Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Research

Kindness as a Paradigm for Governance

A pragmatic critical inquiry into New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's initiatives of kindness and collectivism as revealed in *The New Zealand Statement*, her speech to the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2018, and her address at the *Christchurch Remembrance Service* in March 2019.

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Abstract

This Masters research thesis is a pragmatic critical inquiry that will investigate *kindness* and *collectivism* as social transformation initiatives identified within a governance paradigm, and introduced internationally in *The New Zealand Statement* to the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly (2018) and further demonstrated in her speech at the Christchurch Remembrance Service (2019) by New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern.

The pragmatic critical inquiry into these initiatives will be contextualised and synthetically analysed against a theoretical framework assembled for this thesis comprising of the cultural and political theory of Hannah Arendt, Tom Clark, John Ralston Saul, and Iris Marion Young. Additional analysis will also consider Opinion and Op-ed from a selection of print media publications, examining a broader intersubjective response to both *The New Zealand Statement* and Ardern's leadership actions in the wake of the Christchurch attack.

The inquiry will look for connections that can be found, and meaning that can be revealed, as a result of a synthetic analysis of: the theoretical framework of cultural and political theory; Ardern's speeches; and, the Opinion and Op-ed pieces. It will also consider if and how how this synthesis of materials may in turn augment the theoretical framework.

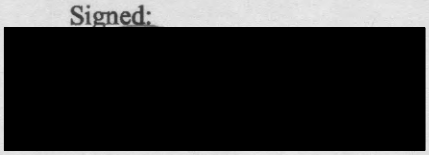
At the heart of this inquiry is the question, is Ardern providing a template and paradigm for governance and social transformation?

Declaration

"I, Richard Craig, declare that the Master of Research thesis entitled *Kindness as a Paradigm for Governance* is no more than 50,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work".

"I have conducted my research in alignment with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and Victoria University's Higher Degree by Research Policy and Procedures.

Signed:



Date: 12.06.2022

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father, John D. Craig (1927-2014),

for his nurturing of being and thinking.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the support of my supervisors Greg Aronson and Associate Professor Tom Clark. They have provided a fascinating, generous, and important forum of collaborative debate. I thank them for their enthusiasm, guidance, and academic rigour.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge the contributions of Holly and Jonathan, who have read drafts and provided an invaluable sounding board for the discussion and teasing out of ideas. Extra thanks to Holly for her editing, commitment, and support.

Thanks to Lyn and Cody (Spacebar Writers Group) for their encouragement and contribution to my work-in-progress development as a student and writer.

- Richard Craig.

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Abbreviations

Opposite the Editorial Page	Op-ed
Sustainable Development Goals	SDGs
United Nations	UN
United Nations General Assembly	UNGA
Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism	GIFCT
Television New Zealand	TVNZ
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	ABC

Introduction

The aim of this Masters research thesis is to conduct a pragmatic critical inquiry (consistent with Dewey's methodology)[1] into New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's speeches at the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2018 and the Christchurch Remembrance service in March 2019. In these speeches Ardern articulates two key concepts, *kindness* and *collectivism,* and presents these concepts within a governance paradigm at the UNGA and as a broader suggestion for and to all New Zealand citizens at the Remembrance Service.

At the Remembrance Service for the Christchurch terrorist attack in March 2019, dressed in a ceremonial Maori cloak and addressing the Muslim community, surrounded by a protective gathering of local citizens encircling them holding hands, Ardern used a simple but powerful expression to contextualise the victims and their loved ones left behind, "They are us." She concluded her address with the words, "We are one." These statements served to eliminate the difference separating the grieving Muslims and the broader New Zealand community. With these words Ardern drew the Muslim community in, explicitly labelling them as 'us' – not different, *us*, "we are one" (Ardern 2019b).

These concepts reach back to Ardern's address at the UNGA Leader's Week six months prior when she said, "Me too, must become we too" (Ardern 2018). They collapse boundaries of individualism and societal and cultural difference. They also remind that even though it is in the nature of the human condition for us to be unique and separate individuals, we are, all of us, part of something larger. This larger something is the collective of humanity and civilisation which unites and defines as convincingly as the personal characteristics that delineate individuality.

This moment in Christchurch was as redolent with poetry as it was a sobering reminder of the currents that tear us apart; that leave some feeling as *outsiders,* and many questioning the trajectories and values that have led to this impasse of difference and injustice. In many ways it is ironic that in this moment of bereavement and isolation these words were spoken by a politician rather than by a spiritual leader. There is also irony in the fact that to memorialise an event in which so many people were deprived of their right to live 'life in larger freedom' (United Nations 1945), it was not an emphasis of individual lives and loss that was made by Ardern, but the offering of the remembrance of a *collective* identity, of something that makes us human, something felt in the bones (if not the heart and head) like an indistinct memory.

[1] See Chapter One – Method and Methodology

Ardern's statement, "they are us,"[2] is not a claim of either scientific or reasoned knowledge, although it may sound as intrinsically self-evident as a moral truth. Rather, I argue the words are a claim of political speech, a message designed to heal rifts and draw experientially disparate elements of society into cohesion by providing both a unifying vision and a path forward; the power of its healing message filling the vacuum created in the numbing aftermath of a momentous act of hate.

In these words, and others spoken in the two speeches (at the UNGA and the Remembrance Service), lie a complex web of threads that deserve explication and unpacking in order to shed further light on Ardern's messaging; the contexts that she is addressing, and the solutions that she is proposing and acting upon, and indeed, what she is asking of her audiences.

In her UNGA speech, having identified a turbulent world facing unique global challenges, 'wicked problems', '[o]nes that are intertwined and interrelated,' Ardern says:

> Perhaps then it is time to step back from the chaos and ask what we want. It is in that space that we'll find simplicity. The simplicity of peace, of prosperity, of fairness. If I could distil it down into one concept that we are pursuing in New Zealand it is simple and it is this. Kindness.
>
> In the face of isolationism, protectionism, racism - the simple concept of looking outwardly and beyond ourselves, of kindness and collectivism, might just be as good a starting point as any (Ardern 2018, p. 11).

In order to assist with the inquiry's search for meaning and significance in Ardern's speeches and her usage of *kindness* and *collectivism*, this thesis will consider them against a theoretical framework of cultural and political theory. This academic literature will consist of Iris Marion Young's essay 'Structural Injustice and the Politics of Difference' (2009, pp. 362-83), John Ralston Saul's books, *The Unconscious Civilization* (1997) and *On Equilibrium* (2002), 'The Social Question' from Chapter Two of Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution* (1963 (1990), pp. 59-114), and her essay 'Truth and Politics' (1967 (2006), pp. 223-59), and Tom Clark's book *Stay on Message: Poetry and Truthfulness in Political Speech* (2012). It will be shown that considering Ardern's speeches against this theoretical framework allows for a deeper understanding of the social and cultural transformation both inherent and called for in Ardern's speeches, and provides for nuances of understanding and context, for a consideration of meaning, that might escape an analysis based upon rhetorical theory or discourse analysis. But also, in the case of the two preeminent social researchers Saul and Young, why social transformation needs

[2] Ardern places the stress on *are.*

to occur, what needs to change and why, and what some of these changes might look like. We can then compare their findings with what we learn about Ardern's agenda and locate both a context and paradigm for change.

In addition to this presentation and inquiry of theory, the research will also present a selection of Opinion and Op-ed pieces from print media. The intent here is to provide some intersubjectivity – responses and voices, other than the author's, from commentators talking about essentially the same material and phenomena, namely the Ardern speeches and her statements calling for, and pointing towards, social reform and transformation.

Finally, in Chapter Four, this thesis will undertake a synthesis and combined analysis of these elements of speech, opinion, and theory with a view to determining what knowledge and perspectives might be discovered as a result of combining an understanding of these strands of political rhetoric, opinion, commentary, and theory.

Chapter Five will build on Clark's theory of poetics in political speech and introduce the modifier of 'action' and the derived interpretations of political actions and their potential effect on 'message'.

These strands will then come together in Chapter Six, the conclusion. The conclusion will show that Ardern appears to be addressing a distinct need that our modern societies have for social transformation, and with it that she has presented a new paradigm for governance – a challenge to both civil and civic society, and indeed to our international institutions to do a better job and respond decisively to pressing need.

This thesis is not intended to reflect or promote a particular political dogma or belief but is intended as an honest appraisal and study of the matters outlined above. It is intended that any conclusions and outcomes reached are supported by the data, theory, and Opinions presented and are the result of a fair and reasonable synthetic combination and analysis.

It is intended that the thesis tells a story, a story comprised of various thematic ideas integrated with each other and revealing a substrate foundational theme. This theme provides a perspective for understanding many of the elements that will come into play and their sympathetic relationship to each other.

Chapter One

Method and methodology

This Masters research thesis examines the proposition of *kindness as a paradigm for governance* employing the Pragmatic Method of 'radical critical inquiry' first described by Dewey (Crotty 1998, pp. 158-9). It will examine Ardern's brand of *kindness* and *collectivism* attempting to discover the meaning inherent in Ardern's usage of the terms and where such an inquiry might lead. Pragmatic critical inquirers, as Crotty notes, take the view 'that culture is not a realm apart from the give-and-take of everyday society but mirrors its contradictions and oppressions.' To divest themselves of 'inherent' socialised bias, from the 'voices of an inherited tradition and prevailing culture … criticalists insist that the culture and the accounts it informs be radically called into question' (1998, p. 159). This is one of the principal reasons that the project has elected to use print media Opinion and OpEd in order to assess a parallel response to Ardern's *kindness* initiative, as it insures against the single voice of the researcher, with potentially socialised predilections, from distorting analysis.

The objective of this critical inquiry is to discover what the study of these selected speeches of Ardern's reveals when considered through the lens of the cultural and political theory and the Opinion and Op-ed commentary. Is it possible for this research to assist with discovering an approach and/or means for the formulation of policies and governance that assist in creating a better legacy and future for younger generations; or of reminding governments that their primary responsibility is for the wellbeing and interests of the people – *the public interest*?

The social research method of pragmatic critical inquiry has its roots in the work of John Dewey (Sorrell 2013), and is particularly suitable for analysing both politics, and texts that are principally political rhetoric. In these contexts knowledge and truth are subjectively constructed, as opposed to being anchored in metaphysics, within an objective and immutable context (Popper 1972, p. 16). As explained by Morgan:

> [r]ather than metaphysical discussions about the nature of reality or truth, Dewey and other pragmatists called for a different starting point that was rooted in life itself - a life that was inherently contextual, emotional, and social. This does not mean that Dewey's pragmatism lacked a philosophy of knowledge, but instead of traditional metaphysics he relied on a process-based approach to knowledge, in which inquiry was the defining process (Morgan 2014, p. 1047).

The thesis will show that Ardern herself displays the traits of being a pragmatist in her role as a politician and leader. A pragmatic inquiry is therefore well suited to this subject matter. The pragmatic approach allows the fluidity necessary to accommodate new directions or theories if they provide more compelling answers and explanations to observations drawn from analysis of the data and its synthesis with the other materials. It is most suitable in this thesis, where the objective is to use its question as a starting point and allow the research to determine where that might lead and what perspectives might be revealed. This is of particular significance as this research deals with the phenomena of both the *message* and the *messenger*. The critical inquiry will therefore consider this difference between *message* and *messenger* and how it might be of significance in the process of arriving at conclusions.

Just as Ardern's *kindness* is essentially a synthetic construct, so too is a synthetic method employed to reveal and delve into meaning that Ardern generates and to create contextualisation to assist with understanding and perspective. This approach creates room for flexibility and allows the research to find significance in areas that would not easily be otherwise considered or anticipated, such as a letter written by a thirteen-year-old girl living in Australia, or a comment from a Pakistani taxi driver in Dubai. The synthetic approach allows the various elements of the research that are brought into play to resonate with each other, to indicate alternative significances, and to paint unanticipated pictures. These are pictures that are the product of the juxtaposition of themes and elements. Pictures that can lead us to conclusions that may not have been discovered and that are potentially of greater knowledge significance to cultural and political theory than if for instance the research was simply an investigation of Ardern's policy of kindness.

A proportion of the analysis will be my response to Ardern's phrases, language, and actions, involving a subjective interpretation of her speeches. In addition to this analysis I will also present a sample of Opinion and Op-ed pieces from print media sources. These articles constitute a variety of responses to Ardern's, rhetoric, policies, and actions. They are drawn upon to ensure that not only are other responses to Ardern's speeches and actions considered, but that the research provides some counteraction to the potential for the socialised bias inherent in only hearing the researcher's voice (Crotty 1998, p. 159). The utilisation of the Opinion and Op-ed pieces is also a response to Friedrichs and Kratochwil who suggest safeguarding against reaching conclusion in isolation by seeking consensus wherever possible (Friedrichs & Kratochwil 2009, pp. 706-9). The combined voices of the Opinion and Op-ed will therefore be used to add to the analysis of Ardern and the two speeches and to reveal additional unique and personal responses. They function as critical inquiry as they address the phenomena of Ardern's rhetoric and action and prompt conclusions about their meaning and significance. In this context Opinion and Op-ed pieces 'are an institutionalised site of citizen discourse where society reflexively talks to itself,' and provide publishers with the opportunity to publish ideas that may not align with those of their

Editorial Board (Mitman, Nikolaev & Porpora 2012). They also provide something like a forum that can test out ideas and policy directions, and where subject matter experts can also prod governments into changes of direction or to take additional matters into consideration. As such they are read avidly by those within the political establishment (Sommer & Maycroft 2008).

I will look at the use of language and the rhetorical aspects of the speeches, analyse their content for meaning, and discuss the contexts into which they are delivered and the issues being addressed with reference to a theoretical framework based upon selected texts of Arendt (1963 (1990), 1967 (2006)), Clark (2012), Saul (1997, 2002) and Young (2009). The thesis will consider broader responses to Ardern's *kindness* and *collectivism* messaging, her leadership, and political action, such as how it might provide a strategy to begin to overcome the 'wicked problems' (Ardern 2018, p. 11). The research will also look for clues in Ardern's rhetoric and action that tell their own story, clues that provide insight into Ardern's approach and into how she might view the world and its current predicament. I will also consider indications that might demonstrate whether these initiatives from Ardern set her apart; whether it is the nature of Ardern as a political practitioner and her approach and demeanour in pursuing and communicating her objectives that is of significance.

In Chapter Two the thesis will present key critical thinking and argument from the cultural and political theorists noted above. The works to be examined are: Iris Marion Young's essay 'Structural Injustice and the Politics of Difference' (2009); John Ralston Saul's *The Unconscious Civilisation* (1997) and, *On Equilibrium* (2002); a chapter entitled 'The Social Question' in Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution* (1963 (1990)), and her essay 'Truth & Politics' (1967 (2006)); and two works by Tom Clark, *Stay on Message* (2012), and *Talking Up a Legacy* (2019). The intent is to assist with the explication and deconstruction of key ideas and their social and political contexts, thus providing a theoretical frame of reference through which themes and elements that are important for understanding the significance and context of Ardern's political rhetoric may be revealed. In addition to providing a theoretical framework, these theorists also provide the primary literature of the thesis. In the work of each of the theorists there are themes and contexts that track directly to Ardern and thus provide meaningful and significant information that can inform the critical inquiry and speak to social transformation. I have positioned this content at the beginning of the thesis to create and clarify the context of Ardern's speech and action, so that when Ardern's speeches are analysed there can be a synthetic and sympathetic resonance with this theoretical material that will assist in revealing deeper understandings. The chapter discusses these theorist's ideas with minimal references to Ardern beyond some broad observations. It functions as a landscape to create a backdrop into which Ardern's rhetoric and action will subsequently be introduced. Having introduced Ardern into that environment the critical inquiry and synthetic approach will then consider how Ardern's presence may have altered it, and how it

may have led to new insights or understandings. The synthetic approach to a critical inquiry of the data and theory provides a means to discover meaning in the data, and the corollary, a means to find additional meaning in the theory.

Chapter Three is organised into in two sections. These represent the data of the research. Section One will present a critical analysis of Ardern's two speeches, the *New Zealand Statement* (UNGA Address) and the Christchurch Remembrance Service address. This review will deal directly with Ardern's language and with the rhetorical content of her speeches. It will discuss the significance of aspects of Arden's phrasing and language choices that reveal underlying themes and demonstrate that she is an extremely adept politician and communicator who appears to be comprehensively in touch with the social and existential challenges facing both her own citizenry and the world.

Section Two of Chapter Three will present a critical analysis of Opinion and Op-ed articles taken from print media, (predominantly news publishers). These articles are both data, and function as additional but external critique, providing an alternative response to Ardern's speech and action, and to the themes that she is engaged with. They provide further interesting insights into Ardern's speech and action and serve methodologically to function as a counterpoint to the lone voice of the pragmatic researcher. The articles provide alternative and pragmatic interpretations with their own conclusions, conclusions that the research inquiry can consider, and adapt to if necessary. In addition, there is a sense in which these pieces can also be regarded as barometers or mirrors. They inform their readers of some of the key ideas that Ardern is presenting, shed light on how Ardern's kindness and collectivism initiatives, and action, might be efficacious in addressing contemporary issues, and provide a sense of how effective Ardern's political messaging is. One of the Opinions (Kerry 2019) does not deal directly with Ardern but does address issues of *kindness* and *politics*. It also provides insight into the efficacy of kindness within institutional contexts and argues that the time is right for politics to be moving towards kindness. Finally, I have included an Opinion written by Jacinda Ardern herself for the *New York Times* (Ardern 2019a) that provides an opportunity to encounter Ardern exerting political influence internationally in order to focus attention on issues she believes are important.

Transcripts of the speeches presented in Section One and full copies of the Opinion and Op-ed pieces in Section Two are included for readers in the Appendices of this document. In addition, at the beginning of the analysis of each of the speeches YouTube links are provided in the footnotes.

Chapter Four will synthesise the analysis of the speeches and the Opinion and Op-ed presented in Chapter Three with the theory and frameworks presented in Chapter Two and discuss meanings that can be drawn from the critical analysis when reviewed via the lens of the theoretical framework. It will also present any new insights discovered as a result of this inquiry. Finally,

Chapter Four will reveal where the research has led when all the factors under consideration are synthesised. It will identify the elements that have come into play as a result of the inquiry.

Chapter Five will present an argument for a poetical deconstruction of political action building on Clark's theory of a poetic interpretation of political rhetoric. It will demonstrate that when politicians act, *we the people* watch, and that citizens and commentators make evaluations based upon what they have seen and experienced as witnesses. This leads to the conclusion that both the words and deeds of politicians are important, and furthermore, that the witnesses to political deeds make evaluative judgements that are as anchored in poetic interpretation and deconstruction as those concerning rhetoric.

Chapter Six will present a conclusion drawing the threads of inquiry together into propositions that have taken the whole of the research into account. It will balance the significance of Ardern's rhetoric as opposed to her initiatives of *kindness* and *collectivism*. And consider whether Ardern represents a new paradigm for political leadership.

My approach to the mechanics of analysing the speeches, Opinions, and theoretical material is anchored in an attempt to utilise Saul's 'six qualities of equilibrium', *common sense, ethics, imagination, intuition, memory,* and *reason* (Saul 2002). In doing so I am looking for a resonance of ideas and thinking, especially looking for examples that reveal a continuum, those that have roots anchored in civilisation and humanity and whose threads trace their way to the present. In order to create a deeper sense of this anchoring I have also deliberately chosen the ancient Greek philosophers, Aristotle, Plato and Socrates to trace some key concepts back to, as near as possible, their roots. I have attempted to make the informing of the analysis by Saul's qualities covert in order to maintain immersion in the ideas themselves, rather than draw attention to the mechanics and risk getting pulled out of the play and dynamics of linking the materials conceptually. What is overt, is my attempt to create an analysis that uses the theoretical materials as a lens through which to view and understand the data. Also, because rhetoric is arguably the appropriate conceptual framework for understanding the organisation of the sub-structure of the speeches, I have included a lexico-grammatical analysis in order to reveal the crafting and poetic nature of the speeches. Notwithstanding that, even in these sections examining wordplay, my primary focus is on revealing the underlying ideas and concepts of the materials and in using synthetic analysis guided by Saul's qualities of equilibrium to draw them together.

My rationale for pursing this approach lies between Ardern and Saul. Near the end of her Christchurch Remembrance Service speech Ardern says, 'the answer lies in our humanity' (Ardern 2019b). Saul's six qualities of equilibrium respect the same source, 'our humanity,' and introduce the idea that in order to understand our humanity it is necessary to also recognise that it is anchored in our civilisation, and that a deep understanding of 'our humanity' requires delving into the threads of civilisation where we will find continuity and perspective. It therefore seems

fitting to employ Ardern's answer and Saul's guiding principles to assist in the deconstruction and analysis of the materials of this thesis in an attempt to reveal some of the humanistic connections that link them.

Each of us will have our own predilections for where the resonant home of some of the key ideas lies. I have attempted to find mine using *imagination*, *intuition*, and *memory* (rather than history) and then to use *reason* to explain and clarify my selection. Different readers will find resonance in their own 'texts' and sources, I only ask that you keep your point of centre and orientation on the same target, and that is: 'the answer lies in our humanity' (2019b).

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

Arendt – Clark – Saul - Young

This chapter will examine themes noted in the Introduction through a framework provided by four cultural and political theorists: Hannah Arendt, Tom Clark, John Ralston Saul and Iris Marion Young. The review of Young will deal specifically with ideas of structural injustices – identifying two predominant categories of 'difference' and examining briefly some of the general tactics required to begin to overcome them. The appraisal of Saul's work will expand the discussion of society to introduce the realm of democratic politics and the gradual erosion of democracy at the hands of corporatism, which brings to bear an agenda at odds with the public interest, so clearly is it focused on its own private interest. It will look briefly at the corrosive effects that this has had on our civilisation and discuss how the corporatist agenda might be reined in to return to a *government for the people* that has a pragmatic approach to policy filtering and formulation. Arendt's contribution will be a discussion of politics itself, focused on the dynamics of politics and compassion in combination, and the role of truth in politics. This inquiry examines the nature of political truth and how it is different from other notions of truth and considers what this reveals about politics. Clark's contribution will expand on Arendt's theory and concentrate particularly on political speech and rhetoric to examine how meaning can be derived from examining political rhetoric and observing politicians in action. Each of these provide a means of both describing and understanding the contexts of the contemporary world and its social, economic and political contexts and problems. They have been selected not only for this appropriateness, but also because, in varying ways, it seems that Jacinda Ardern reflects the dynamics and in some cases the details of their theory.

This presentation of theoretical material addresses key themes and explanations that resonate with the words and contexts that Ardern employs in an attempt to leverage the theory to provide greater insight and clarity into the speeches and her actions. It also functions to create a picture, a landscape. In subsequent chapters Ardern's rhetoric and actions will be placed into this landscape, as will the Opinion and Op-ed pieces. This will allow for a synthetic analysis that will seek to understand Ardern's initiatives of kindness and collectivism, but also to consider additional matters that may be raised or become evident as a result of the accumulation of data and inquiry. A further consideration will seek to understand how the theoretical framework may also be reconsidered or augmented when all the materials are considered together.

Iris Marion Young

Structural Injustice and the Politics of Difference

Iris Marion Young's body of work provides significant societal-cultural insight. It is, at least partially, a response to how nations, societies, and indeed the world have changed in modern times. Even societies that might once have thought of themselves as multi-cultural have experienced a vast increase in diversity within their populations. Some of these diversities were already present in an ethnic and racial sense and have simply grown in both size and complexity. Other diversities were present but unseen, undefined, unacknowledged or in some cases even unknown. This is a reality that forces a reconsideration of the notion that there is a single homogenous nature to nations and their communities. Young's *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990) acknowledged this altered social and cultural world and drew attention to the fact that modern societies contain disparities of wealth, health, education, housing, employment, language, religion and culture (to name a few). These disparities create disadvantages for some of their people in significant and frequently intractable ways leading to structural inequalities that produce barriers to security, harmony, and opportunity. Young's work discusses the nature of *difference* and the effects it produces for people who are outside normative ideals, and suggests approaches to remediation for the creation of equitable societies.

Jacinda Ardern is particularly focused on creating more equitable societies. In fact it is reasonable to say that her UNGA speech reveals that she is focused on creating a more equitable world, and that she recognises many of the categories of societal and cultural difference that Young articulates. Young's work is therefore an ideal candidate for providing a deeper and more nuanced understanding of these problems and possible solutions.

In her opening remarks of *The New Zealand Statement* Ardern reflects on the character of New Zealand saying, 'Our empathy and strong sense of justice is matched only by our pragmatism' (Ardern 2018, p. 2). She notes the sentiment expressed in 1945 by New Zealand Prime Minister Peter Fraser commenting on the UN Charter, that the UN offered a chance 'for a peace that would be real, lasting, and worthy of human dignity' (2018, p. 3). Ardern also identifies a post-globalisation 'growing sense of isolation, dislocation, and a sense of insecurity and the erosion of hope' (2018, p. 4) and talks about building 'productive, sustainable, inclusive economies (2018, p. 7). Summarising the 'core values' of the United Nations, as expressed in its charter, Ardern reminds us:

> That all people are equal. That everyone is entitled to have their dignity and human rights respected. That we must strive to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom (2018, p. 10).

Ardern's words carry an echo of Thomas Jefferson's expression in the *American Declaration of Independence,* where at the outset he writes:

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed (Jefferson 1776).

Jefferson's sentiments ultimately found their way into the *14th Amendment of the American Constitution* the, so called, 'equal protection clause', which states:

> No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws (Congress of the United States of America 1866).

These documents articulate an expression of equality that form essential understandings of individual human rights and governance principles within modern western democracies. As such, these ideals are also explicitly stated in the United Nations Charter, which begins:

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- to reaffirm our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women of nations large and small, and
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom (1945).

Despite the crystalisation of these ideals in both their constitution and the Declaration of Independence the United States of America has not fully realised them even though they are 'cornerstones' of their republic's constitutional and democratic system (J. Harvie Wilkinson

1992). Indeed, one can argue further that every contemporary western democracy is struggling with these issues of justice and equality, injustice and inequality.

Iris Marion Young's seminal work, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990), was published barely over one year before the city of Los Angeles exploded into riots in 1992. These riots were an expression of exasperation by African Americans who were 'filled with fury and disbelief, and eager to show the rest of the world,' (Medina 2017) – people tired of being treated with prejudice and grouped together as *different*. Henry Keith Watson was one of the men at the epicentre at the riot's inception and was convicted of beating truck driver Reginald Denny after he was pulled from his truck whilst attempting to pass through an intersection in South Los Angeles. Looking back, 25 years on, he observed to the New York Times:

> "Nothing has changed, nothing. We gave L.A. a black eye. Everyone on the world knows about Florence and Normandie. You think any official wants to acknowledge that? We still have Flint, Fergusson, all those places, nothing has changed. The oppression is deep rooted, and it doesn't go away. History has a way of repeating itself" (Medina 2017).

In that same twenty-fifth anniversary year a significant number of citizens surveyed in Los Angeles believed that the LA Riots could reoccur (Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Centre for the Study of Los Angeles 2017, p. 5). In contemporary times this survey feels prophetic. Los Angeles did indeed erupt in riots and protests again. Protests echoed around America as people came to grips with the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, who suffocated to death whilst his neck was pinned under a policeman's knee. A "pandemic of racism led to his death" was the comment made by one of Floyd's lawyers at his memorial service (BBC News 2020).

