects of power" is basically a definition of living.

I wonder if the Government realises that the gargantuan hypocrisy of taking the moral high ground on "the exercise and effects of power" while simultaneously using the "the exercise and effects of power" to ram propaganda down the throats of small children.

Summary of the “Three Big Ideas”

I have reviewed one third of Page 1 of an 11-page document. My summary is that so far it has been an unmitigated disaster and to be honest not a little embarrassing. Already the curriculum has not so much stumbled as fallen flat on its face at the first and very lowest hurdle of historical accuracy.

I note that the creation of this Curriculum involved a veritable United Nations of not only able but “disabled persons communities” (are we actually still allowed to call people “disabled?”). Warm and fluffy as that might make us feel it is of course irrelevant because I suspect that even if they came from Mars they will have been hand-picked because of their political views. One must ask – were any actual historians, or anyone who understands historiography, involved in generating this Curriculum?

The “Three National Contexts”

National Context 1

Whakapapa me te whanaungatanga

This context focuses on how the past shapes who we are today – our familial links and bonds, our networks and connections, our sense of obligation, and the stories woven into our collective and diverse identities.

Firstly, I would ask why Maori terminology is used - this is an English document for English speaking people. There is a Maori version of this document, and I doubt that “Whakapapa me te whanaungatanga” is translated into English in that document. Therefore, would it not be appropriate to extend the same courtesy to readers of the English version?

However, that is probably a minor point because I have no idea what the English text means either. I gather this document is meant to convey information to the people who will be charged with delivering it. If that is the case, I would suggest you give them a break by re-wording it in a way that makes sense and conveys something measurable.

I would also suggest that the use of the term “stories” has no place in a document relating to history. Either it is true, or it is not. That is history.

National Context 2

Tūrangawaewae me te kaitiakitanga

This context focuses on the relationships of individuals, groups, and communities with the land, water, and resources, and on the history of contests over their control, use, and protection.

Again, I have no idea what this means. Possibly it means the history of environmental issues. If this is the case, I would suggest this is far too specialized a subject to be handled in any classrooms lower than tertiary level.

National Context 3

Tino rangatiratanga me te kāwanatanga

This context focuses on the history of contests over authority and control, at the heart of which are the authorities guaranteed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and The Treaty of Waitangi. It also considers the history of the relationships between the state and the people who lived here and in the Pacific.

Over a period of 180 years the Treaty has been embellished, distorted, twisted and mangled into a fantastic, mythical being that makes taniwhas and people coming to New Zealand on the backs of whales and albatrosses seem quite believable. Frankly, the process by which this has happened is an insult to the intelligence of New Zealanders.

Although Ruth Ross's seminal article of 1972

(http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1972/NZJH_06_2_02.pdf) is not without its flights of fancy, fifty years on her summary of "The Treaty" still remains unsurpassed:

"However good intentions may have been, a close study of events shows that the Treaty of Waitangi was hastily and inexpertly drawn up, ambiguous and contradictory in content, chaotic in its execution. To persist in postulating that this was a 'sacred compact' is sheer hypocrisy".

She is very lucky to have passed away early enough not to witness the onslaught of stupidity her article unleashed.

In the context of critiquing this Curriculum, I would point out that New Zealand is historically famous for its progressiveness in social justice and equality. As already mentioned at the beginning of this paper many know this Curriculum has nothing to do with history - it is a mechanism for embedding the Government approved ideological line into the brains of every New Zealand child. If this must be so, can we at least make this social engineering consistent with this country's previous record for social justice and equality? While the rest of the World is relentlessly heading into the future by embracing multiculturalism New Zealand is relentlessly stuck two hundred years in the past embracing bi-culturalism. Moreover this "bi-culturalism" has in practice turned into mono-culturalism by promoting one particular culture over the scores of others that make up this country. If the Government insists on social engineering how about using it to promote equality, harmony and democracy in the reality of New Zealand's multi-cultural society rather than to promote inequality and divisiveness? Just a thought.

Rohe and local contexts

- Rohe contexts as defined by iwi and hapū and guided by the question What stories do local iwi and hapū tell about their history in this rohe?
- Historical contexts relevant to local communities and guided by the question What stories are told about the people, events, and changes that have been important in this area?
- Contexts chosen by students when inquiring into the history of the rohe and local area.

Why is this limited to Maori only? Do not European, Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern etc cultures have stories to tell? Are not my stories, and my father's stories, just as relevant as anyone else's? Why is everyone who is not Maori being redacted?

PAGE 4

Years 1-3

The Curriculum's "Key Knowledge" that is to be taught to our 5-, 6- and 7-year-olds.

Māori voyaged across the Pacific and became tangata whenua: the indigenous people of this place. Māori navigation to Aotearoa New Zealand was deliberate and skilful. Migrant connections with the Pacific have been important and continue to be so.