African Americans, however, are only one 'group' that finds itself on the receiving end of injustice and *the politics of difference*. In addition to racial prejudice and iniquities, citizens may also find themselves disadvantaged because of their sexuality, gender, ethnicity, disability, socio-economic position, religious beliefs, or migrant and refugee status, to name a few.

This backdrop helps us to understand the fundamental building blocks of Iris Marion Young's concepts of *structural injustice* and *difference* (Young 2009). Her substantial body of cultural and social-political philosophy identifies examples of how societies 'norms' actually provide a framework for exclusion and prejudicial behavior - for injustice. She categorises 'group' differences and the dynamics of the injustices they experience, and suggests remedies to create more equitable and just societies. As such, she provides an appropriate theoretical framework that is useful in the evaluation and critical analysis of Jacinda Ardern's rhetoric and action. Ardern is explicitly targeting the effects of prejudicial *group difference* injustices by

promoting the idea that the wellbeing and inclusivity of society, and its citizens, needs to be attended to; attended to with *kindness*.

Young's essay *Structural Injustice and the Politics of Difference* (2009) was originally presented as a paper, delivered at Keele University U.K. for the *AHRC Centre for Law, Gender, and Sexuality Intersectionality Workshop*, 21/22 May 2005 (Young 2005). Young subsequently revised her paper into essay form for publication. She died before completing her revisions, however, her executor made the final draft of the essay available for publication (Christiano & Christman 2009).[3]

There are numerous differences of expression and argument between the 2005 paper and Young's drafting of it into essay form. However, it appears clear that the later version was intended as a refinement and development of the original paper. As such, the essay stands as the culmination of her thinking and philosophical argument, especially with reference to her significant earlier works, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990) and *Inclusion and Democracy* (2002). It is therefore the final draft version of the essay as published in *Contemporary Debates in Political Philosoph*y that this thesis will consider (Young 2009).

Young traces the origins of the politics of difference to 'feminist, anti-racist, and gay liberation' activism in the 1980s that claimed that 'gender, race, and sexuality' produced 'structural inequalities' that the so-called 'dominant paradigms' of equality and inclusion did not clearly recognize or combat. She argues that historically these dominant paradigms have sought justice and equality through nondiscrimination, through 'ignoring gender, racial, or sexual preferences among people.' This approach, Young argues:

> ignores deep material differences in social position, division of labor, socialized capacities, normalizing standards and ways of living that continue to disadvantage members of historically excluded groups. Commitment to substantial equality thus requires attending to rather than ignoring such differences (2009, p. 362) .

In the 1990s a politics of difference emerged 'which focused on differences of nationality, ethnicity, and religion.' This thinking places value on individual uniqueness and 'argues [that] public accommodation to and support of such cultural difference is compatible with liberal institutions' (2009, p. 366).

Young categorises and analyses two approaches to her theory of group difference and justice. The *Structural Inequality Approach* and the *Societal Culture Approach*. Her essay

[3] See Editors' note 1 (Christiano & Christman 2009, p. 381).

elucidates how the *societal cultural* model leads to a narrowing of focus resulting in factors such as racism, for example, being subsumed by ethnicity as the denominator of difference, thus ignoring deep-seated attitudes that:

> attach significance to bodily characteristics – skin color, hair type, facial features, and constructs hierarchies of standard or ideal body types against others which appear inferior, stigmatized, deviant, or abject (2009, pp. 366-7).

Whereas the *structural inequality* model highlights and reveals a broader spectrum of inequalities pertaining to a 'hierarchy of status or privilege', such as those:

> where people produce and maintain advantages for themselves and disadvantages for others, in terms of access to resources, power, autonomy, honour, or receiving service and deference, by means of the application of rules and customs that assume such categorical distinctions (2009, p. 363).

Young argues that it is necessary for institutions to explicitly:

> recognize group difference and either compensate for disadvantage, revalue some attributes, positions, or actions, or take special steps to meet the needs of and empower members of disadvantaged groups (2009, p. 364).

It must be noted that Young ascribes value to each model in so far as they illuminate structural injustices, but she expresses reservation about the 'difference blindness' inherent in modern liberalism, particularly with regard to people with disabilities, institutional racism, and gender inequality (2009, pp. 364-6).

Young develops her argument by using three examples of group difference to elucidate structural and institutionalised prejudice: disability, race, and gender. She contends that society's systems and methods (of organisation and allocation of all manner of resources) operate with defining characteristics that prevent members of these groups from having equal access, reward, opportunity, and ultimately prospect, for the future. For example, American labour markets have a combination of subtle and overt practices that place limitations on members of these groups whereby African Americans have become over-represented in the unskilled manual labour market, leaving many unable to aspire to working in anything but the most menial of jobs for the lowest remuneration. Latinos living in America have a similar experience. Racial segregation is another example of structural inequality, and whilst the United States has moved beyond institutionalised racial segregation policies, such as were present on public transport and education until the 1960s, the dynamics of the labour market, noted above, create socio-economic strata that persist in segregating communities by housing affordability and disposable income. These segregations provide disturbing examples of the insidiousness of structural inequalities that

entrench injustice. The contemporary reality is that racial injustices persist despite most western governments having explicit laws forbidding discrimination based upon race.

One of the most challenging group differences, with concomitant structural injustices, pertain to people with disabilities. For this group the outcomes of injustices are especially ostracising, particularly when their employment opportunities are adjudicated based on merit. Under a merit system, anyone who wishes to apply for a job can do so, but only those judged to be a good fit for the job will ever actually be offered it – a fit based upon considerations such as aptitude, experience, and demeanour. Under this system 'everyone else is a loser … and they suffer no injustice on that account' (2009, p. 364). But society's conceptualisation of what is *normal* either precludes or makes it extremely difficult for people with disabilities to participate on even terms. For example, as Young points out, the 'built environment' of cities is designed around people who can walk, and who can see and access that environment whilst standing, making many simple daily tasks difficult and challenging for people who fall outside this 'normal range.' Young contends that the treatment of people with disabilities is 'paradigmatic of the structural inequality approach to a politics of difference in general. [That it] is more likely to perpetuate rather than correct injustice' (2009, p. 365).

Similar dynamics apply to gender inequality, although it is possibly contendable that in the time since Young drafted her essay considerable progress has been made in most of the areas that she identifies. There are two key areas of difference in Young's deconstruction of gender based structural injustice. Firstly, biological difference. This asserts that society's ideal of the biological norm is masculine, hence uniquely female manifestations such as menstruation, pregnancy, and breast feeding are anomalous – Young contends that 'the female body retains a monstrous aspect in the societal imagination' (2009, p. 368). The second is in the gendered 'division of labour'. Young admits that within the paid workforce significant progress has been made to close the 'gender gap', (although there is still frequent disparity when it comes to equal pay for equal work). On the domestic front however, Young contends that 'women do most of the unpaid care work in the family, and most people of both sexes assume that primary responsibility for care of children, other family members, and housecleaning falls primarily to women (2009, p. 368).

Young's primary contention is that for these contexts of structural injustice difference blind policies of 'formal equality', such as those that are legislated or followed as institutional policies in civil society, are insufficient to overcome the disadvantages the groups are prejudiced with, even where 'overt discriminatory practices are illegal and widely condemned'. She argues that civil and civic society must *notice* these processes of group differentiation before they can be corrected (2009, p. 367).

Young attributes development of the terminology *Societal Cultural* to Will Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (1995). This classification recognises that nation states are often comprised of a variety of ethnic origins. Dependent upon the nature of nation building that occurred, ethnic minority examples might be the aboriginal inhabitants of a land (that now finds itself subject to new geo-political definition); peoples displaced by the drawing of borders or the conquest and colonialization of territories; immigrants who have migrated to a new country for opportunity or who have escaped their homelands for a variety of reasons, such as civil war or invasion. In the 21st century many countries pride themselves on their multicultural composition, which is not to say that they have a multiplicity of *national* identities – in fact, it is the dominance of a majority culture that is defined by the *Societal Cultural Approach*, a majority culture that dominates the political power structures in both civil and civic society. Recognising this, 'the societal culture approach explicitly rejects political principles and practices which assume that a single polity must coincide with a single common culture' (2009, p. 370).

Young summarises Kymlicka's focus:

> For Kymlicka, issues of a politics of difference concern: freedom of expression and practice, territorial autonomy and self-government for historic nations, public support for culture preservation, arguments for exempting members of some groups from certain regulations on cultural grounds; measures to ensure representation of minority cultures in major political institutions of the state; defence against members of minority cultures having to bear unfair costs due to their desire to remain committed to and maintain their culture (2009, p. 370).

An issue of significance for this thesis is that of religious difference. Young notes that Kymlicka omitted religion from his societal cultural approach, but that other commentators developing and evolving his philosophy have included religion as a consideration, and so she follows their lead. It is also worth noting that both Young and Kymlicka neglect to include children as a group, and neither pay significant attention to the elderly as a group.[4]

Young sees a place for both group difference approaches, albeit with a slightly different role to play. They both share the concern about the 'domination that some groups are able to exercise over public meaning and control over resources' and they both take issue with, and challenge, the 'difference blind public principle'. They also both question the notion that:

[4] Young & Kymlicka make no mention of children and young people, yet children are frequently disadvantaged and can suffer complex structural injustices. Ardern specifically recognises and attends to the needs of children and young people.

> equal citizenship in a common polity entails a commitment to a common public interest, a single national culture, and single set of rules that applies to everyone in the same way. They both argue that commitment to justice sometimes requires noticing social or cultural differences and sometimes treating people differently (2009, p. 371).

Each approach also addresses a different aspect of the problem. The *societal cultural approach* addresses dominant nationalistic tendencies. It recognises that national societies can have both 'common political institutions', and 'institutions by which we distinguish ourselves as peoples or cultures with distinct practices and traditions' (2009, p. 371). The *structural inequality approach* provides more specificity and 'highlights the depth and systematicity of inequality … It calls attention to relations and processes of exploitation, marginalization, normalization that keep many people in subordinate positions' (2009, p. 371).

There is also an important and subtle distinction in how the two *approaches* define culture. Per Kymlicka:

> I am using 'a culture' as synonymous with 'a nation' or 'a people'—that is, as an intergenerational community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory or homeland, sharing a distinct language and history. And a state is multicultural if its members either belong to different nations (a multination state), or have emigrated from different nations (a polyethnic state), and if this fact is an important aspect of personal identity and political life (Kymlicka 1995, p. 9 Chapter 2).

For Young culture has a different and more nuanced and informal meaning. She views culture as referring to 'specific meanings that people use and understand when they interact.' This varies from communication conventions and norms used in speech, such as tone, the formalities of behaviour and public speech employed in the context of a meeting of heads of state, or authoritative 'modes of stance' and 'sentence structure' often employed in modern western society. She observes:

> In this usage, people understand, partly understand, misunderstand or do not understand at all meanings conveyed by speech, bodily comportments, or symbols. To the extent that some people do not understand, or misunderstand, this may well be due to their having a cultural repertoire derived from a different place or different group (2009, p. 374).

For Young, responsibility for action to attend to structural inequalities and 'undermine injustice' falls more upon the shoulders of civil institutions than civic institutions. Perhaps this is something that has changed in the last ten or fifteen years, but there seems to be a current tendency for governments not to resile from telling their citizens how to think and act, but to attempt to lead

'political correctness,' to be awake to the unique problems and challenges that minorities face and attend to them.

Young's point of contention with the *societal cultural approach* to difference is that it lacks the subtlety required to identify that within different cultural groups there lie more specific group differences, and that these groups are subjected to enduring structural injustices. Injustices that are not addressed in categorisations that lack nuance, nor in actions that tend to treat, for example, a cultural grouping as a single entity with a single set of problems; an essentialism that belies complexity. She writes:

> The societal culture approach tends to obscure the way that many group-based political claims and conflicts in contemporary multicultural societies involve both issues of cultural freedom *and* issues of structural inequality such as racism. Where there are problems of a lack of recognition of or accommodation to national, cultural, religious or linguistic groups in liberal democratic societies today (as well as others), these are often played out through dominant discourses that stereotype members of minority groups, find them technically inept or morally inferior, spatially segregate them and limit their opportunities to develop skills and compete for high status positions (2009, p. 377).

So, who needs to act, and what needs to be acted upon? For Young, the societal culture model divides along two distinct lines, the public domain – the state, and the private domain – everything else. She suggests that the debate within this model is limited to:

> 'What shall the state permit, support, or require, and what shall it discourage or forbid? …Shall the state allow or even support cultural autonomy? Should the state allow exemptions from some of its regulations for the sake of respecting cultural or religious difference? Can granting special language rights be compatible with a principle of equal political rights? (2009, p. 378).

Concentrating upon civil society, and private action and remediation, ignores the possibility for creative and practical solutions and actions from civic society. In this context, Young appears to only charge civil institutions with the responsibility for action within the private domain. This stance ignores a crucial factor. Yes, there are institutionalised practices which foster structural and cultural injustice, but prejudice is an attitudinal dynamic – at its heart, prejudice is a practice, the action of an individual (or community). These individual actions of prejudice have culminated in collectivised and institutionalised prejudicial policies, as seen in the U.S.A. – but the source of prejudice lies with the individual, even though institutions may perpetuate prejudicial injustice and entrench structural inequalities.

In summary, Young writes that a politics of difference focuses on *structural inequalities* and *societal cultural inequalities*. *Structural inequalities* are identified as pertaining to differences of gender, race, and sexuality. S*ocietal cultural inequalities* include disability, ethnicity, socio-economic standing, and religion. In the societal cultural model these are groups that are *different* from the norm of the state or nation. In this view, groups may be conceived that are comprised of individuals who may also share attributes in common with other groups. For example, refugees in a state may originate from various races and ethnicities, but may also have inherent gendered, disability, educational, or socio-economic inequalities and suffer additional injustices consistent with each of these groups.

Young's strategy is to firstly recognize and identify these groups and their disadvantages. This is a process of analysis for both civil and civic institutions to undertake. Secondly, she devises a combination of policies and actions that specifically attend to redressing inequalities. Young theorises that these may be required to produce advantage in order to counteract the scale of disadvantage.

Young's approach does not explicitly identify that entrenched inequalities are a result of similarly entrenched prejudices that are manifested by individuals. Individuals hold prejudice, and practice prejudice as they interact with others in society, both formally and informally. They may have inherited or learned their prejudice in an institutional setting, or from cultural norms and prevalent behaviour socialised in their society; or they may take their prejudices into institutions and society at large and contribute to creating behaviours that entrench structural injustices. Remedies that do not address and attempt to modify individually held prejudices and prejudicial behaviour, in this context, are not fully addressing the problem. For example, civil and civic institutions may increase awareness of racism and dictate policies aimed at preventing systemic and institutionalized racism, but entrenched individual behaviour can resist these changes, as demonstrated recently in the United States with the death of George Floyd and countless other black lives lost whilst in police custody or interaction.

I think that Young (2009) has contextualised this area of societal-cultural difference extremely clearly, but I do not think that she has fully articulated solutions. It is apparent that in Young's terms considerable progress has been made regarding for instance civil institutions analysing their own practices and environments and creating policies designed to ensure more equitable conditions and access. However Young does not appear to acknowledge either children or the elderly as 'groups', and nor does she deal with the dynamics of individually held prejudices and racism that persecute and perpetuate injustices and inequalities, and that are in turn fed into society's institutions. Ardern, as it will be demonstrated, appears to tackle these issues head-on, has addressed a variety of contexts of *difference* and has been demonstrably successful in some of her initiatives in this respect.

Ardern's *kindness* and *collectivism* **reconnect** the citizenry to civil and civic institutions. They establish a filter for civic policy focused on the public good and the wellbeing of individuals within the state and at the same time encourage *citizens* to also adopt the initiatives and to perform 'daily acts of kindness' (Ardern 2019b, p. 3). In this way Ardern's initiatives attempt to change the dynamics associated with both structural and societal cultural inequalities, but also of politics itself. She explicitly acknowledges the contexts of inequality, targets remediation within civil and civic institutions, encourages participation by individual citizens, and sets *standards* for civic governance.

John Ralston Saul

The Unconscious Civilization

Saul's work expands on the societal and cultural contexts provided by Young, introducing additional perspectives and bringing politics into the discussion. This section will delve into some of the key areas of focus that Saul raises and examine some of the solutions and tactics that he proposes to address the shortcomings of contemporary democratic societies. Saul provides a background that attempts to locate the accumulated learnings of our civilisation and reveal some of the incongruences in our current systems and identity that appear to undercut this continuum. He argues that having lost some of the essential threads of our human civilisation that we appear to have forgotten who we are, where we are, how we got here; and are confused about where we are going. This is quite like Ardern's message to the UN, which albeit diplomatically, appears to make the same claim.

John Ralston Saul's *The Unconscious Civilization* explores the public and private realms of *interest* on behalf of the citizen. Saul contends 'a hijacking of Western civilisation' (1997, p. 2) has been driven by modern notions of individualism that are both self-centred and selfish. These notions are disconnected from the historical and philosophical debates about the development of individual identity and self-knowledge, (that can be traced back to Socrates' "*life without…examination is not worth living*" (Plato ~399 BC (1994-2000))), but rather, are allied to the rise of corporatism. He writes:

> The acceptance of corporatism causes us to deny and undermine the legitimacy of the individual as a citizen in a democracy. The result of such a denial is a growing imbalance which leads to our adoration of self-interest and our denial of the public good. Corporatism is an ideology which claims rationality as its central quality. The overall effects on the individual are passivity and conformity in those areas which matter most and non-conformism in those which don't (1997, p. 2).

The cumulative question then becomes, 'What is more contemptible than a civilisation that scorns knowledge of itself?' (1997, p. 3). One way of understanding this is to ask the question: 'If we don't know and understand who we are, how can we change for the better, and how can we really monitor and evaluate the directions we are taking?' This is of course pertinent to both individuals and their broader societies, and indeed to civilisation itself.

The referencing of Saul in this context is for the purpose of illuminating some of these nuances and to refer to broader features and implications of democratic systems, their origins, and the relationship of existing democratic governance with *we the people.* His thinking is also used to clarify a contextual understanding for many of the problems, the *wicked problems,* that Ardern

was speaking about, and suggesting approaches to, in her UNGA speech (2018). Throughout this speech Ardern makes references that point to a cumulative failure of political leadership to address enduring issues, from the negative effects of globalisation; to protectionism and isolationism; to a failure to significantly address the complex issues of climate change; to failure to address structural injustices and inequalities, which in turn has led to many people in the world feeling (and being) left behind; to failing to make the world a safer place. Most of these failures are ones that Ardern identifies as requiring ownership by both individual nation states and as a collective failure to meet the standards of the United Nations Charter, a failure to adhere to the *rules-based order* and multilateralism.

Saul's opening salvos of *The Unconscious Civilization* set his scene with the reveal of a fallacy, or untruth:

> It is taught throughout our universities, expounded in our think tanks, repeated *ad nauseum* in public forums by responsible figures – that democracy was born of economics, in particular of an economic phenomenon known as the Industrial Revolution. And that democracy is based upon individualism. And that modern individualism was also a child of the Industrial Revolution (1997, p. 3).

Saul might also have added, after the Industrial Revolution, the Constitution of the United States of America (a product of the same era) – a constitution that begins with a central pillar of the 'ideal' of democracy – *we the people* – an idea that is intrinsically both of the individual and of the collective, and is also indicative of a modern notion that *we the people* are in control of our governments and democracies; that we have indeed achieved 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people' (Lincoln 1878).

Of course, this 'learning' that Saul refers to quietly ignores the fact that individualism (and democracy) has its roots, at least, in Ancient Greece some 2500 years earlier. Consider, for example, the invocation written on the temple of the oracle at Delphi, *Know Thyself*; 'because the meaning you give to your life is what propels your actions, before asking *what to do*, ask yourself *who you are*' (Rossellini 2018, p. xv). Socrates is also reputed to have consulted the Delphic oracle, but is described in Plato's *Apology* as going around 'questioning [his] fellow citizens about their knowledge and virtue,' an unpopular tactic at the time, but nevertheless one consistent in philosophical terms with the search for knowledge and certainty, but also for self-improvement (Wallach 1988, p. 399).

Saul's central tenet is that 'after long-term undermining of the representative system [of government] by the corporatist system' (1997, p. 98), *we the people,* have become effectively disenfranchised *en masse*. This has left the people diminished in the power required to effect meaningful change. Jaded from the experience of seemingly being unable to effect outcomes, the

voting public has lost faith in the process of democratic government. Saul argues that the citizenry have also lost sight of the fact that 'government is the only organized mechanism that makes possible that level of shared disinterest known as the public good' (1997, p. 77) and that the citizenry has 'become so obsessed by hating government that they forget it is meant to be their government and is the only powerful public force they have purchase on' (1997, p. 80). Saul's suggestion is that the *public good* has become subverted within western democratic governments to the extent that they have become unable to create policies of *disinterest*. The relentless lobbying of the people's representatives and public servants by and for *private interests* has corrupted them away from the public good (1997, p. 97). If, as Saul suggests, the instruments and institutions of political policy and law-making have been hi-jacked by the corporatist system, (that places the interests of commercialisation, free-trade, globalisation, and economics above humanistic considerations), is it surprising if these same interests are unable or unwilling to dent the structural injustices suffered by minorities at the hands of these same public institutions?

This brings to mind Plato's sobering contemplation of justice and injustice in his section on The Guardians in *The Republic,* and of Socrates' interlocutory discussion:

> But don't you agree that, if injustice has this effect of implanting hatred wherever it exists, it must make any set of people, whether freemen or slave, split into factions, at feud with one another and incapable of any joint action? … And so with any two individuals: justice will set them at variance and make enemies to each as well as to everyone who is just…The effect being, apparently, wherever it occurs – in a state or a family or an army or anywhere else – to make united action impossible because of factions and quarrels, and moreover to set whatever it resides in at enmity with itself as well as with any opponent and with all who are just (Plato ~375 BC (1941), p. 35).

Plato's observation is a recognition that *Private* and *Public* interests do not coincide but are at odds with each other, predicting one group in opposition to the other rather than sharing and working with a collective vision. In order to underline this dichotomy of *interest* Saul traces back to the rise of corporatism, in the mid-19th century post-industrialisation world, and the synthesis of its aims in the 1920s. He notes the first three aims of the corporatist movement in Germany, Italy, and France at this time:

1. Shift power directly to economic and social interest groups;
2. Push entrepreneurial initiative in areas normally reserved for public bodies;
3. Obliterate the boundaries between public and private interest – that is, challenge the idea of the public interest (1997, p. 91)

These aims were developed by the same people who went on to develop Fascism in the 1930s. Saul concludes with the disturbing reflection, 'This sounds like the official program of most contemporary Western governments' (Saul 1997, p. 92). Armed with this manifesto, the lobbyist

apparatchiks of the corporatist interests assail the elected representatives of the people to further the corporatist's private interests through the unrelenting exercise of influence. In this context, the 'effects of corporatism are so invasive that the strategy of the citizenry should be to change not the policies in place, but the dynamics' (1997, p. 179). It is tempting to think that the economic rationalism that informed the neo-liberalism of the 70s and 80s (particularly as witnessed in Australia, and New Zealand with its own version called *Rogernomics*) had a lot more to do with the economics of finding and expanding new spheres of commercial operation and profit growth for the corporate sector (which clearly benefited), than it did with the often claimed public interest, and benefit to citizens, of their governments divulging themselves of the management and operation of burdensome utilities, regulators, and public services (Editors).

Saul's *The Unconscious Civilization* details how pervasive corporatism has infected many aspects of modern societies, including tertiary institutions. He notes that these have increasingly become training grounds for the job market, observing:

> What the corporatist approach seems to miss is the simple, central role of higher education – to teach thought. A student who graduates with mechanistic skills and none of the habits of thought has not been educated. Such people will have difficulty playing their role as citizens. The weakening of humanities in favour of profitable specialization undermines the university's ability to teach thought (1997, p. 74).

Saul returns us to Plato and Socrates to underscore this point, quoting from *Apology*:

> "If on the other hand I tell you that to let no day pass without discussing goodness and all the other subjects about which you hear me talking and that examining both myself and others is really the very best thing a man can do and that life without this sort of examination is not worth living, you will be even less inclined to believe me. Nevertheless, gentlemen, that is how it is."
>
> To which I can only add that that is indeed how it is (1997, pp. 74, 5).

By way of conclusion, Saul's contention is that civilisation is:

> in the grip of an ideology – corporatism. An ideology that denies and undermines the legitimacy of the individual as a citizen in a democracy. The particular imbalance of this ideology leads to a worship of self-interest and a denial of the public good. The quality that corporatism claims as its own is rationality. The practical effects on the individual are passivity and conformism in the areas that matter and non-conformism in the areas that don't (1997, p. 191).

I mentioned above that Saul, by way of seeking a solution, wrote that the:

> effects of corporatism are so invasive that the strategy of the citizenry should be to change not the policies in place, but the dynamics (1997, p. 179).

So, what might this change in dynamics look like, and how might it honour the rights and role of the citizenry within a democracy and return them to their rightful place as the collective *for* whom governments govern (Saul 1997, p. 80)? How might societies move away from the dismissive habituated responses that observe dropping standards of living and iniquities as stemming from the 'inevitabilities of globalization as well as the invisible hand of the market-place and technology' (1997, p. 194), resorting to band-aids to treat symptoms and doing very little to address causes?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, for Saul the answer is found in one of the primary attributes that distinguishes humanity – consciousness. But this is not merely a signifier of higher processes of reason and thought (repeatedly used to delineate human beings from the animal kingdom), he is referring to the particular attribute of being aware of and 'balancing our qualities' – finding a clarity of understanding regarding our situation and correspondingly 'clearer avenues for action'. Saul calls this *equilibrium*, leaning heavily on the Confucian qualities of: 'the art of peace; of goodness; of superior behaviour, which is the opposite of the petty and mean; of propriety and grace; and finally, of the just use of power' (1997, p. 192).

Saul is considering these qualities from a humanistic perspective, and is applying them both to the role of the citizen and as a requirement of democratic governance, brought about by the 'commitment of the citizen to the common good' which he observes is 'the true meaning of obligation,' saying:

> Those who govern or have power cannot on the one hand invoke obligation and on the other deny the common good and the real legitimacy of the citizen…Common sense, creativity, ethics, intuition, memory and reason. These can be exploited individually as a justification for ideology; or imprisoned in the limbo of abstract concepts. Or they can be applied together in some sort of equilibrium, as the filters of public action (1997, pp. 193, 4).

This notion of placing a filter through which to consider political policy, a checklist if you will that ensures that the public interest is of primary import and consideration, represents a paradigm shift in political determinism – a change in 'the dynamics' of politics towards 'an actively organized pool of disinterest called the public good' (1997, p. 76).

On Equilibrium

Common Sense

Introducing *common sense*, Saul uses several examples of early colonial musings and nascent republics, noting that they were:

> obsessed by the need for public education, a very expensive service. And their desire was not primarily to train their children to make money. Their desire was to equip them to participate as citizens in their society. Self-interest and wealth would follow behind…Similar examples can be found in almost every era in almost every place where humans have gathered. The explanations vary, many are contradictory. Together they constitute a shared knowledge of the necessary existence of society as a primary human force. Perhaps shared knowledge is the relationship which carries us above self-interest (Saul 2002, pp. 21-2).

It will become clear that Saul's individual 'qualities of equilibrium' share an interconnectedness. For example, in his reflections quoted above on *common sense*, as manifested in the need for public education, it is clear that there are also links to *memory*, as it also provides a continuum of shared-knowledge and contributes to a sense of identity.

Saul begins his discussion on common sense with a question, 'What is common sense if not shared knowledge?' (2002, p. 19). He describes common sense as:

> Essentially complex, lateral and disinterested.
>
> It demands a very unusual form of intellectual concentration during which the implications of reality are really digested. This is not analytic. It is tied to our sense of society – our sense that society exists…. It is quite different to think of common sense as an expression of shared knowledge, something which links us to the *other* and acts as the foundation for societies of all sorts – a foundation of undefined commonality which allows us to engage in conversation. You might call this the ongoing debate of human relationships, small or big (2002, pp. 19-20).

This idea of common sense being foundational is critical. Building starts at the foundations. Foundations are the inground works that quite literally create solid footings - stability - and this is where Saul is locating common sense. It is the underpinning for the various types of constructs that we undertake, it is fundamental. Saul describes common sense as having two aspects, 'One is the relationship between humans. The other is the relationship of those humans to a place' (Saul, p. 24). This thought locates one of the fundamental schisms of post-colonial societies, a clash of common sense between the aboriginal inhabitants and their existing societies and human

relationships, and the colonial settlers introducing a wholly different order. Invariably the incumbent is not equipped to accommodate the colonial *other*. [5]

So, what is common sense really about? Saul's answer is as follows:

> Whether it is inherited, learnt or experienced as part of life in a society, the practical effect of common sense is prudence. To take care is neither conservative nor radical. It is a form of consciousness – conscious that we are part of something which precedes us and, if we are prudent, will follow in as good or a better state. We are both reliant upon it and indebted to it (2002, p. 45).

Common sense then is both practical and prudent. Faced with a problem, common sense would judge it more practical and more prudent to treat the cause of the problem rather than its symptoms or other manifestations:

> What common sense provides is a clear sense that nothing is inevitable; that we belong to a society (2002, p. 64).

Ethics

On *ethics* Saul observes:

> It has a steely edge which makes its existential nature impossible to ignore.
>
> That steely edge is there precisely because ethics is down-to-earth and practical, a matter of daily habit. Of course, the heroic sort exists – the ethics of crisis. It and the great heroes it produces exist as a reminder of the ultimate cost of honest consciousness.
>
> But the citizen's ethics has to wake up every morning. There is an element of drudgery to it. This is something which must be present everywhere in tiny details. There is a need for constant effort, constant evaluation. Ethics is like a muscle which must be exercised daily in order to be used in a normal manner (2002, p. 66).

Saul invokes a remembering, but his characterisation of ethics also suggests the need for education and the acquisition of discernment.

[5] Arguably, this forms one of the foundations of *the politics of societal and cultural difference*.

Imagination

Using the dream of our ancestors' urge to fly as an example, Saul introduces *imagination*; the dreaming and fanciful idea that, in defiance of reason and the perceived laws of nature, led men to believe that they could 'leap off a cliff and fly':

> Then, in the twinkling of an eye – less than a century in fact – you can do it seated comfortably with hundreds of fellow passengers in a jet, or alone, on the cliff, with a simple apparatus of kite-like wings (2002, p. 115).

Saul likens *imagination* to a force that keeps carrying us forward, a resisting force to both inertia and static complacency. He notes that:

> Imagination protects us from the temptation of premature conclusions; the temptation of certainty and the fantasy of fixed truth. What's more, it seems to draw us forward by using this prolonged uncertainty to alternately leap ahead and then enfold our other qualities – our other means of perception – into a new, inclusive vision of the whole. Then, just as we *think* we understand, it leaps ahead again into more uncertainty. And so imagination appears to be naturally inclusive and inconclusive.
>
> As an inclusive quality, imagination is our primary force for progress, whatever progress is (2002, p. 116).

It is evident that for Saul there is a dynamic wherein a 'quality of equilibrium' is intertwined and relies in a coexistent way on other qualities. Common sense and memory tell us where we are and where we have been, imagination propels us into the future – into, *where do we want to go?*

Intuition

Saul synthesises this overlap in his thoughts on *intuition*, writing:

> Periodically, we wish to or must make sense of the swirling forces of imagination in which there are elements of memory, common sense, ethics and reason. Like a god, we send our thunderbolt of decision and hope it strikes. This is the intuitive moment.
>
> It may not sound defensive, but it is. The offensive force is the swirling uncertainty of our imagination. Intuition is our reaction to that movement.
>
> In other words, intuition is the most practical of our qualities. The most useful, verging on the utilitarian. This is the essential existential quality (2002, p. 163).

Saul's notion of intuition is far removed from gypsy card-reading, parlour games, and idle afternoon reveries. His version is built upon the solid ground of 'memory, common sense, ethics and reason' and is a dynamic that along with the 'force' of imagination allows us to progress –

the kind of dynamic that inspires the inventor to think, "birds fly because they have wings, if I could design wings large enough to carry a human-being, then a human being should also be able to fly" – this process is not merely one of reason, it is reason mixed with imagination and brought into reality with intuition.

Memory

Saul denotes his fifth quality of equilibrium, *memory*, as shape and context. He writes, 'Memory is not the past. It is the water you swim through, the words you speak, your gestures, your expectations' and continues, 'Only memory gives us the ability to shape our thinking and our actions in a balanced way' (2002, p. 213) . Refuting rationalist philosophy's 'reductionist and linear arguments' Saul contends that Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were closer to the truth in their ideas about memory, ideas supported by modern science:

> Memory, it appears after all, is everywhere in our body. And this memory is shared in a manner which confirms both our original idea of societies and our century-old concept of the collective unconscious.
>
> It seems that the more we learn of how our bodies function – the technical details, the fragments – the more the inclusive, overarching arguments of humanism are reaffirmed, while those of utilitarianism are disproved. The problem is that the technocratic structures we have gradually put in place over the last century, and increasingly over the last fifty years, artificially prop up a utilitarian view. In particular they prop up the intellectual assumptions of methodology, while obstructing a more inclusive approach (2002, p. 214).

This brings us to contemporary problems for contemporary times – to a collective unconsciousness that seems devoid of much meaningful and practical reflection on the choices we make as societies, and the future that our societies are heading towards – circling back to corporatism. Taking aim at our idealised global economic progress, Saul writes:

> Take, for example, the various utilitarian forces – the shapeless fragments – which are bundled together as an inevitability called globilization. Because they are vaunted as inevitable forces free of social constraints, they are perceived to be free from memory. In that sense they resemble pure religious doctrine, rather than internationalized civil concepts…
>
> Without memory there is a vacuum. Propaganda thrives in a vacuum, as does ideology. As does public relations. All three replace context with scrambled fragments of memory. False memory. Artificial shape (2002, p. 214).

It is perplexing that with so much 'progress' in the last one hundred and fifty years that the collective memory and knowledge is so patchy. As Saul observes, 'New knowledge should clarify and enrich our sense of context' and in a sense it does, technologically:

> But we are surrounded by a general feeling of shapelessness. We have difficulty placing ourselves; identifying our direction. It is as if we had no functioning memory, in the sense that memory is the context of our community (2002, p. 215).

This appears to be like the classic existentialism of the twentieth century; like the disconnected ambivalence expressed by Mersault in *The Outsider* when he says, "My mother died today. Or maybe yesterday. I can't be sure." Mersault is seemingly unwilling to offer any explanation or to defend himself against accusations of murder; stands trial without offering any insight; and, is subsequently sentenced to death (Camus 1942 (2012), p. 1). His apparent lack of volition and connectedness are not due to a lack of *memory*, rather to his overwhelming sense that the obsessed and obsessive *play* of everyday society has no real significance, that it is a sideshow of little weight or import - even when coercive forces were aligned and pointing to an inevitable death-sentence at the hand of the state. It is in fact *memory* and not the lack of it that Mersault is contending with. His sense of futility and apparent disconnectedness is a recognition of Socrates' reflection, that 'life which is unexamined is not worth living' (Plato ~399 BC (1994-2000), p. 12), and his corresponding experience of a lack of that reflective *examination* in every aspect of the society surrounding him. Mersault is an *outsider* because he remembers too much, not too little. At this existential coal-face Saul contends that:

> Memory brings us back to the shared knowledge of common sense and the prolonged, shared uncertainty of imagination, and the shared expression of intuition.
>
> Of all of these, memory relates perhaps most intimately to the passive half of intuition – to the expression of what we might be. You can see in creativity, in the novel for example, the writer struggling constantly to reanimate our memories. They are "working against this loss of self", as Saul Bellow puts it, binding us to the great river of creativity which, through our deepest memory, ties us to our experience (2002, pp. 236-7).

This story-telling tradition has been integral to human societies the world-over. It has resulted in the ancient story *The Epic of Gilgamesh* being inscribed on ancient stone tablets, and the oral storytelling tradition of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Illiad*. It inspired Joseph Campbell to collect these stories and reflect on this tradition in *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (Campbell 1949 (2004)), it has inspired countless story-tellers throughout the ages to add to the tradition and tell their own stories.

Like the *Dreaming* of Australian Aborigines these stories create and maintain a thread of continuity that informs us of who we are, where we are, and where we have come from - the deeds, the aspirations, and the dreams of characters in these stories provide us with glimpses of both the past and the future, of those who have gone before - of what is possible, and what can be achieved. In these tales lie the collective consciousness, the collective *memory* of humankind, the stories of civilisation. And in terms of a modern continuum of the oral tradition, in modern twenty first century societies this is apparent (and formalised) in political speeches. Although the heroes and characters have mostly although not entirely disappeared, the speeches of politicians are an attempt to address us collectively as a society, to capture the imagination and paint pictures of what the future might look like (in their hands).

Reason

Saul begins his section on *reason* by asking the question:

> Why should any quality have to be both the ideal expression of our humanness and the instrumental mechanism by which we should act? After all, any honest glance at our own experience tells us that none of this is so (2002, p. 265).

He contends that when we strip away these illusory and misleading definitions of reason, we see the quality of *reason* itself:

> Reason is thought. Argument is an adjunct of thought. Both are unrelated to purity, certainty and instrumentalism. This least utilitarian of qualities is simply waiting to be rescued from those who have kidnapped it as cover for the directionless obsession with form, methodology, technology and managerialism …
>
> As with common sense or ethics, reason requires a relationship of tension with our other qualities in order to function. Irrationality shows itself in a taste for absolute answers or truths, in self-referentialism or in a belief that specialization implies a privileged access to truth. Our central protection from irrationality is the tension between reason and the other qualities… The grandiose concept of reason as all-inclusive, both pure and instrumental, is standard religious doctrine or, in modern terms, ideology (2002, pp. 266-7).

Saul acknowledges that such thinking is difficult for the modern mind to absorb. From the Greek philosophers onwards, western civilisation at least, has regarded 'reason as a form of universalism' (2002, p. 267). In Saul's view, as a result, in the evolution of modern civilisation, reason has been placed on an unassailable pedestal that it is perceived the world around us, the

world of 'nature,' should conform to. As Saul observes, that way lies 'absolutism' – and 'why would anyone accept an either/or description of reality' (2002, p. 268)?

Taking aim at the pinnacle of rationalism, Descartes' shout-out negating the *Evil Genius*, "I think therefore I am," he writes:

> We may well be the only creatures capable of thought. But that can be said for all our qualities. And thought only takes on significance because "we are" part of something which exists beyond us. Call it society. It is our ability to extend our considerations beyond ourselves which makes them thought' (2002, p. 270).

Saul calls Descartes' absolutist syllogism, 'logical speculation [masquerading] as certainty; and therefore speculation as a decision making mechanism…or reason as irrationality' (2002, p. 270). But why is this 'instrumental reason' or 'false rationality' significant? What effect does it have? It is important because of the effect it has on action which is derived from the false utilitarian premises that it is used to construct, which in turn seem an entirely:

> convincing approach because it seems to be about feeding our children, feeding the hungry, and other essentials. The trick is that it begins from a short-term close-up position. This is justified as the foundation of the argument because it is said to be rational. That the short-term, logical, linear, instrumental nature of this central argument may actually be the root cause of the problems is never dealt with. That would be romantic. Instead, the claim of rationality keeps us focused close-up onto symptoms and far away from causes (2002, p. 273).

In essence Saul's argument is that reason is important because of how it is exercised and because of the fallacies that ensue from its false elevation as the be-all-and-end-all of human accomplishment at the expense of other qualities – a false positive if you will. For Saul, this elevation of reason has led us to forget our humanity, our essential humanness. This leads in turn to his contention that contemporary societies have forgotten the nuanced understanding of the:

> idea of reason as uncertainty through thought and argument [which] has been with us for 2,500 years. That idea has always included the sense that, of all our qualities, reason most clearly activates the human ability to be disinterested – to distance herself from herself, to see herself, to see the *other*. And this very noble idea of what we are capable of has been repeatedly relaunched over the centuries. Each time a sense of humanity is injected into society (2002, pp. 313-4).

And so finally a picture emerges revealing what Saul might mean when he says, 'the strategy of the citizenry should be to change not the policies in place, but the dynamics' (1997, p. 179). This is not so much a call for revolution as it is a call for a return – a return to our essential humanness;

a return to the ideals of a democratic system that forms part of our civilisation's history; for a government's rationale being the interests of the people to whom it belongs – *we the people*. Saul is suggesting that societies need to pick up and re-examine the threads of human civilisation and rediscover the significance of *we the people* and where the public interest lies, and act anew to refresh our democratic governments accordingly.

In conclusion, Saul reveals that modern democracies have lost sight of an essential thread. That thread contains the evolution of humanity and links people to a continuum of civilisation. It has been lost because democracies have effectively been usurped by corporatists who have been lobbying the elected representatives in furtherance of their own interests above all other considerations, in a process equivalent to death by a thousand cuts. These private interests do not, as a rule, coincide with the public interest or the public good. This has resulted in a scenario in which democracies have lost sight of the rationales that initially formulated them. These rationales stipulated that the democracies were to be for the benefit of the people. As such they had a humanistic perspective that is now an almost distant memory. To redress this balance, the dynamics need to change in order for politics to be brought back to a consideration of the public interest. Saul's solution is that a means to do that lies in the recognition and elevation of six essential human qualities and a process of harnessing these and bringing them into balance, into equilibrium. These qualities are *common sense, ethics, imagination, intuition, memory*, and *reason*. Saul envisages these qualities acting as a filter to assist in re-focusing politics back to the public interest.

There are several synergies between Saul and Ardern's priorities. It will become clear in the next chapter that Ardern indicates she has an awareness of the continuum of civilization that Saul articulates, and importantly, that she also identifies responsibility and guardianship as key spheres of political action. Her *common sense* concern for the legacy left to younger generations and her approach to addressing both the existential and social problems that exist in the world also indicate that she is seeking meaningful solutions to the root cause of problems in order to secure lasting benefit. In addition, it will become apparent that one of Ardern's principal concerns is the wellbeing and welfare of citizens, and that she views this wellbeing as being something that it is in the public interest to achieve.

Hannah Arendt

This section on Arendt's political theory is intended to identify and delineate some of the boundaries and limitations of politics in order to provide clarity with respect to political speech and rhetoric. It will discuss the relationship of politics, truths, and absolutes. In doing so it will also attempt to clarify political argument, a consideration that will be picked up in the next chapter's discussion of rhetoric. As a seasoned politician, it will become evident that Ardern has a firm grasp on these nuances (also demonstrated by the further refinements of this discussion that will follow in the section on Clark).

On Revolution

Socrates' quest to find a wiser man than he, as told in *Apology* (Plato ~399 BC (1994-2000)), raises the interesting questions: what is knowledge, and what, if anything, is truth? A large part of Plato and Socrates' philosophical enquiry is concerned with these questions. Plato's discussions draw distinction between facts, and truth; and ask what *is* or *can be* an object of knowledge. What can we know? This knowledge is distinct from facts that might be considered to be localised truths, such as those of scientific measurement or skilled technique and method. The truths that early philosophers were seeking were of a higher order – they searched initially for knowledge that is universal, for objective rather than subjective knowledge[6] – where the intrinsic characteristic is not determined by contingencies such as perspective, scale, or context. This is the search for order, an attempt to contextualise where human beings fit into the grand scheme of things – to all of creation. And so epistemological enquiry intersects with ontological enquiry, both grappling with essentialism and attempting to reveal a metaphysics.

Unlike philosophy, when religion becomes involved in the search for *Truths* that are immutable, especially in the western context of Christianity, there appears to be little reservation when it comes to the Absolute, and in declaring it found. Religious dogma replaces belief with (false) certainty, and has no qualms in proclaiming Truth, with a capital 'T'. Christianity expresses both an actual and a moral imperative, it imposes a requirement for conformity that

[6] Plato's analogy of the cave for example, which asks if human consciousness perceives the world directly or if as though sitting with its back to the cave opening looking at the shadows the world outside casts (Plato ~375 BC (1941), p. 227).

provides both a 'place' in the world and explicit instructions for the action and interaction of humankind.

It is Truth with a capital 'T', and *compassion* as an absolute or unconditional force or metaphysical *quality,* arising from this tradition of the philosophical and the religious, that Arendt is exploring in her chapter entitled 'The Social Question' in *On Revolution* where she discusses the mix of politics and compassion (1963 (1990), pp. 50-114). Politics: that very human interaction, a contested negotiation of interest and representation; and compassion, a *quality,* a force and state of empathy and care that, in its purity and singular focus on an individual's plight, transcends the mundane. She writes:

> The magic of compassion was that it opened the heart of the sufferer to the suffering of others, whereby it established and confirmed the 'natural' bond between men which only the rich had lost. Where passion, the capacity for suffering, and compassion, the capacity of suffering with others, ended, vice began. Selfishness was a kind of natural depravity.
>
> … It was perhaps unavoidable that the problem of good and evil, of their impact upon the course of human destinies, in its stark, unsophisticated simplicity should have haunted the minds of men when they were asserting or reasserting human dignity without any resort to institutionalized religion. But the depth of the problem could hardly be sounded by those who mistook for goodness the natural 'innate repugnance of man to see his fellow creatures suffer' (Rousseau), and who thought that selfishness and hypocrisy were the epitome of wickedness (1963 (1990), p. 81).

Arendt's observation is made in respect to the 'aftermath' of the French Revolution, which is the principal subject matter of *On Revolution*. Arendt continues, saying that such considerations of good and evil within a Western context cannot be made without accounting for the 'active love of goodness as the inspiring principle of all actions' as demonstrated by the figure of Jesus of Nazareth (1963 (1990), pp. 81-2). The first point being that the depravities of action to one's fellow human beings, perpetrated in the name of the revolution, were un-reflected upon and unacknowledged by the revolutionaries, who felt they were fighting with righteousness for a righteous cause, but who were in actual fact revolting with 'unsophisticated simplicity' against 'the rich.' The second point being, and here Arendt refers to Dostoevsky, that 'the sign of Jesus's divinity clearly was his ability to have compassion with all men in their singularity, that is, without lumping them together into some such entity as one suffering mankind' (Arendt 1963 (1990), p. 85). Using two examples from literature, *Billy Budd* (Melville 1962), and 'The Grand Inquisitor' from *The Brothers Karamazov* (Dostoyevsky 1862 (1958), pp. 288-310), Arendt seeks to bring to life a consideration of the radically different contexts of politics and compassion and to show how politics is necessarily limited, is *inter-est*; of the interests and affairs between men; and how

compassion represents an absolute value which suffers neither negotiation nor exception. She concludes the thought:

> Because compassion abolishes the distance, the worldly space between men where political matters, the whole realm of human affairs, are located, it remains, politically speaking, irrelevant and without consequence. In the word of Melville, it is incapable of establishing 'lasting institutions.' … Such talkative and argumentative interest in the world is entirely alien to compassion, which is directed solely, and with passionate intensity, towards suffering man himself; compassion speaks only to the extent that it has to reply directly to the sheer expressionist sound and gestures through which suffering becomes audible and visible in the world. As a rule, it is not compassion which sets out to change the worldly conditions in order to ease human suffering, but if it does, it will shun the drawn-out wearisome process of persuasion, negotiation, and compromise, which are the processes of law and politics, and lend its voice to the suffering itself, which must claim for swift and direct action, that is, for action with the means of violence (1963 (1990), p. 86).

There is a compelling logic to Arendt's argument. Some theorists have argued that politics can practice compassion (Porter 2006), however, I find myself agreeing with Arendt's stance with regard to compassion and politics, (although there is clearly nothing stopping individual politicians practicing being empathetic in their approach to the citizenry and their predicaments).

Truth and Politics

In her essay 'Truth and Politics' (1967 (2006)), Arendt presents an interesting analysis of the tension that we perceive, all too common place in contemporary times, between the two. As Saul observed, citizens have come to distrust, or at least view with caution, the notion that politicians and their rhetoric are truthful - in fact there is a tendency to expect that politicians lie. Arendt poses the questions:

> Lies have always been regarded as necessary and justifiable tools not only of the politician's and demagogue's but also of the statesman's trade. Why is that so? And what does it mean for the nature and dignity of the political realm, on one side, and for the nature of truth and truthfulness on the other. And what kind of reality does truth possess if it is powerless in the public realm…(1967 (2006), p. 225)?

For Arendt, maintaining the integrity of truth is of paramount importance, a matter of 'survival'.

Dispensing with attempting to define truth beyond existing usage and convention Arendt offers two common classifications. These are: 'mathematical, scientific, and philosophical truths' as ascribed to 'rational truth;' and 'factual truth' (1967 (2006), pp. 226-7). Clarifying her thought on the significant difference between these two classifications, Arendt observes:

> Facts and events are infinitely more fragile things than axioms, discoveries, theories – even the most wildly speculative ones – produced by the human mind; they occur in the field of the ever-changing affairs of men, in whose flux there is nothing more permanent than the admittedly relative permanence of the human mind's structure. Once they are lost, no rational effort will ever bring them back (1967 (2006), p. 227).

Arendt contends that the opposite of a 'rationally true' statement is 'either error and ignorance, as in the sciences, or illusion and opinion, as in philosophy.' A 'deliberate falsehood, the plain lie' is only relative to factual truths or 'factual statements.' Summarising, with some prescience for contemporary readers at least, that 'from Plato to Hobbes, no one, apparently, ever believed that organized lying, as we know it today, could be an adequate weapon against truth,' observing that 'only with the rise of Puritan morality … were lies considered serious offenses' (1967 (2006), p. 228). The 'conflict between truth and politics' lies in the philosophers' judgement that the opposite of truth is opinion, 'which is equated with illusion' – this dismissive position gathers 'political poignancy' because:

> opinion, and not truth, belongs among the indispensable prerequisites of all power…not even the most autocratic ruler or tyrant could ever rise to power, let alone keep it, without the support of those who are like minded (1967 (2006), pp. 228-9).

In this context, the politician uses 'rhetoric' as the means of persuasion of citizens, as opposed to the philosophers' use of reasoned 'dialogue,' to validate their claims of truth. Here Arendt notes Hobbes' observation in *Leviathan* on the difference and 'contrariness' of eloquence and reason:

> But these are contrary Faculties; the former being grounded upon principles of truth; the other upon Opinions already received, true, or false; and upon the Passions and Interests of men, which are different, and mutable (Hobbes 1651 (2009), p. 349).

For Arendt, truth and politics are like oil and water, they don't mix, and they resist each-other. She writes:

> Seen from the viewpoint of politics, truth has a despotic character. It is therefore hated by tyrants, who rightly fear the competition of a coercive force they cannot monopolize, and it enjoys a rather precarious status in the eyes of governments that rest on consent and abhor coercion. Facts are beyond agreement and consent, and all talk about them – all exchanges of opinion based on correct information – will contribute nothing to their establishment. Unwelcome opinion can be argued with, rejected, or compromised upon,

> but unwelcome facts possess an infuriating stubbornness that nothing can move except plain lies. The trouble is that factual truth, like all other truth, peremptorily claims to be acknowledged and precludes debate, and debate constitutes the very essence of political life (1967 (2006), p. 236).

This is not to disregard the allure that truth may hold for the politician, for truth has a persuasive and coercive power of its own and may well at times suit the politician's agenda. In this respect Arendt raises the case of Thomas Jefferson and the wording of the *Declaration of Independence*, which claims, that we hold these 'truths to be self-evident,' then states that 'All men are created equal' (Jefferson 1776); because 'he wished to put the basic consent among the men of the revolution beyond dispute and argument.' For Arendt, this constitutes a concession by Jefferson 'although he may not be aware of it, that equality, if it is to be politically relevant, is a matter of opinion, and not "the truth."' (1967 (2006), p. 242). This is a key moment in Arendt's argument, and she says that notions such as the fundamental equality of citizens are also of major significance politically, but that they are nevertheless 'matters of opinion and not of truth.' She observes that these opinions rely upon:

> free agreement and consent; they are arrived at by discursive, representative thinking; and they are communicated by means of persuasion and discussion (1967 (2006), pp. 242-3).

Political rhetoric then, if it is to be persuasive and effective, needs tricks in its arsenal. Skilled political rhetoric seamlessly blends opinion and 'truth' in a compelling argument designed to appeal to a majority of citizens. It may have the outward appearance of 'self-evidence' to many in their audience, but nevertheless, the 'truths' it claims are merely contentions within the contestable and opinionated arena of the political life.

In summary, the philosophy of Arendt argues that politics *is* action, existing in the space which Arendt defines as the interests between men (people, humankind, women). It is a negotiation, a contest. Absolutes cannot enter this domain of politics, as by definition absolutes defy redefinition and debate; they are not a matter of opinion and they are not a matter of interest – they exclude redefinition by a forum. Politicians may refer to and use these *absolute* concepts in order to persuade constituents and capture a perceived moral high ground, but as they do so the context of usage changes meaning, so that the now *political* truth has become a matter of opinion and not truth, and the *truth* no longer has the meaning ascribed to it by philosophy, science, or morality.

Whilst Arendt is included in this framework in order to provide some description and delineation to the endeavour of politics, in order to clarify the bounds within which Ardern operates, it is also interesting to note how Ardern uses these structures to her own advantage. For instance, Ardern speaks with conviction on matters of equality, and on the significance of

addressing equality and iniquities, but she does not fall into the trap of attempting to label this conviction as a truth or moral imperative. Taking her UNGA speech as an example, her tactic, to put discussion of these matters beyond debate and dispute, is to return to the United Nations Charter where these ideals are already enshrined. This also has the effect of putting the validity of demanding action on issues of equality beyond contention as the UN has already committed to them. This is indicative of a savvy political operator who understands political truths and how they are constructed, and who understands how to create compelling political argument.

Tom Clark

Stay on Message

This section on Clark's theory, primarily focused on political rhetoric, is designed to take the inquiry further into the details of the manipulations and tricks of political speech. It will demonstrate that political rhetoric follows and employs precise structures, and furthermore, that these structures can be analysed and deconstructed in order to reveal meaning and create understanding. Both speeches that this thesis is analysing as primary data are sophisticated examples of this craft of political rhetoric, both are layered with allusion and meaning, and contain messages designed to incite further political action. It is appropriate therefore to become familiar with some of the devices and tricks of political rhetoric.

Tom Clark describes his book *Stay on Message* as an exploration of 'politics and language together' (2012, p. 1). This provides a reminder that language is the indispensable medium of the world of civil politics, an essential tool that the best politicians wield with great effect.