The first sentence is an oxymoron – you cannot voyage to a country and become the indigenous people. The American Indians and the Australian Aborigines are indigenous – Maori are not. Having island hopped their way from somewhere in the west to somewhere in the east, Maori (or whatever they considered themselves to be at the time) have probably less claim to be indigenous to anywhere than any ethnicity in the World. I understand that the United Nations has devised an alternative definition of "indigenous" based on "self-identification", according to which Maori (and for that matter practically anyone) can claim to be "indigenous". The result of this is that "indigenous" is now officially a meaningless word which should be relegated to the scrapheap of lexicology. A far better choice of terminology would be "first peoples".

The quest for origins of Maori is the New Zealand equivalent of the search for the Holy Grail. Scores of books have been, and continue to be, written on the subject. Disappointingly the summary of over hundred years of scholarship and speculation by the likes of Thomas Buddle, Richard Taylor, A.S Thompson, Edward Tregear, Percy Smith, Elsdon Best, Te Rangi Hiroa, Andrew Sharp, M.P.K Sorrenson, Kerry Howes, David Simmons, Margaret Orbell, to name just a few, can be summed up in under half a page.

Where did the Maori come from? Did Maori come here deliberately? Did Maori come here "skilfully"?

There are many theories - all unproven.

Are Maori the “indigenous peoples” of New Zealand?

No, Maori are colonists like everyone else.

Are Maori the “tangata whenua” of New Zealand?

If that expression is to be interpreted as “First Peoples” then the answer is probably yes (although some tribal traditions mention other people being here on the arrival of canoes). However, “tangata whenua”, in the context in which it is used here, is a politically charged term. It implies an absolute right to superiority based on a “finders keepers” mentality that is normally limited to small children.

Years 7-8

Different stereotypes of a ‘New Zealand’ identity have been purposefully constructed at different times to define who is included and who is excluded.

I would be interested to see the Parliamentary debates showing how these identities have been “purposefully constructed” as part of some masterplan.

Years 9-10

Aotearoa New Zealand has a history of selective and discriminatory practices to control migration, with little negotiation with Māori as tangata whenua. Nineteenth-century immigration schemes were designed to create a British colony and consequently shifted the balance of power from Māori to settlers. Immigration policy has been used to exclude some peoples and to restrict conditions for entry and citizenship.

“Immigration policy” always has and always will be used by every country in the world to “restrict conditions for entry and citizenship”. It would be insanity to do otherwise.

Contested ideas about identity have come from youth challenging social norms, and from social actions addressing injustices and societal divisions over values.

This is a wild generalisation and gross oversimplification. It belongs to some social science, but that is not history.

PAGE 5

Tūrangawaewae me te kaitiakitanga

I repeat – this is an English document – please have the courtesy (and common sense) to write in the English language.

This context focuses on the relationships of individuals, groups, and communities with the land, water, and resources, and on the history of contests over their control, use, and protection.

This may be a fascinating subject, but it has nothing to do with history.

Years 1-3

Naming places was key to establishing mana and tūrangawaewae. The names of marae, hapū, iwi, and geological features relate to experiences and whakapapa. Many of the names of geographical features, towns, buildings, streets, and places tell a story. Sometimes there is more than one story.

It is a big ask to teach the meaning of “mana” and “tūrangawaewae” to 5-year-olds. And yet again, where is reference to the origins of Europeans and other ethnicities here – after all, they make up most of the population.

Years 7-8

Aotearoa New Zealand was claimed and named. Te taiao was cared for and transformed by Māori and by subsequent settlers.

Many would have no idea what a “te taiao” is – yet again request to use English in the English version of this document.

Years 9-10

New Zealand’s settler government and the Crown were determined to undermine mana Māori, especially by acquiring Māori territories. The New Zealand Wars and the legislation that followed demonstrated their willingness to do this by any means.

This is an absolutely OUTRAGEOUS statement, not based on fact.

PAGE 6

Years 4-6

There was much debate among Māori chiefs over signing Te Tiriti o Waitangi. There are two versions of the treaty – Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Treaty of Waitangi. Some key words and phrases are different between the two versions. While the versions were taken to other parts of Aotearoa New Zealand, not all Māori signed. Almost all who did signed the Māori version and were given assurances that it guaranteed their chiefly authority.

The Curriculum is playing loose and free with the truth here.

Years 7-8

It is clear that Māori did not cede their mana to the Crown, and that they signed in the belief that it would give them power to govern in partnership with the Governor.

There is absolutely NOTHING clear about the Treaty. The behaviour of Maori in the twenty years following the signing shows absolutely no indication that Maori had any understanding of the concept of governing in partnership with the Governor.

The Kīngitanga was a significant example of pan-tribalism in response to the challenges of increasing immigration and constitutional change.

To call it "pan-tribalism" is a stretch – it included a small number of hapu and was specifically rejected by many other hapu.