As Clark's book attests the best political rhetoric is highly structured, tailored for its delivery medium, and consists of a poetic logic and form that governs the choice and delivery of words and phrases in a precise manner, a manner that is designed to leave a lasting impression and to persuade and align the audience with the views and policies expressed by the politician – to form supportive opinion. Many of the strategies employed to accomplish this aim are familiar techniques, such as the repetitions and motifs employed within the oral story-telling traditions, 'epic verse', and also in more contemporary mediums, such as 'hip-hop and live sports commentaries' (2012, p. 3). Of course, the fact that a formulaic approach might be employed by practitioners of the dark arts of political rhetoric and public discourse does not imply that they have things going all their own way. Large swathes of the political audience are either undecided

or object, almost on principle, to the structured packaging of political messaging, as Clark observes 'there is a widespread and strategically engaged cynicism towards public rhetoric on the grounds that it inherently constitutes public manipulation' (2012, p. 6). Arguably, as Saul suggests, still more are simply dismissive of modern politics, having lost faith in its ability to represent and act on behalf of either them or their needs. As a result, both the credibility of the messenger and the *truthfulness* inherent and measurable in their messages are under scrutiny, with 'a measure of the verisimilitude between what people say, write, or otherwise express and the corresponding reality that their communications purport to represent' (2012, p. 9).

This is not the same *truth* encountered in Arendt. Arendt, as a philosopher, uses *truth* formally according to the strictures of both her discipline, and her predilection as to the order of things. Thus, for Arendt, truth, if it exists at all, has by definition a universal and absolute nature. Clark's usage is based upon the conventions of formalised written English language in the first instance, but is also tempered with modifiers that embellish an understanding of what is possible, such as the conventions and realities of live performance, where other subtle measures, such as integrity, authenticity, and believability come into play. However, a fundamental contention that both Arendt and Clark share is that *political truth* (as opposed to philosophical truth) is conditional and contextual, and not absolute. As Clark notes, the context and medium of and for the delivery of a political message:

> precondition[s] the sorts of truths it is possible to express, the sorts of truths audiences and readers are capable of perceiving, and the tactics that both public communicators and their receiving public can use to maximise (or minimise) the honesty and integrity of their communicative exchanges (2012, p. 11).

As a result of this aspect of the reality of political speech Clark says that the 'professional advisors' that form the support staff of politicians, the 'press secretaries, strategic advisors, media skills trainers, and so on – are themselves extremely conscious of the performative challenges and opportunities that confront the speakers they work for,' where what is heard (as opposed to what is said) shares importance with what 'audiences see, feel, and smell as well.' In this context of political speech as 'performance' Clark notes that:

> the success of a political speech depends on a capacity to create momentous performances, performances whose audiences are carried by the power of the moment, thoroughly attuned to the speaker and her or his message' (2012, p. 16).

As noted above, political speeches share structural similarities with epic verse from the oral tradition. In epic verse these motifs or 'formulae' are often used to characterise the verse and familiarise their audiences with character attributes. Homer's *Illiad*, for instance, provides rich

examples of the formulaic approach to character description that are variously crafted to match line and rhythm. For example: 'brilliant Odysseus', 'resourceful Odysseus', and 'long-suffering brilliant Odysseus' (Homer nd (1961), p. 39). In the context of political speeches these motifs are commonly epithets frequently used to denigrate political opponents and their policies. Such epithets take on the attributes of slogan-like 'sound bites', often repeated to great effect. Clark observes that in the early 90s Paul Keating, whilst campaigning to be returned to office, characterised the opposition leader of the day John Hewson as a 'feral abacus,' 'a phrase Bob Ellis coined for him.' He describes this as a 'turning point in the campaign against Hewson's economic rationalist agenda because it remoralised a Labor Party caucus that had lost hope' (2012, p. 53). But these repeating motifs or formulae are not always in the form of epithets and imbued with humour and slogan. Sometimes they are subtle shifts of language that are employed to reframe political debate. In a deconstruction of what is acknowledged as one of Keating's most notable political speeches, the Redfern Park speech, Clark notes how Keating's selective use of 'we' and 'us' shifted a nuance of context with 'a grammatical paradigm that has governed subsequent discourse about Aboriginal reconciliation, whatever the motives of the discussants' (Clark 2013). In this context, Ardern's usage of *kindness* and her phrase 'They are us', are also used to frame debate and to invoke attitudinal shifts.

Clearly, however, the successes or failures of political speeches are not only to be found in their rhetoric and delivery. There are other elements at play that contribute to 'momentous performance' that transcend the performative. Sometimes this might simply be a matter of capturing the zeitgeist of the times; putting 'their finger on the moment we're in' as President Obama described it (2012, p. 16). Paul Keating's Redfern Park speech is a fine example of this. For a politician who is noted for his ability to deliver entertaining and enthralling political speech, the Redfern Park speech's performative aspects are lacking on all fronts. As an exercise in stage management, it is an epic fail - with Keating struggling to maintain audience attention and being interrupted by constant heckling - the recorded audio quality of the speech is sorely deficient, and his delivery is flat. Although it *is* true, as Clark notes, that the 'rowdy' and interjecting audience 'made the moment of this speech so intense' (2013). Unlike many of the most memorable political speeches of contemporary times, which are designed to be represented with sound bites and/or presented via a visual medium such as television, it is probable that Keating decided that, given the gravitas of the reconciliation issues at stake and their implications for Australian national identity, this speech should not be peppered with *ad hoc* improvisations. Perhaps even that the text of the speech should be rigorously adhered to. The speech itself seems designed to be read in the newspapers of the day, rather than heard as oratory. Clark, for example, refers to Keating's delivery as 'strikingly 'writerly' rather than performed for charismatic effect' (2013).

Whatever else Keating intended, *staying on message* was almost certainly his primary performative concern. This reflects an almost coldly utilitarian attempt within the realm of politics that attempts to ensure that speeches, debates, and answers to journalist's questions, frame with deliberate precision in order to contextualise an issue or problem. To either draw attention to, or steer attention away, from particular areas of focus or policy for example. This might involve recasting an issue to make it appear to be something else entirely and perhaps even someone else's problem. Clark uses an example of the Australian politician Philip Ruddock fielding questions from a journalist about refugee 'boat people' making their way by boat from Indonesia to Australia, whom the government characterised *en masse* as 'illegal immigrants'. He writes:

> Ruddock's interest was not in informing or interesting people about the issue of boat people, but in framing the issue and disinteresting people in its nuances….The particularity of Ruddock's rhetoric was against truth, because it was calculated to block public interest in the truth (2012, p. 114).

So political rhetoric is an intense game with no sure winners to be played, which is, partially at least, why it is so intently stage managed and choreographed. Society has known, at least since Plato, of sophists, skilled in 'the art of influencing public assemblies' (~375 BC (1941), p. 193), and that this care and attention to detail has nothing to do with ensuring telling the truth, rather, it is the art of swaying public opinion. As Cornford notes in his Introduction to Plato's *Republic*, 'rhetoric means the art of persuading a crowd that a certain course of action is the right one to take, or a certain person has right on his side' (~375 BC (1941), p. xix). A course of action being 'the right one to take' is a matter determined by opinion, the weight of public opinion in this case, similarly, having 'right on his side' is a matter of opinion and not moral certitude or *truth*. This is the exact dynamic Arendt identified when reflecting on Jefferson's 'self-evident' truth regarding equality (noted above). And nor is *truth*, in the absolute sense, as discussed by Arendt, the same as *truthfulness*. Clark notes that 'professional ethics,' such as the codes of conduct that govern:

> journalism, marketing and public relations…pragmatically defer the question of what truth is…they do not separate the attitude of the protagonist from the effects of her or his deeds and words. These codes are predicated on the public's assumed right to hear truthful speech – to hear from speakers who have taken reasonable precautions to eliminate untruth from their remarks. That is, they assume a steady circulation of untruths around and through our lives but proscribe any wilful or wanton exacerbation of them. In most cases the bogey of lying is not seen to require a mention (2012, p. 118).

At the core of this, from a political viewpoint, is *interest* and the possibility that the public's interest, the public's 'right to know,' is not necessarily aligned with the politician's (2012, p. 120).

Accordingly, sins of omission in political speech are often political expediencies, and although obfuscation might be employed, this does not constitute telling an untruth, rather, simply not fully and frankly telling *the truth* – this murky territory is commonly labelled as *spin*. Introducing Saul's argument into this context, it may even be the case that a politician has, in some cases, no objectivity regarding where truth or untruth is to be found in particular matters; no sense of where the public good and the public interest is justifiably at variance with private interest - 'the relentless lobbying of private interests' has long since seen to that (1997, p. 97).

As politics has rhetoric at its core, these games of shadow play lying at the heart of politics should not really be surprising. This is illustrated by Clark's assertion that 'all language is manipulation,' and always has been, that manipulation is in the very essence of language and therefore at the heart of politics. Moreover:

> political discourse frames facts as necessarily contestable, even where claims made against their accuracy may be preposterous, because public truth is a quality achieved only through agreement and arbitration (2012, p. 121).

Therefore, political debate is an exercise in manipulation, in strategically and persuasively swaying opinion. So, when Ardern's use of the terms *kindness* and *collectivism* within her political rhetoric is analysed, it is important to remember that in the arena of politics, *kindness* and *collectivism* are defined to mean whatever it is that she and her (caucus) colleagues agreed upon. The clues to meaning will be found in the political rhetoric that introduces and uses the terms. That Ardern has also used these internationally still does not imply that a dictionary might adequately define her terminology. Her language, examples, and aspects of her message delivery must be examined in order to divine her probable intent and meaning.

In this contestable arena of claim and counterclaim, of unsubstantiated fact and substantiated fiction, it is very difficult to 'sort the wheat from the chaff.' How do the public respond to a president who made 10,000 false or misleading statements in 440 days (Kessler G, Rizzo S & Kelly M July 2020)? What are they to think? Clark's answer to this problematic scenario lies in his thesis that ultimately political speech is poetic. He offers an approach to both deconstruct and decipher based upon a poetic analysis, writing:

> An awareness of the poetic dimension greatly enables us as critics to appraise whether a given utterance upholds standards of honesty: does it bear out an acknowledgement that its publics are entitled to the important facts, shared in good faith. Does it seek to help listeners come to their own considered judgements on questions? Does it invite negotiation with alternate points of view rather than effacing or obliterating them? Does it bore? These questions cannot be answered in any thorough sense without considering the texture, the style, the poetics of the utterance. And this I understand as a beginning for moral criticism, rather than an end of it; it is a methodological suggestion that the

> moral criticism of a political speech can begin with and flow from the poetic criticism of it (2012, p. 126).

Building on Arendt, Clark's theory informs us that political rhetoric and political speeches are poetic in nature. They have clear aims designed to serve the political purpose of the day: they are designed to persuade and sway opinion, to provide a rally point, to claim a *political* truth, to clearly articulate a message, and to contextualise issues. In order to accomplish these aims they are highly structured and employ established poetic tactics in order to isolate their messaging and attempt to create a lasting impression and retention in their audiences – and to create the *sound* of truth. There is a logic to their presentation of fact and opinion, to their own deconstruction and contextualisation of argument and policy, but this is not the logic of scientific or philosophical reasoning. The logic that political rhetoric employs is one of persuasion – of contexts that can be subscribed to by belief and opinion, then becoming political *facts,* unencumbered by moral, philosophical, or scientific consideration. Political rhetoric recasts facts and instructs on how they are to be understood. Clark contends that poetic deconstruction and analysis can be employed to assist in the determination of meaning and to reveal the underlying tactics and structures that are being utilized to 'stay on message' and persuade public opinion.

As a communications specialist, Ardern is extremely adept at refining her messaging into 'bite sized chunks' – soundbites. Her political speech is highly structured and contains formulaic elements that encapsulate her key points and positions. Like an epic poem, Ardern's speeches at the UNGA and Christchurch Remembrance Service have strong elements of storytelling designed to engage the audience. These take the form of clear and precise messages that appeal to a 'return to core values' and thus appear to be possessed of a 'righteousness' and idealism which belies the political context in which they are delivered. However, although we may look to traditional definitions of kindness, definitions steeped in ethics and religious practice, ultimately Ardern's *kindness* is a version with characteristics that are defined within her speech and government; agreed upon by the executive and her caucus, agreed upon by the members of the United Nations, and agreed upon by her audience and constituents.

Chapter Three – Section 1

The Speeches

Section One of this chapter will introduce the primary data consisting of transcripts of two speeches that were delivered by Jacinda Ardern and, in order to reveal meaning, will provide a critical analysis that will examine the contexts and phrases that she uses. This section will primarily be comprised of the researcher's responses to the data, however some congruencies with the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Two will also be highlighted (although the bulk of these will be presented in the synthesis in Chapter Four). The analysis will look for meta meanings, that is, meanings that are not directly bound with the words being uttered but with other situational factors that might shed light on Ardern's intent. In addition, it will examine some of the language structures employed and consider a selection of the word choices that Ardern has made. The first speech presented is the *New Zealand Statement* (Ardern 2018), delivered during 'leader's week' at the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2018. The second was delivered by Ardern at the *Christchurch Remembrance Service* held in the aftermath of the terrorist attack in March 2019 (Ardern 2019b). The transcript of the *New Zealand Statement* is an official release from the United Nations General Assembly and the transcript of the Christchurch speech is taken from the British newspaper *The Guardian* (derived from TVNZs live video stream). The chapter will begin with a critical analysis of some of the language structures of Ardern's speech, before reading each of the speeches in turn for meaning and intent based on their *messaging*.

Section Two will introduce the remaining data for the research, Opinion and Op-ed pieces from print media mastheads. In addition to being data, these pieces also function in a dual role as another voice of critique. As discussed in Chapter One, these opinion articles will play a key role in the method of critique, allowing for voices other than the researcher's to be heard, which is advantageous in social research utilising pragmatic critical inquiry. It can function as a foil to counterbalance the researcher's inherent bias determined by factors of social conditioning. As noted in Chapter One, Opinion articles form an important aspect of citizen involvement in the discussion of politics and policies, as such they provide a measure of investment and interest and deliver vital feedback on the success or otherwise of political rhetoric.

A number of interesting Opinions have been written about Ardern in the time since she presented *The New Zealand Statement* at the UNGA in 2018. In February 2020 she was on the front cover of *Time Magazine* with the headlined quote, 'KNOW US BY OUR DEEDS' (Roy 2020), she has been covered by *Forbes Magazine* 'New Zealand P.M. Jacinda Ardern is The Leader We've Been Waiting For' (Fox 2019), and by *Bloomberg*, 'New Zealand's Well-Being

Budget Is Worth Copying' (Sunstein 2019). Noting the sometimes rocky and sensitive relationship between Australian and New Zealand politicians, the *New York Times* ran an Opinion, 'Do Australians have a case of 'Jacinda Envy'? (Msimang 2019). Indeed, Ardern has made headlines around the world as a forward thinking and decisive leader. The data is presented in full in the Appendices.

Structure

It will become clear in this chapter that Ardern has garnered a reputation as a sincere and straight-talking politician and leader. But does this equate to being a truth-teller? Both Arendt and Clark have shown that politicians use rhetoric in their speech. So firstly, let us consider the difference between rhetoric and the form of reasoned dialectic in order to demonstrate how language choices and construction can be used to create or augment meaning. Arguments made using a dialectical approach use reasoned structures to deduce truth (as opposed to opinion), they are a dialogue attempting to arrive at logically sound and verifiable conclusions. The syllogism is a good example of a logically sound and reasoned dialectical approach to argument. This structure uses two premises (A, B) to arrive at a deductive conclusion (C): *if* A + B *therefore* C. Similarly, Aristotle's Law of Non-contradiction states, 'the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject in the same respect' (Tahko 2009, p. 2), or as a logical expression, A cannot = B and ≠ B at $t1$ (t = time). There is an intellectual and reasoned rigour to such 'arguments.' But these conventions, which plainly provide little wiggle room, are too constraining for politicians.

So, what is rhetoric? Aristotle provides a useful clarification on the nature of rhetoric, '[t]here is no need, therefore, to prove anything except that the facts are what the supporter of a measure maintains they are,' and to accomplish this goal, political rhetoric makes liberal use of the enthymeme:

> The enthymeme is a sort of syllogism, and the consideration of syllogisms of all kinds, without distinction, is the business of dialectic, either the dialectic as a whole or of one of its branches (Aristotle 350 B.C.E.).

Hence much political rhetoric sounds convincing, for we are accustomed to hearing arguments formulated as syllogisms. However, enthymemes ignore the second premise and jump straight to the conclusion. Whereas the syllogism is formulated *if* A + B *therefore* C, the enthymeme takes the form, *if* A *therefore* C, dispensing with B. In an oral context this sounds like compelling argument and, dispensing with having to make the qualification of the premise, keeps the argument moving forward (which in terms of the poetics of construction is useful). It also allows

the politician to make statements of apparent fact and to paint compelling pictures of their world view and of the perils of ignoring their message. In the *New Zealand Statement* Ardern employs the enthymeme on several occasions, albeit in a disguised format. Consider the following examples:

> And if we're looking for an example of where the next generation is calling on us to make that change, we need look no further than climate change (2018, p. 4);
>
> And if we want to ensure anyone is better off, surely it should be the most vulnerable (2018, p. 6);
>
> If we forget this history and the principles which drove the creation of the UN we will be doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past (2018, p. 9).

Ardern appears to be drawing logical conclusions, and her statements sound reasonable rather than blatantly didactic, nevertheless, they are not syllogisms of deductive reasoning, they are statements of political contention. In fact, their formulation and construction are *intended* to put their conclusion beyond contention. This is reminiscent of Arendt's observation regarding Jefferson wishing 'to put the basic consent among the men of the revolution beyond dispute and argument' (1967 (2006), p. 242). Ardern is employing the same device, she is making statements and arguments of fact, her *political fact*, but we do not need to label these as deductive reasoning, even though externally and stylistically they do resemble logical argument. Per Kock, *For deliberative disagreement: its venues, varieties and values* (2018), although political rhetorical statements resemble logical argument, we need not hold them to that criteria, and most probably they are not intended to be so. Rather, the politician's argument raises matters for our consideration, for deliberation. This is political advocacy, that, as Kock observes, may or may not present a full list of pros and cons, it may well be one sided, but the intent is not to persuade an audience with logical reasoning, rather to get it to consider and **deliberate** over an issue. Understood in this way, Ardern's enthymemes make a different kind of sense. She wants her audience to deliberate on the proposition, "Here's a problem. And this is what will happen if we don't fix it." Kock's argument is particularly relevant in the context of the next structural observations (2018, pp. 492-3).

Prior to those, however, it is worthwhile to observe here that some rhetorical researchers have taken these categorisations further in positivist directions - for example, Zarefsky's 'Presidential Rhetoric and the Power of Definition' (Zarefsky 2004) or Ceccarelli's work on the method of textual-intertextual reading, *Shaping Science with Rhetoric. The Cases of Dobzhansky, Schrodinger, and Wilson* (Ceccarelli 2001) – however, this thesis responds to and articulates a more interpretive and pragmatically discursive set of questions.

Another interesting device employed by Ardern is her use of the word *but*. As a conjunction *but* is normally used to separate two clauses of a sentence that contrast with each other. Ardern is using this understanding, *but* her construction differs. Rather than use *but* as a bridge within the sentence (as evidenced in the previous sentence), Ardern uses *but* to begin the next sentence. The effect conveys confidence, and again, as with her use of the enthymeme, has the effect of appearing to put the proposition that she is making beyond dispute. For instance:

> Our action in the wake of this global challenge remains optional. But the impact of inaction does not (2018, p. 4);
>
> The international institutions we have committed ourselves to have not been perfect.
>
> But they can be fixed (2018, p. 5);
>
> We must show the next generation that we are listening, and that we have heard them.
>
> But if we're truly going to take on a reform agenda, we need to acknowledge the failings that have led us to this cross road (2018, p. 6).

The implicit deliberative messages of the above are: *we must act; our international institutions need fixing; we need to face up to our collective mistakes – they led us into this mess.* In her comparatively short UNGA speech, Ardern uses this 'but' device 15 times. The overall effect is to convince her audience that she is speaking with certitude and is a safe pair of hands that can be trusted to make accurate assessments.

There is also another aspect to this usage, and that is its role as a motif or formula discussed earlier in the section on Clark's theory. Like the ancient storytellers, Ardern is using this device to get attention (something akin to an audio cue), and to jog her listeners minds and prepare them for the solution or clarification that is about to be delivered. Listeners become accustomed to her motif couplet of *problem: solution* in the same way that Homer's audience were reminded of their hero's attributes, with formulas such as *fleet footed Achille*s (Homer nd (1961)). Given the context of the two speeches, the UNGA address being a highly politically charged moment and the Christchurch Remembrance Service being a highly emotionally charged moment, it is perhaps not surprising that this device is less evident in the later speech. Nevertheless, it is still subtly present.

In the theory of Arendt and Clark it has been identified that political rhetoric is designed to persuade; to deliver a *message*. In presenting examples of the language and syntactical structure of Ardern's speech some of their underlying constructions have been revealed. Sornig provides an indication as to the point of this investigation. He writes:

> The selection and arrangement of the stylistic resources and devices that may serve to bring a certain perspective to the fore, to "talk" somebody over to one's own point of view, to make him/her believe in something that the persuader him/herself may, or may

> not believe in, is what rhetoric and persuasion is all about. Nevertheless, it is not the verifiable truth of a message which is relevant and likely to impress an audience and make it act upon a certain impulse; it is the *way* things are said (or done), irrespective of the amount of genuine information carried by an utterance. This is why persuasion must pre-eminently be seen as a stylistic procedure (Sornig 1989, pp. 95-6).

I think it can be extrapolated from this that Ardern's oratory and its role in her repertoire as a politician and leader is not an accident, not a misfired attempt at deductive reasoning, but is rather, precisely formulated and strategically stylised 'messaging'.

Sornig makes another fascinating observation worthy of note in relation to Ardern's speeches. He raises the issue of the difference between *conviction* and *seduction*, writing:

> Whereas mechanisms of convincing and conviction obviously work mainly along cognitive argumentative lines, seduction, instead of trusting in the truth and/or credibility of arguments, rather exploits the outward appearance and seeming trustworthiness of the persuader. Seductive persuasion tries to manipulate the *relationship* that obtains or is to be obtained between the speaker and the listener (1989, p. 97).

(Carlo Allegri | Reuters 2018)

This aspect of investigating Ardern's speeches therefore provides interesting insight that reveals stylistic clues which expose a sophistication in her rhetoric. And secondly, that her message is not solely conveyed by her speech, but is also inextricably bound with her delivery, with the act of delivery and the overall presence she creates in the process. In the presentation of the Opinion

and Op-ed, and in the following Synthesis in Chapter Four, I look further into how the reception of Ardern's speech is not simply based upon what she says and her messaging but is also contingent upon how she presents and deports herself. The photograph above provides an interim example of this. Ardern made the decision that her retinue present in the General Assembly chamber would consist of her husband and her young baby daughter – both sitting at the New Zealand desk with Ardern. This simple set of circumstances alone created international news headlines and sent powerful subliminal messages. For example, to any young girls who saw the reporting of Ardern's presence in the UNGA chamber it messaged: you can be a mother and a leader (Roy 2018).

New Zealand Statement, 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 2018.

https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/73/nz_en.pdf

The *New Zealand Statement* (2018)[7] is crafted around notions of *kindness* and *collectivism* which are identified by Ardern at the conclusion of her speech revealing New Zealand's response to the so called 'wicked problems' that have created challenging times both domestically and internationally. Ardern describes these as problems that are 'intertwined and interrelated' (Ardern 2018, p. 10). Having discussed the contemporary challenges faced by New Zealand and the international community Ardern concludes her address to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) by stating:

> Perhaps then it is time to step back from the chaos and ask what we want. It is in that space that we'll find simplicity. The simplicity of peace, of prosperity, of fairness. If I could distil it down to one concept that we are pursuing in New Zealand it is simple and it is this. Kindness.
>
> In the face of isolationism, protectionism, racism – the simple concept of looking outwardly and beyond ourselves, of kindness and collectivism, might just be as good a starting point as any. So let's start here with the institutions that have served us well in times of need, and will do so again.
>
> In the meantime, I can assure all of you, New Zealand remains committed to do our part in building and sustaining international peace and security. To promoting and defending an open, inclusive, and rules-based international order based on universal values (2018, p. 10).

The transcript of Ardern's speech contains a number of sub-headings. These arrange the speech into discrete topics that she elucidates; each reflecting a well-developed thought that either summarises or indicates a policy direction and response, or the wish for one where she is tactfully suggesting that the UN has fallen short. Her topics are: generational change, global challenges, rebuilding multilateralism, connectedness, reforming the UN, universal values, and then her conclusive statement (2018).

In addition to using these talking points and sub-headings in Ardern's speech to contextualise this critical analysis, I have focused on key clauses that signify ideas and thinking underpinning her government's position and concerns. These are clauses such as: 'governments

[7] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiobwkovZWw

do have obligations to their people and each other', and 'our engagement with the world has helped shape who we are' (2018). The few subheadings that I have selected (that are not Ardern's own subheadings from the prepared statement), are from the opening paragraphs of her speech. I have chosen these because of a particular reveal that I think they generate. They form important foundational content for the topics to come later in the speech.

I am also looking for content in Ardern's speech that has a resonance with the theorists. Sometimes this is a conceptually overt tie in to either Saul or Young, and sometimes this is about the covert and subliminal messaging that is a function of the political rhetoric. The diplomatic rebukes that I think Ardern delivers fall into this latter category.

A close reading of Ardern's speech reveals that it is organised to diplomatically suggest that a paradigm shift is required to address global and domestic challenges, and to offer examples of what that shift might be. Ardern signals that some of these are already being pursued by New Zealand. Although the speech stops short of suggesting that the United Nations must also pursue these initiatives of kindness and collectivism, the framing of these as being central to the requirement for reformation and paradigm change leaves little doubt as to New Zealand's position, which is explicitly calling for a shift in the balance of power and *modus operandi*, a shift away from the practice of self-interest and a decision process 'hamstrung by the use of veto' (2018, p. 8).

My opening remarks were in Te Reo Maori

Ardern begins her speech using Te Reo Maori and refers to New Zealand by initially using its Maori name, *Aotearoa*, literally translated as *land of the long white cloud*. Ardern is not a Maori herself, so this deliberate act of using the Maori language to open her address is significant. I think it is also significant that she does not provide a direct translation of the Maori but instead paraphrases into English. The effect is tantamount to maintaining a cultural privacy. It signals respect and acknowledgement of New Zealand's cultural heritage (going beyond its British colonial history) and offers a sign of the vital inclusion of New Zealand's indigenous Maori people, and their customs and culture, into New Zealand's national identity.[8] This is a clear statement of Ardern's sense of a domestic collectivism lying at the heart of New Zealand's culture

[8] The *Treaty of Waitangi* Signed in 1840 by Maori chiefs and representatives of the British government, formally established New Zealand as a British colony whilst also attempting to enshrine 'rights' to the Maori people and guarantees of their rights to land, … and survival. New Zealand later established four Maori electorates (in 1867) to ensure Maori representation in parliament.

as a country, and an indication of an awareness that she is also speaking to and on behalf of a domestic audience in New Zealand (2018, p. 1).

I acknowledged those who are here, why we are here, and the importance of our work

This statement is framed in the inclusive language of collectivism (and the language of diplomacy) whilst acknowledging the who, why, and what of the specific context of the UNGA session that she is addressing. Her use of the plurals, *those*, *we*, and *our*, is an early demonstration of her thinking, that the United Nations strength lies in its membership acting as one, in multilateralism (2018, p. 1). In this sense Ardern's ideologies are partially revealed through her language choices (Hodge & Kress 1993). There is a subtlety to these choices, and they contribute subliminally to the message as covert operators. As Butt et al note, 'grammar has particular power, because it lies beneath the threshold of consciousness' (Butt, Lukin & Matthiessen 2004, p. 270).

I'm struck … by the power and potential that resides here

Building on her previous point, this is a direct inference that member nations, acting in concert, have the power to create change, and that this is where the UN's true potential lies (2018, p. 1). Ardern expands on her vision of the potential of the UN later in her speech in the section 'Reforming the UN' noting that the UN Security Council, which has a history of long being thwarted at the voting stage by veto, must also be reformed if it is to 'fulfil its purpose of maintaining international peace and security' (2018, p. 8). This early indication that Ardern perceives that the strength of the UN lies in *collectivism* and shared values is significant, indicating that her view demands that the UN not only shares common sense 'values' but also acts accordingly and consistently with respect to those values.

Our geographic isolation has contributed to our values

Isolation creates an *outsider* perspective of looking in from without – rather than being inside due to proximity, which by default implies inclusion. The inference is that New Zealand's isolation has influenced its national identity, and that therefore deciding to be a part of something external is a deliberate act of affirmation. Given Ardern's later usage of the terms *isolationism* and *protectionism* the subtext here might be understood as 'although we are apart, we stand with you'

(2018, p. 1). But Ardern is also suggesting that this isolation has contributed intrinsically to the New Zealand psyche, to the identity of both country and people.

We are a self-deprecating people. We're not ones for status

This paragraph suggests that an egalitarianism lies at the heart of New Zealand society where 'worth' is measured by character, that what people do (for a job) is less important than how they behave – that respect is earned by one's *deeds* rather than one's *position*. Ardern also uses the word 'empathy' and suggests New Zealanders have a 'strong sense of justice,' implying a society in which individuals and their welfare matter. The phrase a 'strong sense of justice' also suggests awareness of the corollary, *injustice*. This reveals that New Zealanders feel that how people are treated is important. Ensuring people are treated well and taking care of their welfare signals one of the underlying aspects of Ardern's brand of *kindness* (2018, p. 1).

Our engagement with the world has helped shape who we are

This expands on the idea that integral to New Zealand's identity is the understanding, transcending its geographical isolation, that it is part of the world, and, that this entails a responsibility, 'a duty to use our voice within.' The section continues by identifying that the roots of the United Nations lie in its inception post WW2 as an organisation collectively established based upon a shared vision and mission. A mission to identify through its charter, conventions, and rules, 'a set of international norms and human rights,' and then to act to protect and ensure those rights (2018, p. 2). This statement amounts to a diplomatic rebuke, the inference is that in New Zealand's opinion the UN has wavered off-course from its charter's core values and international mission.

Governments do have obligations to their people and each other

Having previously acknowledged New Zealand's geographic isolation, Ardern is clearly stating that the governments of the world, wherever they may be, have shared 'obligations' with/towards other governments, and a corresponding recognition that governmental actions can have effects that go beyond their national borders. This is probably also a diplomatic rebuke to the Trump administration's retreat from various positions of mutual involvement and collaboration, such as the Paris Climate Agreement (Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2015).

Ardern now links the founding principles of the UN to the contemporary situation, saying:

> given the challenges we face today, and how truly global they are in their nature and impact, the need for collective action and multilateralism has never been clearer (2018, p. 2).

I think that this section of her speech makes it clear that Ardern is challenging the UN to take decisive action. This is also delivered with the observation that the UN needs to re-focus, that its attention has become diverted:

> …debate and dialogue…is not centred on the relevance and importance of our international institutions. Instead, we find ourselves having to defend their very existence (2018, p. 2).

This is another more pointed diplomatic rebuke, a clear insinuation that New Zealand thinks that the UN has lost its way and member nations have not maintained the commitments that they signed up for. It is also interestingly constructed language. It expresses a positive in order to not have to frame an accusation negatively. The covert message is that some countries are acting unilaterally, and these actions are undermining both the functioning of the UN and the search for, and delivery of, solutions to problems.

Concluding her introduction, Ardern notes that globalisation is part of the root cause of this predicament facing the international community, stating that whilst the effects of globalisation have been largely beneficial, 'for many, for others it has not.' Amidst 'unprecedented global economic growth' for many citizens the reality has been isolation, dislocation, insecurity, and an erosion of hope. This is an early signal in the speech of Ardern's awareness of structural inequalities – in this case a group that expresses that they have been left behind and disenfranchised by the promised economic miracles of globalisation and transnationalism. The grand neo-liberal vision of letting the market economy dictate the way forward has faltered. She further states that, in search of a solution with respect to these problems, politicians may either blame and retreat into further isolation, or act collectively to 'seek to fix them' (2018, p. 3).

Generational change

In this section Ardern begins to deliver a contextual rationale for collective action. Two unique challenges of the post-globalisation world are climate change and digital transformation. The nature of these place the world's younger generations directly in the path of their effects. Globalisation saw the rise of transnational corporations, entities so large that many of their balance sheets dwarf nation states. Modern legislatures face unique governance challenges in holding these entities accountable. Their collective failure to meet these challenges has

contributed in part to a 'trend of young people showing dissatisfaction with…political systems (2018, p. 3). But the effects of globalisation are not the only contributors to a 'borderless' world. Digital transformation has radically altered the tyranny of distance that used to separate nations and their citizens. It has created an unparalleled free interaction and dialogue between citizens irrespective of nationality. One of the outcomes of this is a generation that increasingly sees itself as 'global citizens' and who carry an expectation that their respective governments will respond to their concerns and act on global problems before they are inherited (2018, p. 3).

Global Challenges

Ardern talks about climate change from a distinctly Pacific perspective, unsurprisingly as the Pacific Ocean looms large geographically for New Zealand and its neighbours, many of whom are tiny island nations on the frontline of rising sea levels. Ardern identifies that climate change is the most significant example of a problem requiring that the UN respond with 'collective action and multilateralism'. She notes:

> Our action in the wake of this global challenge remains optional. But the impact of inaction does not…And yet there is a hesitance we can ill afford. A calculation of personal cost, of self-interest (2018, pp. 4-5).

As a demonstration of governmental responsibility, as noted above, Ardern indicates some of New Zealand's responses to the global challenge of climate change: a goal of 100% renewable energy generation by 2035, a green infrastructure fund, and a commitment to plant one billion trees over the next 10 years (2018, p. 5). These initiatives indicate her government's willingness to play a part in taking responsibility and acting on global problems, actions that clearly exceed New Zealand's scale of contribution to the problem's caused but that reflect its view of acting as part of a global citizenry seeking collective and multilateral solutions to problems that transcend national borders. But Ardern is also raising one of Saul's observations. That *interests* other than 'the public interest' are getting in the way of governments and international institutions taking the appropriate actions to address some of the challenging dynamics of the changing world, a situation that the younger generation has increasingly less tolerance for.

Rebuilding multilateralism

Ardern acknowledges that the international systems 'have not been perfect' and urges the UN members to 'rebuild and recommit to multilateralism [to] rediscover our shared belief in the value, rather than the harm, of connectedness' (2018, pp. 5-6). She continues:

> We must demonstrate that collective international action not only works, but that it is in all of our best interests. We must show the next generation that we are listening, and that we have heard them' (2018, p. 6).

This illustrates her view on collectivism on two levels. Firstly, the repetition of shared beliefs and values and the strength and effectiveness of collective action as a response. Secondly, regarding the aspect of generational connectedness, that the younger generations are not separate but connected, and, that they are invested in the future, with an expectation of witnessing collective and measured responses to global problems. The use of the word 'heard' also implies a dialogue, an empathetic two-way communication.

Connectedness

Ardern now builds on the idea of collectivism and multilateralism but begins to turn her attention to the individual. Ardern observes that whilst 'international trade' has helped raise the standard of living for many people, helped to 'bring millions of people out of poverty', this has not been the case for everyone; that many citizens have experienced a decline in their standard of living. Ardern recognises that this has created a hesitancy to the progress of nations taking up the options of trade agreements, which in turn has resulted in some governments resorting to the 'false promises of protectionism.' She identifies protectionism as 'one of the mistakes of the past,' offering 'that we must all work to ensure that the benefits of trade are distributed fairly across our societies (2018, p. 6).

Raising the notion of governmental responsibility again, Arden suggests that governments must:

> …build productive, sustainable, inclusive economies, and demonstrate to our peoples that when done right, international economic integration can make us all better off. And if we want to ensure anyone is better off, surely it should be the most vulnerable (2018, p. 6).

This statement moves the idea of collectivism from one of collective action to include collective responsibility, specifically, a collective responsibility for the welfare of vulnerable citizens, no doubt also intended to include refugees. This idea of a government's welfare responsibility is well established in New Zealand, which has an historical attachment to policies that provide a safety net, aka. the welfare state. This has seen the provision of free services for health and education, and the availability of support payments for people who are unemployed. In this context, however, Ardern is signalling a refocusing and new initiative which has perhaps broadened the frame of reference for who is vulnerable in society by giving specifically focused policy attention to the welfare of children. She declares that an 'ambitious goal' has been set in

New Zealand, a target that aims to make New Zealand 'the best place in the world to be a child' (2018, p. 7). Introducing her government's Wellbeing initiative, Ardern indicates that New Zealand is approaching this goal with practical governance and measurable policies and outcomes in mind, saying:

> we can measure material deprivation, and we can measure poverty, and so we will. And not only that, we are making it law that we report on those numbers every single year alongside our budgets (2018, p. 7).

The aim is 'nurturing that next generation,' accompanied by a corollary aim of being aware of the legacies of generational change, being concerned about what 'we are handing down to them too;' the responsibility for stewardship and guardianship, a 'duty of care' (2018, p. 7). Ardern uses the Te Reo word *Kaitiakitanga* for guardianship, saying that it captures the importance of the role of creating a legacy, for giving attention to what the next generation are to inherit. The concept of guardianship as a civic 'duty of care' is also analogous to Plato's *Guardians* discussed in Chapter Two. It ties into Saul's notion of dispassionately adjudicating and filtering policy and governance choices to ensure the *public interest* is met.

These wellbeing initiatives provide a clear example of what Ardern means by kindness embedded into models of governance. They also illustrate aspects of meaning that Ardern's government has attached to *kindness* as a political action– meanings that relate to traditional understandings that are entwined with compassion, empathy, and love, but that are the specific product of the contestable domain of politics – pointing in this instance to a government designing policy to nurture the wellbeing of the communities and citizens it represents.

In a practical illustration of her government's intent, Ardern uses policies for protecting and improving the local environment as an example, citing measures such as: addressing degradation, reducing waste, eradicating predators, protecting biodiversity, and phasing out single-use plastic bags (2018, p. 7). This approach is reminiscent of the slogan that came to prominence in the 70s, *think globally, act locally.*[9] Clearly for Ardern, the 'duty of care' is a combination of macrocosmic and microcosmic responsibility. This section of Ardern's speech provides a clear indication that she is applying kindness and collectivism and her concomitant sense of responsibility at the level of the individual, the local and national community and its environment, and internationally, to the global community and environment.

[9] There are conflicting views on the origin of this statement that became a catch cry of the 'progressive' environmental movements of the 80s and 90s. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to unravel the phrase's etymology.

Reforming the UN

Whilst acknowledging the reformation efforts of the UN Secretary General, Ardern notes that ultimately it the responsibility of the member states 'to drive change at the UN' (2018, p. 8). Ardern discusses reformation of the Security Council in this section, stating that 'its practices need to be updated so it is not hamstrung by the use of veto' (2018, p. 9). This can be reasonably interpreted as a recognition that Ardern thinks it is time to move away from an established routine of global superpowers enforcing their 'interests' on the Security Council at the expense of collectivism and multilateralism. Perhaps it is also an indication of changing times; recognition that the most pressing global threats are not anchored in the binary of communism vs. capitalism, but are instead the global challenges of climate change, zones of endless conflict (spawning ever increasing numbers of refugees), access to health and education services, and the injustices of racism, prejudice, grinding poverty, and economic iniquities.

In a further example of her government's attitude of collective responsibility Ardern signals New Zealand's commitment to the roll out of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 'a significant increase in our Official Development Assistance budget' (2018, p. 8).

Universal Values

In this section, Ardern begins by backgrounding why the United Nations was formed, 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which through two World Wars had brought untold sorrow to humanity' (2018, p. 8). She speaks of the need to revitalise the 'international rules-based system' and to renew 'commitment to our values' (2018, p. 8). These statements add a nuance of purpose to the continuing theme of collectivism. In this instance the purpose is the protection and safeguard of a hard-won peace and the resulting institution of the United Nations and its Charter, a peace that must most especially be maintained for 'succeeding generations', as noted above.

In a comment bringing to mind Saul's *memory* in *On Equilibrium* (2002), Ardern speaks of the importance of 'history', of remembering both the past and the 'principles which drove the creation of the UN,' noting that if these are forgotten 'we will be doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past' (2018, p. 9). Ardern continues by listing 'the core values', founding principles set at the inception of the United Nations.

That all people are equal

As discussed in Chapter Two, this principle is attributed to Thomas Jefferson and the U.S. Declaration of Independence. Jefferson's passage reads:

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed (Jefferson 1776).

However, unlike Jefferson's statement, Ardern is not claiming self-evidence or appealing to a moral high-ground, rather, she points to the 'core values on which the UN was built' (2018, p. 9). The significance of this distinction from Jefferson's, as articulated by Arendt (1967 (2006)), is that rather than appeal to a concept of morality to justify self-evidence, Ardern is referring attention back to the UN Charter, where these rights are already enshrined. Both statements are given in a political context, but Ardern's context is beyond the contestable because it is already enshrined and agreed upon in the UN Charter, whereas Jefferson is attempting to make the case, to generate a weight of support and opinion.

As a political statement and concept, this is perhaps the pinnacle of collective egalitarianism – it argues that despite factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomics, at origin we are all equal and have the same status, therefore citizens should have access to the same protections and opportunities. This concept is also articulated in modified form in the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution, The Equal Protection Clause (Congress of the United States of America 1866), which definitively ensures that equality and protection, from and by the institutions of state, (in addition to liberty), is enshrined as a cornerstone of a U.S. citizen's constitutional rights (J. Harvie Wilkinson 1992, p. 235).

Ardern expands its relevance with her next statement, 'That everyone is entitled to have their dignity and human rights respected' (2018, p. 9). It is conceivable that this is a timely reminder to the UN to be both vigilant and even-handed with respect to the contemporary problems of refugees attempting to flee civil war by migrating across borders – often targeting developed democracies as safe-havens but discovering that their right-of-passage and settlement, and old U.N. responsibilities guaranteeing refugee intake quotas, are no longer as straight-forward as they once were. Beyond that consideration, it is probable that this is also a reminder to member nations that their governments have responsibilities, as noted earlier in her speech, not only to each other but also to their citizens. These 'core values' are reasonably expected to be adhered to, in respect to the actions and policies of the UN, and within the sovereign borders of member nations who have signed the UN charter and are therefore accountable to the UN to maintain and

honour these standards of human rights both at home and abroad. In diplomatic terms, this is the language of rebuke, calling out the high-profile human rights abuses within the borders of member nations, but also probably with respect to the various refugee crises that are playing out in a number of geo-political spheres. Within a more geographically specific domestic locale, i.e. the South Pacific, this might also be read as a diplomatic dig at Australia's policies for the deportation of New Zealand citizens from Australia, deportations that occur even when citizens have lived their entire lives in Australia and have no familial contacts in New Zealand, a policy that Ardern described as 'corrosive' (Remeikis 2020).

In this section of her speech, the significance of the observation made earlier in this chapter about the relationship between language and ideology, and the subtle effects of grammar, becomes evident. For instance, in the phrase:

> In an increasingly uncertain world it is more important than ever that we remember the core values on which the UN was built (2018, p. 9).

The opening of the sentence is describing the present, with the future looming 'uncertainly' – she then moves into the past tense at the end of the sentence with, *remember* and 'the UN *was* built' – oddly though, the pluralisation *core values* and then their listing, '*that* all people are equal', '*that* everyone is entitled to …', '*that* we must strive to…' has the subtle effect of bringing the values out of the past and into the present as actualities and imperatives. They are at once a relic of the past, and concepts for today. The use of *core* also makes them essential. But this is cleverly not didactic ideology from Ardern because they are already the 'values of the UN', so nothing is foisted upon the institution that is not already there, in fact she has reminded the UN, (prodded its collective *memory*), that these concepts are foundational, they are in its roots.

Gender equality

Ardern concludes this section of her speech by talking about gender equality, initially using New Zealand as an example of progressive policy. She points out that New Zealand had recently marked the 125th anniversary of women's suffrage, noting that New Zealand was the first country in the world to enact this in 1893. However, despite her personal experience of feeling no restriction to her developmental and achievement ambitions, she notes that New Zealand still has a 'gender pay gap, an over representation of women in low paid work, and domestic violence. And we are not alone.' Social iniquities and injustices are clearly a practical impediment to collectivism, and Ardern notes that internationally 'other women and girls experience a lack of the most basic opportunity and dignity (2018, pp. 9-10).

Concluding this section it needs to be noted that there is a difference between the *New Zealand Statement,* the speech the New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations officially lodged to the General Assembly (2018, p. 10), and transcripts of the live recording of Ardern delivering the statement at the UNGA on September 27th, 2018 (Newsroom Contributor & Ardern 2018; United Nations 2018, p. 10). Live transcripts and video recordings of the speech conclude with:

> Me Too, must become We Too.
>
> We are all in this together (United Nations 2018).

The General Assembly's officially published version does not contain this statement 'Me Too must become We Too.' With reference to *kindness* and *collectivism* this is a significant difference. Invoking the *#MeToo*[10] movement introduces a major social moment, a shouting-out and rallying cry against sexual (and power) abuse, in which individuals 'came-out' and revealed their personal experiences of victimisation. But Ardern is really delivering an expansion of the frame of reference, the message that 'we', *everyone,* is deserving of our care and support, '*we* are all in this together' – a movement from self-interest to collective interest.

In addition to the above is the significance of the change with respect to considerations of political speech and political communication. The addition of this element adds contemporary awareness and demonstrates not only an appreciation of the social dynamics behind the *#MeToo* movement, but also offers it an evolutionary direction that if leveraged might arguably strengthen its effectiveness as an agent for change. The concluding statement of this section, "We are all in this together" is therefore an important modification to the cumulative, but lone, voice of *#MeToo*. It is perhaps the purest expression of *collectivism* in the entire speech, as it is offered as a catch-cry for citizens to stand in solidarity with those of their peers who have been victimised and/or oppressed. In this sense it represents political action and the expression of a political voice at its most foundational level, that of the individual, the fundamental component of the political constituency. The phrase simultaneously acts as an agent of change whilst invoking a change of order, policy, and response. This is an order in which citizens no longer stay silent whilst their neighbours are oppressed but take up their cause in good conscience and stand with them. In doing so, they demand that the unison of their voices is not only heard, but that their cumulative voice is acted upon by the political institutions that represent them. This is the voice of *we the people.*

[10] A phrase coined in 2006 and that went viral on social media as a hashtag in 2017.

Conclusion

The conclusion of Ardern's speech uses the collective language of *we*. It begins by re-acknowledging and re-characterising the 'chaos' of contemporary challenges facing institutions, leadership, and the individuals that societies are comprised of – these are the *wicked problems*, 'Ones that are intertwined and interrelated' (2018, p. 10). Ardern is looking for, and offers, 'new' solution paradigms, not just new policies and responses. She suggests that:

> 'it is time to step back from the chaos and ask what we want. It is in that space that we'll find simplicity. The simplicity of peace, of prosperity, of fairness' (2018, p. 10).

This statement is the clearest illustration of her position that the concepts of *kindness* and *collectivism* are not merely ideas, but that they can be embedded into a governance paradigm – one which her own government is already acting upon. A consideration for a new political action that is conceptually, and simply, grounded in notions of peace, prosperity, fairness, and wellbeing. Furthermore, Ardern anchors this by offering an over-arching guiding consideration to be front and centre in policy debate and consideration, a functional refinement to be applied in governance as a filter, *Kindness*. Ardern then contextualises its applicability suggesting that *kindness and collectivism* be brought to bear to solve the 'wicked problems' of 'isolationism, protectionism, racism,' and further suggesting that this reformation be taken up by the United Nations, with 'the institutions that have served us well in times of need, and will do so again' (2018, p. 10).

Ardern's final comments are an affirmation of New Zealand's commitment to its responsibility as a global citizen, an assertion that New Zealand will meets its obligations:

> to building and sustaining international peace and security. To promoting and defending an open, inclusive, and rules-based international order based on universal values.
>
> To being pragmatic, strong and kind (2018, p. 10).

But this is not a commitment to do more of the same, this is a commitment to find and enact new solutions for the contemporary 'wicked problems.' As such, New Zealand is issuing a challenge to the United Nations to change both its thinking and policy, because:

> The next generation after all, deserves no less (2018, p. 10).

The Christchurch Remembrance Service Speech, March 29th, 2019

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/29/jacinda-arderns-speech-at-christchurch-memorial-full-transcript

This speech was made by Ardern two weeks after the Christchurch terrorist attack in which a lone gunman attacked two mosques in central Christchurch and in just over thirty minutes killed fifty people and injured nearly fifty more. The 'service' was conceived as a Muslim prayer vigil. It was held in Hagley park, close to the Al Noor mosque, one of the sites of the terrorist atrocity. An international audience watched as Jacinda Ardern reached out to the victims and families of the violence, and to the broader Muslim community, delivering a message to New Zealanders and to the world whilst many thousands from the Christchurch community formed a protective 'cloak' around the Muslims who had attended for prayer.[11]

An interesting aspect of this speech is the contribution to its subtle meaning that has been created by the preceding UNGA speech. It is as if the Christchurch speech is an example of how to put into practice and bring to actuality the ideas and ideals expressed in the UNGA speech.

The tides of remembrance flow over Christchurch today

As with her speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Ardern commences her speech in Maori. She offers a greeting acknowledging the people gathered for the service, 'distinguished leaders, speakers and those who bear authority.' She then extends these greetings to 'the whole of Ngāi Tahu', the Maori *iwi*, or tribe, whose domain extends over the majority of the South Island of New Zealand. This aspect invokes and contextualises *place*; it might also be said that it invokes memory and continuity. In doing so, she not only acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which people have gathered for the Remembrance Service, but also that this culture is both alive and present, and that it is upon their land that this terrorist atrocity was enacted (Ardern 2019b, p. 1).

In the days following the attack Ardern's televised and photographed (news media) interactions with the local Muslim community often showed her wearing the *hijab*, the traditional Muslim head-covering worn by Muslim women. This was widely regarded as a mark of her respect for Muslim culture. This was of significant strategic importance as it enabled her to walk freely amongst the local Muslim community and commence the healing process, it provided the

[11] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdGq3frFsRo

first indication of her response of collectivism and inclusivity. It is therefore notable that for the Christchurch memorial, which was conceived as a Muslim call to prayer, Ardern chose not to wear the *hijab*, but rather wore a ceremonial Maori cloak signifying that she attended the service as New Zealand's pre-eminent leader, and that New Zealand is a multicultural nation that respects its indigenous cultural origins. There is potent symbolism of tolerance and diversity inherent in both of these decisions. Ardern concludes her introductory greeting by acknowledging both the place and nature of the pain the act has caused.

She says:

> E papaki tū ana ngā tai o maumahara ki runga o Ōtautahi.
> *(The tides of remembrance flow over Christchurch today.)*
> Haere mai tātou me te aroha, me te rangimārie, ki te whānau nei, e ora mārire ai anō rātau, e ora mārire ai anō, tātou katoa.
> *(So let us gather with love, in peace, for this family, so that they may truly live again, so that we all may truly live again.)* (2019b, p. 1).[12]

This language, of compassion and inclusivity, calls to mind not only the pain and heartbreak of the fatally consequential attack that has culminated in this gathering, but also the connectedness of community. It recognises that the victims of this event are not just 'they', those who were injured, killed, or directly related to the event by either their presence as congregation or literal relatedness as immediate family, but 'we'; iwi, Muslims, New Zealanders, and indeed the world community - for an act of terrorism is an attack and affront on universal values, on a 'civilised' way of life (that the developed world, at the very least, is accustomed to) - it leaves us lost.

As-salaam Alaikum. Peace be upon you.

Ardern continues her address by talking about a collective loss of words, an inadequacy of expression, in reflecting on the attack. Turning the tables on a dynamic that has become commonplace in many contemporary terrorist attacks that have been perpetrated by Muslim extremists, she says:

> What words adequately express the pain and suffering of 50 men, women and children lost, and so many injured? What words capture the anguish of the Muslim community being the target of hatred and violence? What words express the grief of a city that has

[12] The TVNZ broadcast added subtitles for this content, but it is unclear whether they or Ardern's staff provided the English translation.

> already known so much pain? I thought there were none. And then I came here and was met with this simple greeting. *As-salaam Alaikum*. Peace be upon you (2019b, p. 2).

This is a powerful stylistic and poetic moment within her speech, with overtones of a classical tragedy - evoking agony without using the word. The two questions that commence this phrasing invite reflection, but they also ask for a remembrance of the horror of the act that was perpetrated. She then applies a salve, a little like a haiku that succinctly captures a moment in time, or a dynamic of existential being – *peace be upon you* – she is inviting those listening to wash away their pain, which is of course the point of this salutation. It is hard to ignore the eloquence of her juxtaposition. To underscore the effect, in her next sentences she repeats the phrase *simple words* three times:

> They were simple words, repeated by community leaders who witnessed the loss of their friends and loved ones. Simple words, whispered by the injured from their hospital beds. Simple words, spoken by the bereaved and everyone I met who has been affected by this attack (2019b, p. 2).

The city that 'has known so much pain' is a reference to the two devastating earthquakes that destroyed much of Christchurch. It is significant that the words Ardern finds that best fill the vacuum of loss are Muslim words, the blessing '*As-salaam Alaikum*. Peace be upon you' (2019b). With these words Ardern is both acknowledging the inherent dignity of Islam and showing respect for its ancient wisdom. These comments demonstrate empathy and understanding, a light touch, and a sensitivity to the moment. Building upon the shared experience of grief and loss Ardern speaks of the contexts in which these 'simple words' have been heard. They have been:

> repeated by community leaders…whispered by the injured…spoken by the bereaved…spoken by a community who in the face of hate and violence, had every right to express anger but instead opened their doors for all of us to grieve with them (2019b, p. 2).

There is a clear poetics to this phrasing, it conjures a *scene* as effectively as it might if they were stage directions for a play. *Repeated* by … *whispered* by … *spoken* by. The salutation is almost audible subliminally, there is an effect of resonance, the hint of a secret, of a piece of wisdom being passed around from one to another. But there is also an aspect here that conforms to a well understood construction of political rhetoric, the three-part listing (Atkinson 1984). This section begins with *what words …* (x3), then*, simple words* … (x3), concluding with *repeated by, whispered by, spoken by* – while the resonance of *what words,* of speechlessness, is suspended in the background. The overall effect when watching the speech is almost mesmerising as it builds and contains its message; which is 'the simple words', *peace be upon you, As-salaam Alaikum* (Ardern 2019b).

These words turn the tables on the west's own extremist and fundamentalist movements that have grown rapidly in recent years, movements that express their righteous indignation indiscriminately against the followers of Islam, holding all Muslims accountable for *jihadi* extremists and their violent acts of terrorism. They turn the tables on the extremists' entitled expectations of supremacy. By resolutely communicating from a compassionate position, Ardern draws the often-alienated Muslim community into *our* community, not separate, but the same – entitled to empathy and support in their hour of need. And so, she concludes this section:

> But even when we had no words, we still heard yours, and they have left us humbled and they have left us united (2019b, p. 2).