In the past, the government has selectively excluded and supported people through processes associated with voting rights and welfare provision. New Zealand political parties have had different views at different times about the role of the state in regulating people's lives.

New Zealand has always been at the forefront of franchise requirements – the curriculum seems to conveniently ignore that universal suffrage is extremely new in any part of the world. I would be very interested to see evidence that the government has "selectively excluded...people...through processes associated with welfare provision".

Realm of New Zealand relationships have changed over time, for diverse reasons and with different outcomes for different countries. Pacific states have secured different levels of independence, which impact on their rights to New Zealand citizenship, participation in international organisations, and agreements with other countries.

I have no idea what "Realm of New Zealand relationships have changed over time" means. I also debate if this should be part of the history curriculum.

Years 9-10

The Waitangi Tribunal investigation process and subsequent settlements by the Crown have led to economic, political, social, and cultural growth for iwi. The settlements have also provided an opportunity for reconciliation.

Yes indeed "the settlements have also provided an opportunity for reconciliation" - what a pity these opportunities were not taken. After 45 years of Tribunal operation there is absolutely zero evidence that it has provided any reconciliation whatsoever, in fact on the contrary, there is abundant evidence that it has resulted in an amplification of discontent.

When people and groups have campaigned on or asserted their human rights, it has forced the state to act. This has been evident in the actions of workers' groups and organisations of women and of wāhine Māori. It has also been evident in law reform in relation to gender identity.

I question why are "wāhine Māori" singled out and not automatically included under the term "women?"

PAGE 7

Years 1-3

I can retell a story from the past using an appropriate frame of reference.

Wonderful. A 5-year-old can tell a story. Bravo. What is more, they understand what an "appropriate frame of reference" is. These are some uber-children we are breeding here. Do they study astro-physics and brain surgery as well?

I can use historical sources with deliberate attention to mātauranga Māori to help answer questions about the past.

A 5-year-old using historical sources? The "Little Golden Book of Maori History" complete with finger puppets, perhaps?

I can make observations about how people have acted in the past and how they act today.

This would be a tough enough requirement for an adult to fulfil let alone a 5-year-old child.

Years 4-6

I can draw on historical sources, giving deliberate attention to mātauranga Māori sources, to answer questions about the past. While doing so, I identify views that are missing and note how this restricts my conclusions.

How exactly is it possible to "identify views that are missing and note how this restricts my conclusions"? This is difficult for adults to achieve, let alone 10-year-old children.

I can identify the attitudes and values that motivated people in the past and compare them with attitudes and values of today.

Once again, this would be far too difficult for a 10-year-old child to achieve.

Years 7-8

I can construct an extended historical sequence of related events and changes, locate it in relation to the present, and recognise that others might sequence it differently using a different frame of reference.

What precisely does "locate it in relation to the present" mean? Does this direct student to be aware of "presentism", a crucial concept which is conspicuous by its absence throughout this Curriculum?

What exactly is meant by "a different frame of reference"? Under this curriculum, at this stage these students would have been taught precisely nothing about World history so it is presumed what is meant is a "Maori frame of reference", whatever that may be. It is essential that

students know world history to establish a frame of reference for “European” actions. “Europeans” acted according to the international standards of their day and it is against these, not a “Maori frame of reference” that they should be judged.

While doing so, I recognise that sources are incomplete, that there may not be a full answer to questions, and that my conclusions are themselves interpretations.

Bravo. This is possibly the only thing where there is likely to be broad agreement so far.

I can make an informed ethical judgement about people’s actions in the past, taking account of the attitudes and values of the times and the challenges people faced.

This is asking too much of children. Such “informed ethical judgements” rely totally upon an understanding of “presentism”, a far greater depth of knowledge than will be possible in the school environment and a far greater maturity than is possible at this age.

Years 9-10

I can construct and compare narratives of cause and consequence that place historical events, people, and changes in an extended sequence with links to the present.

This is asking too much of this age group.

I can actively seek out historical sources with differing perspectives and contrary views (including those that challenge my own interpretation), giving deliberate attention to mātauranga Māori sources. While doing so, I identify missing voices and draw conclusions that capture the diversity of people’s experiences.

How is it even possible that anyone, with the best will in the World, can “identify missing voices and draw conclusions that capture the diversity of people’s experiences”. To do this requires knowledge of the history of the rest of the World – how can you possibly pass judgements on New Zealand history when you don’t even understand World history, which the curriculum has been at pains to avoid?

I can make an informed ethical judgement about people’s actions in the past, giving careful consideration to the complex predicaments they faced, the attitudes and values of the times, and my own values and attitudes.

It would only be possible for students to make “informed ethical judgements” when they know what the ethical standards of the day were internationally. Otherwise, the only conclusion one can draw from this is that students are expected to judge 19th century ethics based on the ethics of 21st century New Zealand.

PAGES 8-11

These are a repeat of previous content and should be deleted.