They are us[13]

Ardern now transitions from words to stories, to tales of the recent events and the histories of those directly affected by them. The tradition of *oral* storytelling, in particular, is virtually ubiquitous (Campbell 1949 (2004)); sometimes tales of great undertakings, or tales of resoluteness and bravery, heroism in the face of adversity. Or the simpler stories of everyman, engaged in everyday life, stories of love and loss, sacrifice and reward. These tales, part history and part allegorical fiction, are culture building, they create *memory,* and form, through shared history and experience, the bonds of community. Shared stories are part of the fabric of community, and Ardern now underscores this point. Having listened to the stories from the grieving and survivors, Ardern now draws these from the Muslim community and includes them into the broader New Zealand story, saying:

> These stories, they now form part of our collective memories. They will remain with us forever. They are us.
>
> But with that memory comes a responsibility. A responsibility to be the place that we wish to be. A place that is diverse, that is welcoming, that is kind and compassionate. Those values represent the very best of us (2019b, p. 3).

In these words, kindness, collectivism, empathy, compassion, and wisdom are all bound together, inextricably woven into one, into New Zealand's collective memory, indivisible from its identity as a nation, and the multicultural backgrounds of its people. In the use of the word *wish* there is also the future – an acknowledgement that New Zealand's story is a work-in-progress, an ongoing tale that is still being written, and although without conclusion, nevertheless a shared sensibility about the type of story the country wants to have, as demonstrated by its values – 'the very best

[13] I have underlined *are* in this subheading to reflect the emphasis Ardern uses in her speech.

of us'. In this sentiment of taking on the fallen and making them part of *us*, there is also an echo of Turkish President Kemal Ataturk's words to commemorate *our* fallen at the battle of Gallipoli and to soothe the pain of mothers, words that are now inscribed on the Kemal Ataturk Memorial in Anzac Parade, Canberra (Watt 2016). Of course, in Ataturk's case he is speaking about foes, ANZACs and Turks that have fallen on the battlefield, whereas Ardern is dealing with citizens who have been murdered in a terror attack. It is evident that Ardern also wishes to move beyond an *us and them* dynamic though. Her language here, and her actions in reaching out to the Muslim community and acknowledging their anguish, displays her awareness that religion *was* a factor in the attack. There is also a recognition that the 'different' cultural modes and mores of that Muslim community inform many of their social interactions and call in turn for a sensitive response that is careful not to further offend either these values or to take offence at these modes of behaviour. Ardern embraces this cultural difference and draws it into the collective New Zealand experience.

Racism exists, but it is not welcome here

In the next paragraph Ardern exercises the power of collective imagination, will, and action – action that is politically designed for nation and identity building. With words that are perhaps poised between reality and wishful thinking, she says:

> Racism exists, but it is not welcome here. An assault on the freedom of any one of us who practices their faith or religion, is not welcome here. Violence, and extremism in all its forms, is not welcome here. And over the last two weeks we have shown that, you have shown that, in your actions (2019b, p. 3).

These words almost read like a manifestation of the 'universal values' that Ardern spoke about in her 2018 UNGA address. They simultaneously acknowledge elements within society that hold prejudicial and/or extremist beliefs whilst delineating these as falling outside New Zealand society's core beliefs and values. There is an element of nation building in them. The repetition also indicates the underlying poetics. By repeating 'is not welcome here' three times Ardern creates a delineation that invites the corollary contemplation of "is welcome here." It is like a demarcation line drawn in the sand which declares; 'On this side is our identity as New Zealand and New Zealanders; and, on that side is who and what we are not.' The final sentence is an assertation that in the days following the terrorist attack New Zealand society has demonstrated that it collectively rejects these prejudices and then draws New Zealand's Muslim community inclusively into that values based collective. But this final sentence is also one of shared experience and shared points of view. It is a sentence of identification and recognition of a shared reality between Ardern the political leader and her constituents, all New Zealanders. The 'you' is without exception or equivocation, it leaves no one behind or outside. This section of her

speech is picking up on the theme of the 'wicked problems' that Ardern alludes to in her UNGA speech, a few examples of which she characterised as 'isolationism, protectionism, racism' (2018, p. 10).

Ardern then explicitly returns to her theme of kindness and collectivism as a means to defeat the 'wicked problems.' In doing so, she extends the responsibility for change to all citizens, saying:

> But do not leave the job of combatting hate to the government alone. We each hold the power, in our words and in our actions, in our daily acts of kindness. Let that be the legacy of the 15th of March. To be the nation we believe ourselves to be (2019b, p. 3).

Whereas Ardern's use of *kindness* in her UNGA speech appears to be focused on *kindness* as a government policy and action, Ardern's usage here references individual action – a more traditional context where, 'our daily acts of kindness,' suggest the implication of a personal practice of *kindness*. The distinction is important. Whereas the meaning in the political context is negotiated and agreed upon within the contested arena of political debate, kindness as a singular political act by the individual relies only on conventional understandings of its meaning. This brings to mind the Theravada Buddhist practice of *mettá bahavana*, the practice of extending loving kindness to the world (Buddharakkhita 1989). In a September 30th interview with Stuff, Ardern demonstrates that she is aware of the distinction between the political and personal contexts. She acknowledges that there are assumptions that you can't 'bring to life' *kindness* in politics, but states: 'I do think that you can embed it in what we do when we govern as well' (Watkins & Flahive 2018). Her government's Wellbeing Budget is surely an example of this (New Zealand Treasury 2019). As individual action, however, Ardern is suggesting a *kindness* that is attitudinal, a consistency in 'word' and 'action' and with the additional concept of kindness as *practice* – 'our daily acts'. Whereas very little is written about kindness as a paradigm for governance, there is a body of work that talks about kindness as a practice by the individual and by a collective of individuals (Aspy & Proeve 2017; Brownlie & Anderson 2016; Cochrane et al. 2019; Hall & Smith 2014; Sampson 2003; Thielmann & Hilbig 2015).

Ardern now turns to the 'global community who have joined us today' saying:

> And we also ask that the condemnation of violence and terrorism turns now to a collective response. The world has been stuck in a vicious cycle of extremism breeding extremism and it must end (2019b, p. 3).

This is direct language, the use of *must* is an imperative delivered without diplomatic equivocation. As such it is both a challenge to the international community and a rebuke for allowing the perpetuation of a negative and destructive cycle of hatred, prejudice, and violence.

At this point she makes an interesting claim and distinction, saying:

> We cannot confront these issues alone, none of us can. But the answer to them lies in a simple concept that is not bound by domestic borders, that isn't based on ethnicity, power base or even forms of governance. The answer lies in our humanity (2019b, p. 4).

It is curious that Ardern appears to be saying that whilst politics can practice *kindness*, it cannot address or cure cycles of extremism on its own – extremism that manifests as racism, hate speech, and the violence of terrorism. It seems here that Ardern is suggesting that a different sort of 'collectivism' is required, not only the collectivism of governments, of universal values and the rules-based order of international affairs, but the collectivism of individuals everywhere acting in concert with a common sense of humanity defining and informing their behaviours.

Ardern's vision for her initiative is now clearer. She appears to see the need for *individual* reformation and practice combined with *governmental* action, both working in concert to address abhorrent behaviours and attitudes, both targeting *wicked problems*. For example, in addition to the policy platform that informs and motivates the *Wellbeing Budget* Ardern has pursued initiatives such as *The Christchurch Call*.

The Christchurch Call agreement, negotiated by Ardern and President Macron of France with prominent social media companies, is designed to address the propagation and retention of hate speech and manifestations of extremism (such as the live video stream of the attack) on social media platforms. Recently endorsed by both Facebook (Facebook Newsroom 2019) and Twitter, the agreement treats social media companies as publishers and holds them accountable for the hosting and proliferation of content on their platforms, and accountable for the identification of individuals behind the propagation of said content. Ardern outlined her approach to combatting the propagation of hate speech and extremism in online social media platforms in an Opinion piece she contributed to the *New York Times*, 'How to Stop the Next Christchurch Massacre' (Ardern 2019a), a critique of the article is presented in this thesis in the following section.

We are one

In concluding her address Ardern confirms a process of transformation and the collectivism of a shared vision, and reminds her audience of the context of their gathering:

> But for now, we will remember those who have left this place. We will remember the first responders who gave so much of themselves to save others.
>
> We will remember the tears of our nation, and the new resolve we have formed.
>
> And we remember that ours is a home that does not and cannot claim perfection (Ardern 2019b, p. 4).

These words serve to bring her audience back to the present and to consider what lies ahead, but they also inform and define. As a contemplation of remembrance, they are not open-ended statements, Ardern informs her audience of the appropriate focus; 'gave so much', 'new resolve', 'does not and cannot claim perfection'. Ardern now quotes the second verse of the New Zealand national anthem, *God Defend New Zealand*. This verse acknowledges New Zealand's multicultural heritage, beginning with 'Men of every creed and race'. It then offers the qualitative aspiration:

> From dissension, envy, hate,
>
> And corruption guard our state (Bracken 1870s).

Whilst these words, written in the 1870s, might seem like the stuff of idealistic nation building for a land of milk and honey, one hundred and forty years later they carry a sanguine reminder of the perils of the contemporary world and its challenges.

To conclude her speech, Ardern returns to an expression from Te Reo Maori and Arabic:

> Ko tātou tatou
>
> As salaam Alaikum (2019b, p. 5)

Ko tātou tatou, *We are one*. Coupled with the traditional Muslim greeting this completes Ardern's message to a nation in pain. A message of unity and collectivism imbued with kindness and understanding; a solidarity that implies a common purpose, and a multi-cultural national identity that defines contemporary New Zealand.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Ardern's speeches are complex and multi-dimensional. And in this case I think we can also say that the Christchurch Speech gains additional meaning because of the UNGA speech that preceded it. But the speeches also display a deep awareness of the nature and form of political 'messaging' meaning making, and in this context the speeches are very sophisticated, a sophistication that belies their comparatively simple language choices. They speak to their audience in a variety of subtle ways to deliver an accumulative meaning that is beyond a simple reading of her words taken at face value. In total they represent a summary of many of the cultural, social, and political issues the world is currently faced with and deliver a simple and effective message, 'the answer lies in our humanity' (2019b, p. 4). By reaching into our collective humanity with a resolve to behave with respect and inclusivity, with *kindness*, many of the social and cultural problems faced can be addressed. Some problems will prove to be of a more complex nature, solutions to these will require a *collective* approach and multilateral responses to enact

them. The impetus to act will be found by stepping ‘back from the chaos and asking what we want’ (Ardern 2018, p. 10).

Chapter Three – Section 2

Opinion & Op-ed

This section will critique a range of Opinion pieces published in a variety of leading media publications, primarily, but not exclusively, from newspaper mastheads. There are two principal reasons for presenting this content. In the first instance there is the matter, mentioned in the introduction, of the lone voice of the researcher reaching 'conclusion in isolation' and for seeking consensus wherever possible (Friedrichs & Kratochwil 2009). In the context of this study Opinion pieces offer an ideal foil for this potential pitfall. Additionally, there is scholarly precedent for including these views within a pragmatic critical analysis. These pages are a forum of public debate, Opinion and Op-ed pages:

> are an institutionalised site of citizen discourse where society reflexively talks to itself. In opinion pieces, elites at any rate speak rationally to each other, to government, and to any of the general public reading along…This ability to guide public debate imbues opinion pieces with special power.' (Mitman, Nikolaev & Porpora 2012, pp. 394-5).

Publishers use Opinion pages to stir debate, raise awareness and consider possible policy directions (and/or pitfalls). Opinions and Op-eds are:

> Read, used, and cited by lawmakers at every level of government, op-eds create influence far beyond the confines of a single page…Unlike articles in the news section, op-eds are openly subjective and highly opinionated, taking strong stands on issues of interest to the newspaper's editorial board. They are meant to appeal either to policy makers or those who influence them and can have a significant impact upon the policy process, especially for those who stand outside of government (Sommer & Maycroft 2008, pp. 586-8).

This article also draws attention to the fact that many Opinion and Op-ed contributors are in fact academics. Whilst the context they publish in may not be peer reviewed, their opinions are seriously considered, and they contribute to societal debate. Accordingly, some of the pieces to be presented in this section are written by academics and offer carefully weighed insight. These Opinions and Op-eds are presented in full in the appendices.

You can't copy love: why other politicians fall short of Jacinda Ardern

Ghassan Hage
The Guardian
26/03/2019
Opinion
URL: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/26/the-difficult-love-of-jacinda-ardern-cannot-be-easily-emulated-not-by-white-australian-culture-loving-itself

Hage begins his Opinion piece 'You can't copy love' by recounting an anecdote from his time doing fieldwork during the Lebanese civil war. A militiaman has suggested that they put prisoners in trucks and take them back across the warzone's frontline. He recalls a woman named Salma, with a reputation as 'someone exceptionally loving and totally devoted to caring for the militiamen', saying:

> Why? So that they'll come back and kill us? These are children of the devil, finish them, finish (Hage 2019).

He recounts that it 'gave me a permanently disenchanted view…of the facile virtues of those who "love their own people" (2019, p. 1).

Hage wrote this piece in the aftermath of the Christchurch terrorist attack having just witnessed the *actions* and *reactions* of Jacinda Ardern to those events. In a sense his piece is evaluative, asking the questions, what is love, and is love conditional or unconditional?

He writes:

> To me the love that is worthy of our attention and admiration is the more difficult love, the love that is able to cross cultural boundaries and encompass multiplicity and difference rather than remain entrenched within the boundaries of oneself (2019, p. 2).

Reflecting on Ardern's response in the days following the Christchurch attacks he says, 'Like many I am watching her politics unfold full of admiration for its multidimensional restorative potential' (2019, p. 2). Hage links to an article published a few days earlier in *The Guardian*, 'The nation is behind us: New Zealand shares pain of Christchurch Muslims'. This article quotes Imam Gamal Fouda speaking at the Christchurch Remembrance service, who said:

> "Last Friday I stood in this Mosque and saw hatred and rage in the eyes of the terrorist…Today from the same place I look out and see love and compassion in the eyes of thousands of New Zealanders and human beings from around the globe" (Wahlquist 2019).

Clearly for Imam Fouda a restorative displacement is being witnessed: love and kindness, have displaced hate and prejudice.

In Hage's Opinion a view has been formulated based upon a careful consideration of Ardern's politics and actions, combined with a reference to the politics and actions of other leaders, particularly leaders within an Australian context. As Hage's argument develops, it becomes clear that he is considering the efficacy of political responses with particular emphasis on issues of 'difference' and 'injustice' – as characterised by Young in 'Structural injustice and the politics of difference' (2009). Hage is focused on racism, both its dynamics and effects, and the difficulty of formulating effective policy responses to this form of prejudicial extremism. He describes 'white nationalist racism' as a 'shattering force' that 'works to fragment and disperse.' Using Australia as an example, he says:

> We Australians only have to look at colonial racism's effect on Indigenous Australians as individuals and as communities to recognise in this racism, not only a weapon of economic dispossession but also a weapon of mass psychosocial destruction and communal disintegration.
>
> This is why dealing with the effect of structural racism – a racism that has unleashed, and is continuing to unleash, its disintegrative effects on people and society – is such a difficult endeavour. It requires more than cosmetic notions of "closing gaps".
>
> It requires a fundamental and sustained politics of restoration that unleashes all the possible economic, practical and affective centrifugal forces to counter the corrosive effects of the disintegrative politics that has prevailed for so long. But, as importantly, it also requires a special kind of love.
>
> While love on its own leads us nowhere, a restorative politics is not complete without it being permeated by a deeply felt love, a love that can cross rather than erect cultural boundaries and that can heal rather than entrench divisions (2019, p. 3).

It is worth noting, that although Young's theory comprehensively articulates the disenfranchising effects and dynamics of 'structural' difference, and suggests, as her restorative action, 'closing the gap' responses of inquiry and analysis to redress their concomitant injustices and depressive effects, she does not make this additional behavioural/attitudinal argument towards a requirement for 'love' to be factored into a healing response. Young's response is that 'the state and law' alone is an insufficient response to structural injustice, an acknowledgement that laws stipulating, and enshrining, principles of 'equality' are ineffectual on their own, (and arguably, in the U.S.A. and elsewhere this is an accurate assessment). She suggests, that a 'politics of difference seeking to undermine structural inequalities' requires civil institutions:

> churches, universities, production and marketing enterprises, clubs and associations all examine their policies, practices, and priorities to discover ways they contribute to unjust structures and recommends changing them when they do (2009, p. 379).

So whilst both Young and Hage are looking for a politics of restoration, their sense of how this might most successfully address the problem differs considerably, with Hage suggesting that new policies and a review of current practices is not sufficient, that an additional ingredient of 'love' which is capable of crossing the 'cultural boundaries' that are evident in examples of entrenched 'difference', and Young placing the onus on institutions, and discounting individual action and attitude.

Hage's Opinion piece is therefore useful on two fronts. It adds nuance to the theoretical framework of Young's work on structural injustice, and it also provides a clear insight into the power and potential of Ardern's *kindness* and *collectivism* - both her actions and policy, and their restorative potential. It identifies in her approach an empathetic response that is not only a matter of perception but is a deeply felt motivating characteristic intrinsic in how she interacts with the world and identifies with other human beings.

Hage's view, that 'love' is a requirement, moves (again) towards the Buddhist concept of *mettá*[14] - loving kindness. He suggests that despite the political ramifications, the essential, and often missing, ingredient of success lies within the individual, acknowledging that with this additional element comes a 'glimmer of hope that a politics that heals the shattering effects of white ethno-nationalism is possible'. He writes:

> The problem is that such a politics is not easy to emulate if the love that moves it is not genuinely felt…because at its heart it is a gift and an offering. As such it carries in it Ardern's spirit as a giver. If another politician tries to copy her but is not genuinely moved by a healing, cross-cultural love of the multiplicity, no matter what they give, the spirit with which they have given, their *hau*[15], will reveal itself in the undertone of what they offer.
>
> As such, their gift will lack the healing, integrative effect that it should otherwise have. You only need to hear Scott Morrison speak about Indigenous Australians or about Muslims to understand what I am talking about.
>
> The *hau* that is present in what Ardern offers is not hers alone. It is also the spirit of the various social forces she has come to embody. If there is in her a desire and a capacity for healing, it is because she conjures what is best and healing in New Zealand society (2019, p. 4).

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[14] *mettà* – (lang. Pali - Theravada Buddhism) – loving kindness. 'The strong wish for the welfare and happiness of others' (Buddharakkhita 1989, p. 1).

[15] *hau* (noun) - Maori Dictionary: vital essence, vitality – of a person, place or object. <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?&keywords=hau>

In his conclusion, counterpointing Australian politics and politicians with Ardern, he says:

> Even when they say all the right things, the spirit of what they say is present in their offering. And regrettably for all of us, this spirit remains the spirit of narcissistic love, the spirit of white Australian culture loving itself (2019, p. 4).

This offers a clue as to why, as Clark notes, it is unlikely that Malcolm Turnbull (who according to Bill Shorten 'has used the word 'love' more frequently in his public remarks' than any other Australian Prime Minister) will be:

> widely remembered for the arts of loving…If people had noticed Turnbull's quest for love more, perhaps it would have drawn something like widespread ridicule – so clearly was it delivered from a position of weakness (Clark 2019, p. 189).

In other words, Turnbull's message fell on deaf ears. In this context, love is viewed primarily as an emotion, and is not generally regarded as a power for transformation, nor as a 'force'. This cultural understanding of 'love' is vastly different from *mettá* (loving kindness), which is known within Theravada Buddhism as a force or pragmatic agent of change, and as political action:

> In a world menaced by all kinds of destructiveness, *mettá* in deed, word and thought is the only constructive means to bring concord, peace and mutual understanding. Indeed, *mettá* is the supreme means, for it forms the fundamental tenet of all the higher religions as well as the basis for all benevolent activities intended to promote human well-being (Buddharakkhita 1989).

In the practice of *mettá*, negative traits are addressed by 'actively putting into place the correlative positive virtues' (1989, p. 10). Discrimination is addressed by practicing non-discrimination; violence is addressed by practicing non-violence, and so on. With this understanding applied to Ardern's *kindness* and *collectivism*, it is apparent that kindness combats the un-kind (hate, prejudice, and the diminution of others), collectivism combats isolation that manifests as disenfranchisement and the injustices that derive from being different to the normative paradigms. The practice of 'sameness' then actively addresses the dynamics of 'difference', and provides another frame of reference for understanding phrasing that Ardern has used in her speeches at the UNGA and the Christchurch Remembrance Service; phrases such as, "Me Too must become We Too" (Newsroom Contributor & Ardern 2018); 'They are us', *"Ko tātou tatou"* 'We are one' (Ardern 2019b).

The question that remains is whether an effective restorative politics is possible without leadership capable of making a personal practice of restorative behaviours, or without a society that shares and/or accepts that vision and intent?

America Deserves a Leader as Good as Jacinda Ardern

The Editorial Board
The New York Times
March 21st, 2019
Opinion
URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/21/opinion/new-zealand-ardern.html?searchResultPosition=49

This Opinion piece by the New York Times' (NYT) Editorial Board focuses its attention on examples of uncluttered and uncompromising leadership such as that displayed by Ardern in the wake of the March 2019 terrorist attack in Christchurch.

The article initially observes that the white supremacists' attack in Christchurch:

> will be long scrutinized for the way violent hatreds are spawned and staged on social media and the internet. But now the world should learn from the way Jacinda Ardern, New Zealand's prime minister, has responded to the horror.

They note that almost immediately after the attack Ardern spoke of:

> new controls on the military-style weapons that the Christchurch shooter and many of the mass killers in the United States have used on their rampages' (The Editorial Board 2019).

Ardern was good for her word and moved quickly. On the Thursday following the attack, having sought advice and consulting with her executive, she announced a 'ban on all military-style semi-automatic and automatic assault weapons, parts that can be used to turn other rifles into such weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines' (2019). Within less than a month of the attack the New Zealand Parliament had voted 119-1 to pass a law banning assault weapons.

In addition to these measures, Ardern flagged in the New Zealand Parliament that she also had social media companies in her sights for the unrestricted propagation of extremism and images of violence, saying:

> "We cannot simply sit back and accept that these platforms just exist and that what is said on them is the responsibility of the place where they are published. It cannot be a case of all profit, no responsibility" (2019).

By mid-May Ardern and France's President Macron were due to host *The Christchurch Call* in Paris – an initiative calling on social media companies to subscribe to measures to control and identify violent hate speech and extremism on their platforms. By September 2019, major social media companies had come on-board and had pledged to work together and share resources under

the auspices of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) (*Next Steps for the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism* 2019).

The NYT Editorial Board weren't aware of these outcomes when they wrote their Opinion piece, but they had recognised in Ardern a leadership quality and singular focus that stood in stark contrast to responses from US politicians to a 'string of mass killings' – a collective sitting on hands as hundreds of US citizens have perished.

The NYT also noted that:

> In lieu of trite messages, she donned a black head scarf and led a group of politicians to visit victim's families; speaking without a script to a school some of the victims attended she urged the pupils to "let New Zealand be a place where there is no tolerance for racism. Ever." She told grieving families, "we cannot know your grief, but we can walk with you at every stage."

The article concludes:

> After this and any such atrocity, the world's leaders should unite in clearly condemning racism, sharing the grief of the victims and stripping the haters of their weapons. Ms. Ardern has shown the way (2019).

This article, from a publisher that for many people represents an international bastion of the Fourth Estate, often referred to as *the paper of record*, provides a simple appraisal of Ardern's vision and decisiveness, identifying and endorsing her as a leadership example for our times. The Editorial Board's piece also provides an acknowledgement that Ardern's tactic of *kindness* and *collectivism* is an effective governance approach for addressing issues such as racism and prejudice.

New Zealand P.M. Jacinda Ardern is The Leader We've Been Waiting For

Erica Ariel Fox

Forbes Magazine

March 22nd, 2019.

Leadership Strategy

https://www.forbes.com/sites/ericaarielfox/2019/03/22/how-do-you-lead-in-a-crisis-new-zealands-p-m-shows-how-its-done/#31a7b3dd31f3

Writing in response to Ardern's leadership post the Christchurch terrorist attack, Fox says that:

> Ardern demonstrates four pillars of leading in times of great need. Connection. Compassion. Clarification. Conviction (Fox 2019).

Connection

She notes that times of crisis are not appropriate times for leaders to fuel polarisation and 'fuel' the sentiments of "us vs. them". Rather, they are times to bring people together, to find 'common ground.'

Compassion

Ardern did not attempt to conceal her own feelings and her sense of loss and tragedy – furthermore, she maintained awareness of the grieving Muslim community, their religious conventions with respect of burial, and their need to have a safe place to worship – she noted that their security was compromised and 'took steps to protect their personal vulnerability' (2019, p. 2)

Clarification

Fox argues that at times of crisis 'laser-like clarity needs to determine what matters most right now.' She identifies two distinct actions that addressed this need. Firstly, Ardern identifying the act for what it was, 'to call domestic terrorism by its name', rather than labelling it 'a "mass shooting' or a "hate crime." Secondly, Ardern moved immediately towards reforming gun legislation, specifically moving to begin the removal of military style assault weapons, high capacity magazines and conversions that enable other weapons to become assault weapons (2019, p. 2).

Conviction

Lastly, Fox writes about conviction – 'the conviction to act'. Referring to US experiences of the aftermath of 'mass shooting' events, she notes that there, after 'a momentary outpouring of grief…people move on.' Consequently, she notes that 'law-abiding' gun owners feel 'wrongly judged and misunderstood', and 'victimised communities feel left behind in their demand for justice. In the end, nothing happens, so nothing gets better' (2019, p. 3). By contrast to this experience, within 72 hours Ardern's cabinet had agreed on the nature of the reforms they would seek, and within a couple of weeks of the attacks Ardern's government had passed reforming legislation to remove offending weapons from the community.

Finding a Path Forward

Fox observes that her perception is of a world that is 'fraying at the edges. Even falling apart.' What kind of leadership is required in this 'increasingly fractured, angry, and broken society?'

Fox maintains that through her display of:

> connection; compassion; clarification; and conviction. [Ardern] showed us a world held together through common humanity, sincere empathy, thoughtful consideration, and fierce resolve. That's a way forward (2019, pp. 3-4).

This article indicates that Ardern's *kindness* and *collectivism* translates beyond New Zealand's sovereign borders. In particular it responds to two dynamics. Firstly, leadership: a decisive and empathetic clarity of response and action. Secondly, the political: a consistency between the personal and the political 'collective' and the guidance and harnessing of the political culture to enable meaningful reform that is consistent with the 'political' messaging.

Considered with respect to Saul and Young, it might be observed that the act of terrorism in Christchurch damaged New Zealand's national psyche and that Ardern's personal and governmental responses elevated the 'public interest' over 'private interest' (Saul 1997). The collective interest of safety was elevated above other considerations. Victims weren't marginalised by the event, their 'group difference' (2009) as Muslims, didn't inform the emphasis of response, in fact the opposite occurred. Ardern delivered the message, 'They are us' (Ardern 2019b), she identified broader New Zealand society with the Muslim community – therefore her protective act (that of enabling legislation to ban the sale and ownership of assault weapons) was an act for all – for the 'public good' (Saul 1997), and was devoid of differentiation.

It also needs to be emphasised that these actions are identified by Fox as effective politics, illustrative of a way forward. It is hard to escape the conclusion that this decisive action to attempt to ensure no repeat of the Christchurch events, by banning a variety of high powered weaponry, is also an essential component of the 'restorative politics' that is alluded to by Hage (Hage 2019).

Make Kindness a Priority in Politics

Vanessa Kerry
CNN International Edition
February 5th, 2019.
Political Op-ed

URL: https://edition.cnn.com/2019/02/04/opinions/kindness-needs-to-be-a-priority-in-politics-kerry/index.html

Kerry has an interesting professional background that is a mixture of physician and academic. As the daughter of US Senator John Kerry, who served in the Obama administration as Secretary of State (replacing Hilary Clinton in 2013), she also has a well-developed political insight. Although Kerry's article does not deal directly with Ardern, it does form a useful parallel consideration to notions of *kindness* and *collectivism* with respect to the political arena and provides insight into what kindness can achieve.

Kerry observes that while her father served in the U.S. Senate it was a time of partisan respect and bi-partisan politics. However, she notes a distinct and contrasting change in current U.S. federal politics:

> Today, our government is overwhelmingly setting an example of contempt for differences, name calling, one-upmanship and a politicization of each other's values…
>
> I am especially appalled by the positions of the Trump administration. They reflect the exact "un-empathy" and unkindness that I feel has become all too common inside and outside Washington (2019, p. 1).

She continues:

> All leaving us to wonder who is the administration actually trying to help? If trying to uplift citizens of this country, our leaders would be celebrating sectors like clean energy, health care, and technology – where some of the fastest-growing and highest paying jobs are in America. They would provide more comprehensive health care, invest in our education system and, critically, affirm the very real, irrefutable climate change and make an energy policy that protects our citizens and the world for years.
>
> Leaders should govern with honesty and humility, acknowledge hard truths and adapt to our evolving future. That is kindness (2019, p. 1).

The parallels to Ardern's UNGA speech are unmistakable. Kerry identifies a similar political status quo and notes the failure of contemporary U.S. politics to adequately address important

contemporary issues; especially those that pertain to difference, and to the inextricably bound contexts of energy policy and climate change. Significantly, Kerry's concerns are similarly placed with issues facing the younger generations, both in the context of children growing up with adequate access to health-care and education, and also with respect to the growing social-media platforms and their 'modes of communication that dilute the humanness of connection' (2019, p. 2).

Writing as a health professional and academic, Kerry cites references for proof that acts of kindness, and the act of behaving with kindness, are beneficial to health and well-being, in addition to boosting business success (Editors Kindness.org 2017; Editors Random Acts of Kindness.org n.d.; Gaz 2018). These examples speak to the practice of kindness at the individual level, 'random acts of kindness', and *mettá* – loving kindness – and indeed they are just a few of a substantial number of studies into the practice of kindness by individuals (cited earlier). As such, these can inform, providing a sense of what kindness might be capable of, and therefore what it might be able to mean within the political arena of policy and governance. However, Kerry adds an additional element to the consideration of kindness, one that is more firmly allied with the Buddhist concept of *mettá* than the traditional understanding (which is most often linked to empathy and compassion). This is a finding that *kindness* can be contagious. Referring to a study examining the power of social networks to spread good (Fowler & Christakis 2010), Kerry observes that it has found that 'contributions to public good can be consequently tripled through direct and indirect influence' (2019, p. 2).

If kindness begets kindness, begets kindness, and if the results are beneficial on an individual level, and for society, then Ardern's governmental decision to embed kindness into governance and to enable it as a referencing tool for the analysis of new initiatives, not only makes sense as a reform initiative, but ought to also result in a gradual expansion of kindness throughout the nation state. And amongst those states that benefit from a state actor and its citizens acting on (and from) a kindness paradigm for the public good. This also makes sense from both Saul and Young's perspective – as this has the potential to address both the 'public interest' and 'group difference' (1997; 2009).

Why Jacinda Ardern Matters

Sushil Aaron

The New York Times

March 19th, 2019.

Opinion

URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/19/opinion/jacinda-ardern-new-zealand.html

Sushil Aaron's Opinion is perhaps most notable for his concluding observations, which he builds to after providing some contexts for international readers about what New Zealand is like experientially, an observation he makes as an immigrant.

He first provides some interesting background views on Ardern as a leader, noting that she 'set high benchmarks for messaging and leadership during this crisis' (Aaron 2019, p. 1). He then recounts how Ardern donned a 'black scarf', the traditional headgear of Muslim women, as she moved among affected Muslim families offering comfort, stating that this was a 'remarkable gesture given the reactions Muslim women's headgear provokes in many Western countries' (2019, p. 1).

In the face of a terrorist attack, motivated by prejudice and racial extremism, Aaron says:

> Ardern has consciously sought to reinforce state ideology and elevate it above private prejudice. She recognizes politics as the domain that decides a nation's values and is providing strong narrative direction for a society suddenly dealing with exposed fault lines. She is reminding Kiwis to come to terms with the altered composition of her nation and, in fact, told Donald Trump that the best way he could support New Zealand was by offering "sympathy and love for all Muslim communities" (2019, p. 1).

Something about this attack, and its aftermath, captured world attention in a most uncommon way. Firstly, there is the fact that the attack was streamed live to the internet, resulting in a firestorm of outrage directed at social media companies who 'published' the material. Secondly, there was the phenomena of Ardern's leadership in response to the attacks. Thirdly, there is an international response to Ardern's leadership manifesting as a wave of respect and admiration for her forthrightness and compassionate empathy and respectful actions, this latter response lead in no small part by the international Muslim community. This is perhaps best summed up in a tweet by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed of the United Arab Emirates:

> New Zealand today fell silent in honour of the mosque attack's martyrs. Thankyou PM @jacindaardern and New Zealand for your sincere empathy and support that has won the respect of 1.5 billion Muslims after the terrorist attack that shook the Muslim community around the world.
>
> (Twitter, *@HHShkMohd,* March 22nd, 2019 - https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/christchurch-shooting/111503420/worlds-tallest-building-lit-up-with-image-of-jacinda-ardern) (Mohammed 2019).

To accompany and underscore his message Sheikh Mohammed arranged for an image to be projected onto the side of the Burj Kalifa, the world's tallest building (and an icon of Dubai's ascension as a significant international city). The image showed Ardern, eyes closed and wearing a traditional Muslim headscarf, embracing a Muslim woman in sympathy. Projected above Ardern's head the word *peace*, written in both Arabic and English (Lapin 2019).

And so back to Aaron's observation, '[Ardern] recognizes politics as the domain that decides a nation's values and is providing strong narrative direction for a society suddenly dealing with exposed fault lines' (2019, p. 1). A narrative direction, that on the back of the respect her inaugural UNGA speech received, has bled out beyond the shores of New Zealand and into the international community. A narrative with a message founded in principles of *kindness*, *collectivism* and connectedness: Ko Tatou Tatou – *We are one, '*They are us.'

Examined through the theoretical lenses of Arendt and Clark, this combination of words and action is *all* political action, political discourse. The *moment* that Ardern has seized is not unique to New Zealand, in fact the seeds of her action post the Christchurch terrorist attack were clearly sown in her address to the UNGA six months earlier, but her actions and messaging after the Christchurch attacks do appear to display a clear recognition of the fact that politics *is* the domain wherein narratives are shaped, and can therefore be transformational – and so Ardern, as Aaron notes, is now emerging 'as the definitive progressive antithesis to the crowded field of right-wing strongmen' - a wing of politics that sows dissent, xenophobia, and unrest, that is divisive and polarising by design.

Both Ardern and Sheik Mohammed have captured a moment of zeitgeist and responded with *momentous* performances. Ardern somewhat presciently capturing the moment in her UNGA speech in 2018 followed by her words and actions after the terrorist attack in March 2019; and HH Sheik Mohammed eloquently capturing the magnitude of the moment with his tweet and the posting of an image of Ardern's embrace of a Muslim woman under a simple and contemplative message, *peace* on the Burj Kalifa, a symbol of Muslim economic power and success.

Aaron observes that:

> The challenges [Ardern] faces resonate with those in other democracies. It remains to be seen if in her case normative habits and deliberative practice can prevail over nasty right-wing subcultures that are amplified by technology, social media and weapons…Ms. Ardern will need to use her country's civility to confront social divisions rather than allow it to foster silences that block fuller expression of equality for marginal groups.
>
> Her government will need to craft newer meanings of national belonging to translate the tolerated and unwanted into the desirable. Democratic discourses must ultimately aim to bridge ethnic silos and parallel cultural lives (2019, p. 2).

On the domestic front in New Zealand perhaps the Ardern government's Wellbeing Budget (New Zealand Treasury 2019) is an example of just this, serving as a practical embodiment of *kindness* and *collectivism* embedded into state governance. Beyond New Zealand, Ardern's message has struck chords and won her widespread respect and admiration. HH Sheik Mohammed's response indicates that Ardern's actions are also healing long standing divisions. At the very least, as Aaron observes, 'Right now her moral clarity is inspiring the world' (2019, p. 2).

"Dear Prime Minister...": An open letter to Jacinda Ardern

Summer Joyan

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

ABC Religion & Ethics

March 20th, 2019.

Opinion

URL:https://www.abc.net.au/religion/letter-from-a-muslim-girl-to-prime-minister-jacinda-ardern/10922442

This Opinion piece was written by a 13-year-old Muslim girl living in Australia. Along with her friends, also Muslim girls, she speaks of the feeling of being *outsiders* within Australian society. That is, until a first experience of inclusion in the aftermath of the Christchurch attack, an inclusion that has manifested as a result of Ardern's demonstration of embracing the pain of the Muslim community.

She begins with the background that she was born after September 11th, 2001, writing:

> I have never really contemplated how dark the anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant language is that permeates Australian society, because it is all I have ever known. I guess I've become used to hearing political leaders use that same language (Joyan 2019).

Joyan acknowledges what witnessing Ardern's behaviour has meant to her and her friends, to the whole Muslim community. Having watched video of Ardern meeting with students at a local Christchurch high school, she observes:

> You showed such strength and kindness, and it made me wish I could experience the same thing in Australia. In my high school, not a single teacher or figure of authority even mentioned the attacks. They didn't acknowledge that a white supremacist murdered 50 innocent Muslim men, women and children in a usually peaceful place of worship. They didn't offer support or reach out to the Muslim girls in my school or even provide any counselling services for grief and support.
>
> In a country that is so similar to New Zealand, and yet so different, can you imagine the comfort that my Muslim friends and I felt, knowing that there was one leader in a neighbouring country that was on our side? My friends and I are Muslim; we were all born in Australia and it is the only place we have ever known. But this has been the first time we have ever felt that we were part of the fabric of a community, and it breaks my heart that this feeling of belonging has come at the cost of 50 lives… Your leadership has brought the world together (2019, p. 2).

This piece is a demonstration of the power of political action and leadership, and of the potential that can reside with it. In a sense it shows how little action is actually required to touch the hearts and minds of people and begin the process of healing division and difference. It also serves to remind that people *want* to feel that they belong in their communities and nations. Joyan reminds us that political action can be a source of both alienation and unity.

Joyan's letter reminds me of an anecdote my brother shared recently. He was stopped in a taxi in heavy traffic in Dubai. The driver asked where he was from, so he told him that he was from New Zealand. The driver, a Pakistani, responded with "Jacinda Ardern!" He then told my brother that when he has breaks or there is quiet time between fares, he often connects to YouTube and listens to speeches/watches videos by Jacinda Ardern. Ardern has made him feel both *seen* and *cared about*. Collectively referring to Western leaders, the driver told my brother, "She's the first one that noticed us."

There is an indication here of just how successful Ardern's messaging of *kindness* and *collectivism* has been by drawing attention to the experience of individuals who, for the most part,

experience their life as outsiders. Joyan is clear that she is responding to Ardern's leadership, to her individual 'acts of kindness' (Ardern 2019b, p. 3), to Ardern's personal demonstrations of compassion and empathy. This begs the question as to whether these individual acts of kindness and empathy, when performed by a state leader in the performance of their duties as head of state, can ever be truly considered individual acts, or whether they are intrinsically political, notwithstanding Arendt's claim that compassion is 'politically speaking, irrelevant and without consequence' (Arendt 1963 (1990), p. 86).

Joyan's responses to Ardern also indicate the transformative and healing power of Ardern's actions in a manner consistent with the Buddhist concept of *mettá,* loving kindness. I will let the Dalai Lama have last word on this aspect of Ardern's kindness:

> "She really tried to tackle this problem through non-violence, through compassion and through mutual respect. I really admire her. I think that's one living example" (Australian Associated Press 2019).

Jacinda Ardern is showing the world what real leadership is: sympathy, love and integrity

Suzanne Moore

The Guardian

Opinion

March 18th, 2019.

URL: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/18/jacinda-ardern-is-showing-the-world-what-real-leadership-is-sympathy-love-and-integrity

Suzanne Moore commences her article:

> Out of the horror inflicted by those who cannot accept the world as it is, comes a vision for a better world (Moore 2019).

Moore recalls Ardern's actions with respect, and recounts Ardern's exchange with U.S. President Donald Trump who asked how the U.S. might help New Zealand, to which she replied, "Sympathy and love for all Muslim communities" (2019). Moore contrasts the idea of sympathy and love against the United States and the United Kingdom experience, where:

> Trump threatens all with the military in his quasi-Mussolini style. While Theresa May could not communicate any of this warmth of leadership in the aftermath of Grenfell.
>
> That leadership could be about compassion and that overused word "empathy" feels freeing to us now. It wasn't always this way. Dwight Eisenhower once said: "The supreme quality of leadership is unquestionably integrity." Ardern embodies this; meaning what she says, saying what she means, unafraid and unbowed…
>
> Ardern has moulded a different consensus, demonstrating action, care, unity. Terrorism sees difference and wants to annihilate it. Ardern sees difference and wants to respect it, embrace it and connect with it. Here is an agnostic showing that love will dismantle hate. This is leadership, this light she shines, guiding us through to a world where we see the best of us as well as the worst (2019, p. 2).

This is another example of a response to Ardern as a leader examined through her initiatives of *kindness* and *collectivism* that is 'connecting' with difference, giving it legitimacy, and redefining 'us' to include 'them' as Paul Keating did in his Redfern Park speech (1992). Ardern's concept of 'us' is *we*; enriched by difference, breaking down isolation and injustice, inclusive of *them,* and reshaping collective identity in the process.

Jacinda Ardern: How to Stop the Next Christchurch Massacre

Jacinda Ardern

The New York Times

May 11th, 2019.

Opinion

URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/11/opinion/sunday/jacinda-ardern-social-media.html

The sub-title of Ardern's NYT Opinion piece is, 'Social media needs reform. No one should be able to broadcast mass murder' (Ardern 2019a). This is a reference to the fact that the Christchurch terrorist attack:

> was live streamed – for 16 minutes and 55 seconds – by the terrorist on social media. Original footage of the video was viewed some 4,000 times before being removed from Facebook. Within the first 24 hours, 1.5 million copies of the video had been taken down from the platform (2019a).

According to Ardern, 8000 people in New Zealand who saw the video in the first week and a half after the attack called mental health support lines. She maintains that the live streaming on social media was a weapon employed by the terrorist to 'spread his hateful vision and inspire fear'(2019a, p. 1).

The interesting aspect of this article is how it demonstrates a response to the events in Christchurch and their representation and coverage in online social media that falls within the domain of international relations and politics. This response is strengthened by Ardern's practice of 'collectivism' and her appeal to the 'rules-based order', as earlier signalled in her address to the UNGA in 2018. Rather than simply expressing outrage and calling on representatives from social media to attend her offices for a 'meeting,' Ardern went large and onto the world stage. Working with President Macron of France, Ardern set up an event in Paris (in May 2019) that they dubbed *The Christchurch Call to Action.* Their intent was to hold social media companies to account as publishers, and to get them, alongside a number of countries who also attended, to sign a memorandum of understanding as a first step towards 'changes to prevent the posting of terrorist content online, to ensure its efficient and fast removal and to prevent the use of live streaming as a tool for broadcasting terrorist attacks' (Ardern 2019a, p. 2). In an apparent response to the United States' own constitutional objections to such an agreement, Ardern writes:

> Social media connects people. And so we must ensure that in our attempts to prevent harm that we do not compromise the integral pillar of society that is freedom of expression. But that right does not include the freedom to broadcast mass murder (2019a, p. 2).

Despite a lack of US government support Ardern and Macron secured an initial memorandum of understanding. The social media companies then further developed it amongst themselves examining just what was possible and realistically achievable on their platforms, and how they might work together efficiently in any future similar context. By September 2019, as the UNGA prepared for Leaders Week in New York, the *Christchurch Call* had gathered significant momentum. On September 17th, Facebook posted an article on its site under the heading 'Combating Hate and Extremism' leading with:

> Today, we're sharing a series of updates and shifts that improve how we combat terrorists, violent extremist groups and hate organisations on Facebook and Instagram. These changes primarily impact our Dangerous Individuals and Organizations policy, which is designed to keep people safe and prevent real-world harm from manifesting on our services (Facebook Newsroom 2019).

By the final week of September an additional 31 countries had signed on to the *Christchurch Call* (bringing the total to 48), and a consortium of social media and 'tech' companies (Amazon,

Dailymotion, Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Qwant, Twitter, YouTube) had agreed to strengthen the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), which was first established in 2017, by sharing research and algorithms and establishing centralised data bases and real-time counter terrorism monitoring, in effect establishing an operations centre for shared intelligence and take-down operations.

In July 2020 a team led by Laura Murphy (a leading American civil rights and civil liberties campaigner) handed down *Facebook's Civil Rights Audit – Final Report*. This report, under the context of 'Hate Speech Enforcement Developments' claims that after the Christchurch attack in 2019:

> Facebook took steps to understand what more the company could do to limit its services from being used to cause harm or spread hate. Two months after the terrorist attack, the company imposed restrictions on the use of Facebook Live such that people who commit any of its most severe policy violations such as terrorism, suicide, or sexual exploitation, will not be permitted to use the Live feature for set periods of time (Murphy 2020, p. 49).

Whilst acknowledging positive change in Facebook's policies, the report specifically criticises Facebook's policies on 'white nationalism or white separatism.' It notes that although a ban on white nationalism has been put in place:

> the policy is too narrow in that it only prohibits content expressly using the phrase(s) "white nationalism" or "white separatism" and does not prohibit content that explicitly espouses the very same ideology without using those exact phrases (2020, p. 50).

Although the audit commenced prior to the Christchurch attack it seems clear that, post-attack, Facebook has responded with initial attempts to control and marginalise hate speech on their platform and that some of these outcomes have no doubt been influenced by Ardern and Macron's Christchurch Call conference in May 2019 and their ongoing work subsequent to that event.

The actions Ardern took with respect to the propagation on social media of politicised extremism, hate, and racism are entirely consistent with the positions she stated in her speech to the UNGA in September 2018. She has articulated both a 'clearly focused' goal and caveat:

> To end terrorist and violent extremist content online. This can succeed only if we collaborate (2019a, p. 1).

To conclude her piece she notes, pragmatically:

> A terrorist attack like the one in Christchurch could happen again unless we change. New Zealand could reform its gun laws, and we did. We can tackle racism and discrimination, which we must. We can review our security and intelligence settings, and we are. But

> we can't fix the proliferation of violent content online by ourselves. We need to ensure that an attack like this never happens again in our country or anywhere else (2019a, p. 2).

The success that Ardern and Macron have had with the Christchurch Call should not be underestimated. In contrast to the difficulty U.S. legislators and civil libertarians have had in getting Facebook to eradicate political speech propagating falsehoods on its platform, Ardern and Macron successfully negotiated a change in both practice and policy with the world's leading social media companies. They achieved this despite US Government reservations based on the grounds that such agreements were in violation of US Constitutional 1st Amendment rights to freedom of speech. They have persuaded a handful of the world's largest social media companies to subscribe to standards and excerpt control over their published content – whereas in other operational areas these same companies have been resisting being held to account as 'publishers' (Murphy 2020, pp. 39-40).

In this instance, Ardern's policy of *kindness* is informing governance and being employed to address its antithesis, *hate*. Political strength is leveraged by her strategies of *collectivism* (to foil *isolationism* and *protectionism*) in order to establish a joint and concerted effort to combat racism and discrimination.

Although Ardern and Macron established their initiative working outside of the United Nations official channels, upon securing agreements on terms, they have taken their initiative back to the UNGA thus achieving additional legitimacy and visibility within the auspices of the General Assembly.

Conclusion

Analysis of the data presented in this Chapter reveals that Ardern is a successful and adept politician. Her *messaging* is layered and sophisticated and respects the nuances of the art of persuasion and the presentation of political truth. The Opinion and Op-ed pieces underscore that success and point to another factor beyond her *kindness* and *collectivism* initiatives that requires consideration. That is Ardern herself and her leadership abilities. As has been evident in these pieces, whilst her actions and rhetoric have been discussed, there has also been a focus on qualities that she demonstrates which serve to put attention directly on her. The discovery of this phenomena underscores the validity of taking a synthetic approach to the pragmatic critical inquiry, an approach which is open to allowing the research to reveal unforeseen areas of interest that both deepen and modify the inquiry and the results that can be achieved. This aspect will be expanded upon in the synthesis to be presented in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four

Synthesis - Digesting the speeches, opinion, and theory

This Chapter integrates the analysis of the theoretical framework in Chapter Two with the analysis of the primary data, the speeches and Opinion and Op-ed pieces presented in Chapter Three. The goal of this synthetic inquiry is twofold. To deepen understanding of Ardern's *kindness* initiatives, as revealed in her speeches, and to pursue additional avenues of inquiry that may be revealed when all the elements are considered together. This includes both alternative understandings of Ardern's political action and rhetoric, and potentially, additional nuances of meaning and significance with respect to the cultural and political theory. The Chapter will proceed systematically considering Ardern against the theorists and opinion writers. Analysis of Clark's work will be carried over into the following Chapter in order to present an augmentation to the reading of poetics in political speech that he has outlined.

Young & Ardern

It is clear from the speeches that Ardern is cognisant of *the politics of difference* (in Young's terms), and that she is not only calling out the plight and injustices that accompany difference and cause suffering and disadvantage, but that she also sees a broader role for the United Nations to mobilise in order to confront these issues. In addition, she has specific responses in mind for New Zealand.

In the New Zealand context Ardern is leading a fight against structural inequalities from the top down and providing a framework for civil institutions to follow, whilst insisting, via her government's Wellbeing budget, that the institutions of government attend to these matters as a primary consideration – and 'measure' their outcomes. Of note, Ardern includes children into her assessment. Neither Young nor Kymlicka make mention of children and young people, yet children are frequently disadvantaged and can suffer complex structural injustices. Ardern is using the mechanism of her Wellbeing Budget and its controls to specifically target and measure progress relating to the welfare of children. As mentioned in Chapter Three, Ardern has stated a goal to make New Zealand 'the best place in the world to be a child.' This is a strategy for the future. A strategy that examines both the causes of disadvantages for children and attempts to put in place long-term solutions (Ardern 2018, p. 7). Beyond children, she also specifically recognises the interests of the younger generations, and the legacies being left to them; will they have the same opportunities as adults, will they inherit a better world?

It has been shown previously that in the aftermath of the Christchurch terrorist attack Ardern stepped onto the international stage, and together with President Macron of France, pressured social media companies to not only change policies in respect of hate speech but to be aware of how their platforms might be used in the co-ordination and radicalisation of individuals. Targeting the most extreme manifestations of hate speech and racism on social media is another step towards addressing the cultural prejudices and xenophobia that continue to oppress. With reference to Young, these actions might be ascribed as specifically attending to *difference* and taking pro-active steps to protect the welfare and security of people who are vulnerable and on the receiving end of extremism and prejudice. Her tactics in confronting these issues clearly demonstrate her desire for collective action and responsibility, and for treating not only the symptoms but the cause. Her action to ban semi-automatic weapons from community ownership can be interpreted in this way; as a proactive protection designed to safeguard the lives of citizens – to protect their human right to live in peace from oppression. This is not the collectivism of assimilation (as per identity politics of colonialism) – it is a values-based international collectivism (allied to the notion of a 'rules-based order') deliberately targeting extremism and those who would tear at the fabric of society and its ideals.

Ardern's ideas of collectivism and shared responsibility in the fight against prejudice and systematised structural injustice also raise another interesting consideration with respect to Young's work. Does the responsibility to address these matters in society lie with civil or civic society? Young appears to only charge civil institutions with the responsibility for action within the private domain, seeing a lesser role for civic institutions that is focused on law and regulation:

> What shall the state permit, support, or require, and what shall it discourage or forbid? … Shall the state allow or even support cultural autonomy? Should the state allow exemptions from some of its regulations for the sake of respecting cultural or religious difference? Can granting special language rights be compatible with a principle of equal political rights? (2009b, p. 378).

Concentrating upon civil society only, and private action and remediation, ignores the possibility for creative and practical solutions and actions from civic institutions, or for combined actions and strategy.

As an example of what can be achieved when civil and civic forces combine to create and incite positive change it is worth returning briefly to Facebook's audit. Having commissioned its civil rights audit, Facebook was confronted with a scathing assessment of its employment practices:

> Civil rights leaders have characterized the current numbers for Hispanic and African American staff as abysmal across every category (e.g. technical roles, non-technical roles, management, etc.) (Murphy 2020, p. 59).

Within about a year, as a result of political pressure, commercial pressure from advertisers, lobbying from civil rights group and the scrutiny of their own audit Facebook returned with a raft of changes to ensure diversity in both their staff and suppliers. In this case the combination of civil and civic pressure has worked to bring about change (Lukovitz 2020; Murphy 2020, p. 60).

As demonstrated by global events in mid 2020, there is still considerable inertia resisting the progressive changes that will be required to overcome the depth and breadth of the social and cultural inequalities and injustices that Young raises. And, that her imperative for civil institutions to be on the front foot leading the changes is insufficient. In an interview shortly after her UNGA speech Ardern addressed these issues directly, saying:

> Part of the reason I raised actual kindness is there is an assumption these are values you can't bring to life in politics or have no place in politics.
>
> I do think that you can embed it in what we do when we govern as well. We are trying to bring in a range of indicators that tell us a bit more about people's lives. We don't want just their income levels. When we bed in material deprivation into our measures, or look at home ownership rates; when we have a goal like everyone earning, learning, caring or volunteering, that tells us about social isolation (Watkins & Flahive 2018).

In this context, the policy leadership and initiative that Ardern has shown, (and her willingness to tackle inequalities and injustices head on, and to remind others of their mutual obligations), is a candidate for becoming an agent of change and for causing a shift of focus and awareness that enable others to also take up the fight. Her focus on *kindness* and *collectivism* anchored in the public interest allows for the consideration of human beings as both individuals and as members of society, the human collective; and for the welfare of both.

The Christchurch attack caused a collision of worlds. New Zealand was thrust into the international spotlight as a result of racist extremism from a white supremacist. Dealing with post attack grief, confusion, and disillusionment Ardern addressed the issue of racism directly in her Christchurch speech, covered here in the Chapter Three, in the section 'Racism exists but is not welcome here'. Whereas in her UNGA speech Ardern was entreating the UN to take action to address these problems, and reminding them of the human rights clauses in the UN Charter, in her Christchurch speech she suggests that New Zealand 'can be the nation that discovers the cure' (2019b, p. 3). This is a language of leadership demonstrating idealism, potential, promise, and vision.

Ardern's speech and actions in these contexts can be clearly identified as designed to protect people who are vulnerable, to protect the disadvantaged, to promote safety for the community. The messaging is all about inclusiveness and ensuring and attending to groups to ensure their needs are met and that they feel they belong and have a future – "They are us." This

is the kind of galvanising political rhetoric that contributes to 'momentous performance' (Clark 2012).

Attending to group differences and injustice requires more than action limited to the institutions of the public and private domains, it requires the action of individuals addressing their own personal and private attitudes and behaviours, and an empathetic response from them towards those on the receiving end of enduring structural and cultural injustices (Bennett 2017). As Ardern put it, it requires an individual practice of 'daily acts of kindness' (Ardern 2019b, p. 3). One might even speculate that without the latter occurring, there is little chance of change in either public or private institutions. It may also be the case, that without additional pressure from the institutions of society that individuals will see no reason to modify their behaviours – so a coercive behavioural and regulatory prod may indeed be appropriate. This kind of change is indicative of a paradigm shift away from self-interest towards a consideration for the welfare and treatment of others, a shift that is anchored in a conscious practice of *kindness* and *collectivism*.

Saul & Ardern

To whom was Jacinda Ardern speaking when she delivered the New Zealand Statement to the United Nations General Assembly in 2018?

a) Was she addressing the institution of the United Nations itself?
b) Was she addressing the United Nations delegates in the room, and through them the countries that they represent?
c) Was she addressing a global citizenry?
d) Was she addressing the citizens of New Zealand?
e) Was she delivering a party-political broadcast aimed at a New Zealand audience?

What does it mean if the answer to these questions is *yes*?

At the outset of the discussion on Saul I proffered the rhetorical question he posed, 'What is more contemptible than a civilisation that scorns knowledge of itself?' (1997, p. 3). It is with respect to this statement that these opening questions are posited. Ardern's UNGA address, in particular, appears to be: part reminder, with a series of definitive statements of where we have come from, our history; part informative, along the lines of "this is what we are doing" or "these are some issues we need to concentrate on"; part speculative and imaginative, "how do we want things to be?"; and part "this is where we might end up if we fail to take decisive action." What kind of civilisation are we, what are our values, and what kind of civilisation to do we want to become, what is our future and how will we get there? My answer to the questions *a* through *e* is yes, she is speaking to each of these contexts and that the subtext of the *New Zealand Statement*

is asking the question 'what kind of civilisation are we and what do we want to become?' Furthermore, that she is delivering a salutary warning that things are probably not on track to arrive at that desired destination and that a change in approach is required.

If a civilisation *is* to have knowledge of itself (which is a requirement for avoidance of the repetition of past mistakes), it seems reasonable that it must on some level be asking itself these questions. To face the difficult and global 'wicked problems' (Ardern 2018) society needs to be reflecting seriously on their root causes. To solve them, knowledge needs to be applied constructively. For that to happen societies need individuals who have been well educated and who can think creatively and constructively. These individuals need to be working in both civil and civic institutions and guiding them. They need to be aware of what has transpired in the past in order that they make better decisions for the future. They need to be inspiring, to have a vision for the future that can be shared, and that is demonstrably progressive, which is to say a vision for the benefit of the public interest. They need to have a moral compass, an ethical perspective, in order to discriminate actions to ensure that they generate positive outcomes for others and neither entrench nor create structural inequalities and injustices. They need to be capable of distinguishing between the public interest and private interests. They need the capacity to stand up to private interests and to put them in their rightful place of supporting and complementing the public interest first and foremost.

But leaders are also required to harness and focus these efforts, and to respond appropriately to the advice they receive from experts and the community, and therein lie the pitfalls. Saul's precursor comment to *On Equilibrium* provides some guidance for the governance problem. As noted in Chapter Two, Saul writes:

> Those who govern or have power cannot on the one hand invoke obligation and on the other deny the common good and the real legitimacy of the citizen…Common sense, creativity, ethics, intuition, memory and reason. These can be exploited individually as a justification for ideology; or imprisoned in the limbo of abstract concepts. Or they can be applied together in some sort of equilibrium, as the filters of public action (1997, pp. 193, 4).

This is how the 'dynamics' are changed, how the transition away from *private interests* to elevate 'that level of shared disinterest known as the public good' is initiated and maintained (1997, pp. 77, 179), where the public interest becomes the principle consideration of governance and policy, and the people take control of government, to serve their *public interest*.

Saul's six qualities of equilibrium offer a means to balance the forces that must be navigated and the mindfulness that must occur to achieve these objectives. In respect of this, as stated in Chapter Two in the section 'On Equilibrium': 'Common sense and memory tell us where

we are and where we have been, imagination propels us into the future – into, *where do we want to go?'* but it is *intuition* that identifies the path we must move down and *reason* that assists us to find our way down it. I think this suggests two requirements. The first is leadership and the second is vision (a third might be, the courage to act and "make it so"). It is *memory* however that keeps us cognisant of the achievements and mistakes of the past, of the trials and tribulations endured along the way - of the continuum of civilisation. It is interesting to note Ardern invoking *memory* in this manner in her Remembrance Service speech, when she says:

> We will remember the tears of our nation, and the new resolve we have formed. And we remember that ours is a home that does not and cannot claim perfection. But we can strive to be true to the words embedded in our national anthem (Ardern 2019b, p. 4).

Equally, as noted earlier, Ardern is invoking *memory* when at the outset of the Remembrance Service speech she acknowledges Ngāi Tahu, the Maori tribe on whose traditional lands Christchurch is located. This acknowledgement on the one hand recognises Maori culture within the context of a post-colonial society, but also allows for their own grief in relation to the atrocity. I believe that this is one facet of what Young was calling for when she discusses 'attending to' difference – attending to *difference* begins with acknowledgement and recognition.

Saul's qualities of equilibrium are to be exercised together, in balance with each-other, so that citizens may in turn act with humanity and equilibrium with and to the world around them; act with nurture, sensitivity, and disinterest to create a future which is both sustainable and beneficial for our natural and cultural human environment. The only qualifier required is that of a humanistic stance arising out of the *qualities* of common sense, ethics, imagination, intuition, memory, and reason. A stance that balances the interests of all of humanity and the world with disinterest - that is beholden to all and not to one or the few.

Whether consciously or not, it is apparent that Saul and Ardern's thinking intersects, and that Saul's theory provides an interesting means for understanding the significance of Ardern's speeches and her initiatives of *kindness* and *collectivism*. In her speeches to the United Nations General Assembly, at the Christchurch Remembrance Service, and in her government policy, Ardern appears to have found a motivation and animation that is anchored in humanism and in a memory of what our societies should be and represent, and therefore what to strive for. She goes to great lengths to paint an accurate picture of the status quo. She demonstrates that she is across the major cultural and political challenges facing the world as a global community, and the understanding that this point has been arrived at by listening too much to 'private interests' at the expense of 'public interest.' Or, to return to Saul's words on reason, that 'we are focused close-up onto symptoms and far away from causes' (2002, p. 273).

Ardern's speeches invoke these qualities of Saul's equilibrium and her themes of *kindness*, *collectivism,* and *wellbeing* echo the search for a different political dynamic, for Saul's 'actively organised pool of disinterest' (1997). Reflecting on Saul and Young, it becomes evident what Ardern is trying to address, what she is trying to 'fix'. There is the distinct sense with Ardern's speeches that she is reminding *us* of somewhere *we* need to be, of something *we* need to do.

Arendt & Ardern

As demonstrated in the section dealing with Arendt's *On Revolution*, Arendt goes to some length to delineate the boundaries of politics in relation to the absolute nature of compassion. I have included this material, not only because of how it reflects on the absolute nature of *Truth,* but because there is often an inter-changing of terms and usage, whereupon kindness, compassion, and empathy are at times confused as if they are all the same.

Arendt's distinctions are important when trying to understand what Arden's *kindness* is. Kindness, a human action, is informed by goodness, as empathy is informed by compassion – but goodness and compassion are absolutes. Kindness on the other hand is a behavioural disposition and action that is focused on the welfare and wellbeing of others and/or another. Ardern's *kindness*, whilst no doubt arising out of personal practice, is negotiated in the contested and contestable space of politics – it is as Arendt says *inter-est*, between men, it is applied collectively, to all citizens, and can also be brought to bear on an individual. In this context, there is the additional nuance that because of its political context, Ardern's kindness has whatever meaning that was ascribed to it as a result of the 'negotiation' of interests. So Ardern's kindness need not align with common definitions. It is the case however, that Ardern encourages all citizens to perform 'daily acts of kindness' (2019b, p. 3), so it is fair to assert that her kindness is an initiative for both civil and civic society.

In her essay 'Truth and Politics' Arendt is essentially arguing that truth and politics don't mix. That politics doesn't like uncomfortable 'truths.' Issuing a cautionary warning about the evolving state of modern debate, Thomas Friedman wrote recently, '…increasingly in America: *Everything is now politics* – even the climate, even energy, even face masks in a pandemic' (Friedman, T 2020). By way of deconstructing the situation this implies, Friedman turns to the religious philosopher Moshe Halbertal:

> For a healthy politics to flourish it needs reference points outside itself – reference points of truth and a conception of the common good. When everything becomes political, that is the end of politics (2020).

Elaborating on this, Friedman writes:

> When everything is politics, it means everything is just about power. There is no center, there are only sides; there's no truth, there are only versions; there are no facts, there's only a contest of wills (2020).

This thinking is further down the road of the decline of the political system than Arendt travels, but there is a consistency here with Saul's claims. In Saul's writing there is a structure that can be employed to put some flesh on the bones of Halbertal's politics with "reference points outside itself." The six *qualities* of equilibrium provide a balanced structure that can be brought to bear on politics itself. This implies that certain 'truths' are agreed upon and put beyond contest and that the business of politics is then performed under the auspices of these 'truths.' This is what Ardern is doing when she elevates *kindness* to the level of a governance control. She is establishing a guiding principle of the public's interest, a principle intended to be beyond ongoing debate. A principle that, once established, is then applied as a filter to aid in determining policy and measuring its success.

Ardern and the revelations of Opinion & Op-ed

Narrative provides a theme that can be employed to link the various threads of the preceding discussions. Whilst each of the major elements; the speeches, the theoretical content, and the print media opinion pieces are narratives, narrative is also a major component of politics, wherein politicians seek constituent approval of their *message* and use these to justify their initiatives and behaviours. For instance, it is clear in Saul's theory that narrative is important for supporting functioning ideas summarising where and what we are, what we are doing, and where we are going. This storytelling is the coal face of the politician's vision-sharing with their audiences. For Saul, narrative is at the crucial intersection of memory and intuition. It is worth repeating his comment quoted in Chapter Two:

> Memory brings us back to the shared knowledge of common sense and the prolonged, shared uncertainty of imagination, and the shared expression of intuition.
>
> Of all of these, memory relates perhaps most intimately to the passive half of intuition – to the expression of what we might be. You can see in creativity, in the novel for example, the writer struggling constantly to reanimate our memories. They are "working against

> this loss of self", as Saul Bellow puts it, binding us to the great river of creativity which, through our deepest memory, ties us to our experience (2002, pp. 236-7).

Demonstrable here is the sense of identity and the linking of identity with experience; with 'where and what we are.' The inherent fragility of the situation is also apparent in Clark's *Stay on Message* (2012) where he draws attention to additional and uncomfortable dimensions of this storytelling, dimensions in which *staying on message* implies more than simply adhering with consistency to a policy or summary of events. He writes:

> Staying on message is itself a clear acknowledgement that there is a public quality to a situation, which speakers respect by communicating methodically. And yet it has all the alienation of method, too: equipped with an organic medium, language, political speakers respond with something mechanised, using themes and phrases that claim a higher authority than the conversations into which they emerge. It is the sound of the alienation of public life from life-life. Little wonder people are given to distrust it (2012, p. 115).

Indeed, the idea that the people have *en masse* lost faith in their political representatives hardly needs further explication.

An intended barometer of *trust* in this thesis are the Opinion and Op-eds. These articles also represent a narrative, a narrative of critique. They not only demonstrate a response to the policy messaging of Ardern but also reflect a more personal response to Ardern as a politician. In addition, the Opinion and OpEd pieces add other critical voices to the discussion of Ardern's speeches – voices that are not the author's in isolation, ('safeguarding against reaching conclusion in isolation by seeking consensus wherever possible' (Friedrichs & Kratochwil 2009, pp. 706-9)), but that are focused on responding to the same material and subject matter. Before examining the narrative elements written about Ardern in Opinion pieces I would like to revisit Ardern's Opinion in the *New York Times*.

In introducing her rationale for engaging in the Christchurch Call Ardern resets the stage by retelling the events of the terrorist attack itself. She recalls that the terrorist live streamed the attack on Facebook video and that the original footage the terrorist streamed was viewed 4,000 times before being taken down, but that within the first 24 hours, 1.5 million copies of the video were removed from social media platforms, revealing that the video was uploaded onto YouTube at the rate of one upload per second! This saturation of social media feeds exposed people to the video who weren't pursing it, because it had gone viral. So in addition to perpetrating the act of terror on location, part of the attacker's plan was for people who weren't present to see and witness the act remotely, as Ardern wrote, 'He wanted his chilling beliefs and actions to attract attention, and he chose social media as his tool' (Ardern 2019a, p. 1). This tactic worked in so far as it was as an act of terrorism recorded for viewing, aiming to either terrorise viewers or

inspire followers and people of similar beliefs. Ardern writes that within a week and a half 8,000 people called mental health support lines in New Zealand. This is a negative but powerful reminder of the power of narrative. To ensure that this could never happen again, Ardern and Macron launched the *Christchurch Call*. In Ardern, the Christchurch terrorist met a worthy opponent. As we have seen, Ardern's efforts to persuade social media companies that this usage of their platforms was unacceptable have been largely successful, and they have mobilised resources to ensure a repetition of these circumstances cannot occur again or can at least be managed more efficiently and with greater speed. This is also a powerful narrative for Ardern as a politician; setting limits, acting and gaining consensus around a cause widely appreciated as being in the public interest – taking control.

In an Opinion written in June 2018 in The Guardian, Van Badham discusses a video Ardern released just days after giving birth to her daughter. Setting the scene, she writes:

> New Zealand's prime minister introduces her new baby with radiant sincerity. She thanks her midwife and the hospital staff for the generous professionalism, and New Zealanders for their kindness and gifts. With a quick cutaway, she even jokes with the baby's father about his "dad jumper".

She then summarises:

> But as political communication, the video was matchless. In an epoch overcast by growing shadows of reenergised right-wing authoritarianism, Ardern's public hospital nativity offers a symbolic affirmation of her leadership not just of New Zealand, but of the western electoral left. The leader of the first Labour government in New Zealand for a decade shares the explicit left agenda for investment in health, education, climate action, public housing and social justice. Ardern's pledge to build an equitable nation where children thrive, and success is measured not only by the nation's GDP but by better lives lived by its "people" is the ancient standard of our side (Badham 2018).

Badham's 'political communication' is of course the 'message' in Clark's *Stay on Message*; the narrative that the politician promulgates to encapsulate, their policy position on the one hand, but also (vitally in a democratic context), their intrinsic value to the electorate as a representative.

Kerry's Op-ed inclusion is intended to provide a context for the practicality of contemplating *kindness* within a political context. Kerry is clearly disillusioned with the direction of contemporary U.S. politics at the time of writing her opinion in February 2019.

Her position is succinctly stated:

> Leaders should govern with honesty and humility, acknowledge hard truths and adapt to our evolving future. That is kindness (2019, p. 1).

But Kerry goes further. She points to the tactical success and contagiousness of *kindness* initiatives noting that 'contributions to public good can be consequently tripled through direct and indirect influence' (2019, p. 2). In Kerry then, there is a narrative that advances the idea that *kindness* makes sense within a political context.

Fox, Moore, and the *New York Times'* Editorial Board provide yet another narrative, a narrative of leadership (Fox 2019; Moore 2019; The Editorial Board 2019). These Opinions point to a common denominator that is beyond a policy of kindness; they point to Ardern herself. Furthermore, they suggest that perceptions of the *actions* of politicians are at least of equal, if not greater, import than their policies. In Ardern these writers have found that fine balance and alignment between what she says, and what she does. An alignment that promotes a sense of both trust and respect. Moore identifies this dynamic when she quotes Eisenhower, who said, "The supreme quality of leadership is unquestionably integrity." Moore's observation is that 'Ardern embodies this; meaning what she says, saying what she means, unafraid and unbowed' (2019).

Another narrative encountered in the Opinion pieces relates to the politics of difference. This is the story of a religious minority living through a senseless act of slaughter motivated by hatred, xenophobia and themes of white supremacy, a violent prosecution of religious, ethnic and racial difference. Both Aaron and Joyan provide accounts that are concentrated on observations of healing and respectful attention to these cultural differences; an attention that reached out and embraced, an attention that refused to identify with difference and instead amplified a message of unity and collectivism, "They are us." In both pieces the power of Ardern's messaging and action in the aftermath of the attack is evident, as is the global reach of that message, and the incredible healing it engendered.

It is probable that such a predilection of goodwill towards a politician, as is manifest in these Opinion articles, papers over some of the downsides that Clark alludes to for those politicians doggedly staying on message. We noted earlier in Arendt and Clark how important it is for a politician and their political rhetoric to persuade, to find support for the positions that they put forth. This task is surely less fraught if constituents, in the first instance, are generally supportive of the politician herself. For, as Badham says, 'politics does not reflect majorities, it constructs them' (2018). This thought leads to Hage. He noted a quality in Ardern that sets her apart from the field and makes possible a politics that might satisfy Saul. Remembering the words of Imam Fouda (quoted in Chapter Three):

> "Last Friday I stood in this mosque and saw hatred and rage in the eyes of the terrorist. Today from the same place I look out and see the love and compassion in the eyes of thousands of New Zealanders and human beings from around the globe" (Wahlquist 2019).

Such is the power of transformation, but so too does this reflect the abilities of a leader who quickly mobilised and created a focal and rallying point for her country; "They are us." Reflecting on Australia's problems of overcoming structural racism's effect on the Aboriginal people, also quoted earlier, Hage wrote:

> It requires a fundamental and sustained politics of restoration that unleashes all the possible economic, practical and effective centrifugal forces to counter the corrosive effects of the disintegrative politics that has prevailed for so long. But, as importantly, it requires a special kind of love (2019, p. 4).

On the one hand Hage is noting the special attention that Young says is required to overcome structural and cultural injustices, but on the other, Hage is talking about an entirely different requirement, 'a special kind of love.' It is worth observing, again, that this ingredient of 'love' is present in neither Kymlicka nor Young's theory. For Hage though, love provides the galvanising energy required to overcome the inertia of structural racism and its hold on people and the community. Hage called this, a restorative politics - a politics with the restorative potential to transform structural injustices, renew and restore faith in political leadership, and along with it, government; with the power to galvanise the attention of constituents and provide them with the energy and enthusiasm to put aside their disillusionment with politics and re-engage with their government. A restorative politics within which they feel heard and represented. It is a restorative politics that in Saul's terms we could say addresses his idea that the answer for the citizenry is to 'change the dynamics' (1997, p. 179).

In summary, I think it is clear from the Opinion and Op-ed content, when it comes to determining citizen support and predilections towards politicians, that value is placed and meaning read into what they say *and* what they do; that their rhetoric is only one factor in a decision to support or reject their position and that their actions also communicate to their constituents. It is also clear, in addition to Ardern's *kindness* and *collectivism* representing a successful initiative, that her own unique qualities as a communicator and leader are of major strategic importance. In fact, of such importance, that for some commentators Ardern appears to represent a path forward, a restoration. This is a significant research finding that represents a development branching out from the initial consideration of Ardern's political speech.

Chapter Five

An argument for a poetic deconstruction of political action

Clark & Ardern

Continuing with a synthetic critical analysis, Chapter Five will revisit Clark's theory. Using the example of Ardern, Obama, and Trump, it will develop an argument for a poetic deconstruction of political action that contends that *viewers* also derive meaning from embodied political action.

In Clark's *Stay on Message,* it is demonstrated that politicians use rhetoric to craft and mold political truths, that they manufacture 'a reality' directed and targeted at specific audiences. Of course, staying on message does not necessarily imply that the message is received as intended. As discussed earlier, in *Talking Up A Legacy* Clark quotes Australian opposition leader Bill Shorten's reference to Malcolm Turnbull's use of the word love. Contrasting Turnbull's use of love with Ardern's similar sentiment expressed at the conclusion of her UNGA speech in 2018, Clark observes:

> If he may be accused of vapid sentimentality, then I am sure Ardern may likewise. But the public reactions simply did not hold up this comparison: Ardern's speech was noticed, discussed, and its idealism largely applauded, while Turnbull's mentions of love rated almost no attention outside of the political class (2019, p. 190).

It is probably fair to assert that Hage's Opinion also substantiates this claim. Ardern's display of empathy and kindness, and her laying of the culpability for the Christchurch atrocity squarely where it belongs, has clearly had a meaningful impact on the Muslim community, both within New Zealand and internationally. Ardern's inclusiveness stands in stark contrast to Trump's divisive 2017 *Executive Order 13769: Protecting The Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into The United States*, commonly referred to as the Muslim Travel Ban, which indiscriminately prevented Muslims, predominantly from the Middle East and Africa, from entering the United States, on the basis that they were Muslim and therefore labelled as potential terrorists (Trump 2017). A political syllogism, wherein A = Muslim, B = selected country of origin, and C = terrorist. One stance is clearly an attempt to address and combat structural difference whilst the other is designed to further entrench it. As Suzanne Moore noted in her Guardian Opinion, 'We have watched as Jacinda Ardern shows the world what real leadership is.' Continuing:

> She has given them [New Zealanders] a language in which to talk about the unspeakable, to vocalise the shock and sadness. "They are us," she said simply of the dead and wounded. The "othering" of Muslims as separate, as somehow different, as not quite

> belonging, was felled in one swoop. “They are us.” New Zealand had been chosen because it was safe, because it was no place for hatred or racism. “Because we represent diversity, kindness, compassion, home for those who share our values. Refuge for those who need it” (Moore 2019).

And as Moore further noted, when Ardern was:

> asked directly whether she agreed with Donald Trump that rightwing terrorism was not growing, she answered clearly:
>
> “No.”
>
> How could the US help?
>
> “Sympathy and love for all Muslim communities.”
>
> Sympathy and love, what kind of leader talks like that in a world where to be tough is to build walls and imprison children or, on our own shores, elevate intransigence and prevarication to new heights? (2019).

In Chapter Two I examined Clark’s observations and theory regarding political speech and rhetoric, and his contention that poetics can assist with its analysis. Like Arendt, Clark states that political truths, such as they exist, are part of the contest of politics, that they are mutable, and matters of opinion rather than fact. In this context, a politician delivers her political oratory with a strong element of performance, as Clark noted:

> The success of political speech depends on a capacity to create momentous performances, performances whose audiences are carried by the power of the moment, thoroughly attuned to the speaker and her or his message (Clark 2012, p. 16)

He revisits this idea in *Talking up a Legacy*, where he notes:

> As Obama put it, "when you have a successful presidential speech of any sort, it's because that president is able to put their finger on the moment we're in." Such moments make history (Clark 2019, pp. 10-1).

But what about political *action* as ‘momentous performance?’ If a poetics in political speech is claimed, is there not also a performative and meaning imbued aspect to a politician’s actions? In this context I am enquiring about their conscious actions taken in the public view. Whether these are the photo/video op in a high viz shirt, or the protective eye-ware worn on a tour of a technology company’s labs, the props that politicians employ like an actor on the stage, or the quick and concentrated interactions with members of the public carefully captured on video with the politician all the while looking meaningfully engaged. These moments are designed to capture both an audible *and* visual ‘bite’ for the evening news. Because of the thinly veiled contrivance

inherent in these 'staged' scenes it is reasonably common for the viewing public to perceive artifice and opportunism. Surely such contrivances are at least partially behind Clark's comment that 'political deeds are inherently stuck at the level of symbolic performance, of acting (2012, p. 26).'

This position is easy to digest as far as the general intake of everyday politics is concerned, where one might struggle to identify sincerity. But everyday politics isn't a constant stream of momentous performance, so what about those rarer moments that *are*? What about those moments when attention is keenly focused on the politician, when they are engaged with people, when we witness their deportment and subtle gestural communication? What about those moments when sincere and empathetic communication is apparent, when there is a palpable bridging of the distance between leader and constituent? In other words, what about those moments of momentous performance without speech?

I would contend that there is a valid argument to be made for an identifiable and sincere political action that can particularly be observed in these interactive moments between politician and citizen, when the gaze of the camera is upon them. This is not to say that all politicians achieve these moments, but it appears as though some certainly manage to, and that viewers and citizens respond to their displays of sincerity and empathy, and equally in other contexts to their displays of frustration. I also think that viewers can discriminate between the ham-fisted and stilted acting some politicians engage in and the sincere and heartfelt actions of others – that they can sense the politician in whom action and speech are aligned.

By way of an example, I was reminded recently of President Obama's action at the memorial service for the nine victims of a random mass-shooting hate crime perpetrated at the *Emmanuel* American Methodist Episcopalian church in Charleston South Carolina in 2015. Obama rises to the podium to offer his thoughts and condolences; he is clearly moved by the circumstances. Looking like he is about to speak but subsiding, then repeating the words *amazing grace* twice. Then, clearly looking uncomfortable and tongue tied, he begins singing the first verse of the hymn, *Amazing Grace*. Somehow, the recitation of the hymn manages to capture both his outrage at the hate crime and his grief and horror for the victims. He recites the names of the victims when the verse is finished (see footnote) (CSPAN 2015).[16] This event moved songwriter and performer Zoe Mulford to write the song, *The President Sang Amazing Grace*, commemorating what she and millions of Americans watching live TV had witnessed (Mulford 2020). Reflecting back on this event, New York Times writer, Thomas Friedman, wrote an Opinion entitled 'When My President Sang 'Amazing Grace': We've forgotten what it's like to

[16] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IN05jVNBs64

have a truth-teller and a healer in the White House' (Friedman, TL 2020). In his article, which is a lament for political truth and integrity, written immediately prior to the US Presidential Elections in 2020, Friedman recalls the Obama event and quotes a verse of the song's lyric:

> *We argued where to lay the blame*
> *On one man's hate or our nation's shame*
> *Some sickness of the mind or soul*
> *And how those wounds might be made whole*
> *But no words could say what must be said*
> *For all the living and the dead*
> *So on that day and in that place*
> *The President sang Amazing Grace*
> *My President sang Amazing Grace.*

Above the lyric Friedman posted a link to a just released YouTube video of the vocalist Meklit and the Kronos Quartet performing Zoe Mulford's song (Stanford Live 2020)[17]. Friedman's agony at the antics of a Trump White House wringing decency out of every moment is matched by the poignant performance by Meklit and the Kronos Quartet. Their performance captures both the appalling despair at the shooting and the grace inherent in Obama's response. It is matched also by the lyrics of the song – which is really a sentinel marking yet another senseless racially motivated hate crime in the U.S.A. and the sense of agony and shame the event left in its wake, an agony transformed, at least partially, by Obama's singing of the hymn.

In contrast to these events, and how they have moved and motivated people, compare an event that happened outside the White House in June 2020. Amongst civil unrest in support of *Black Lives Matter* and George Floyd, (the African American man who suffocated and died whilst being arrested by police), protesters had gathered outside a church immediately opposite the White House in Lafayette Square. The church had received minor damage from the protesters and its windows were boarded up. Meanwhile the Trump team had decided that they should have a photo-op of President Trump standing before the church with a bible. They decided to have the protesters dispersed with a mix of flash bangs, tear gas, riot police, and mounted police (Reuters and Associated Press 2020; Rogers 2020).[18] The crowd was removed from the intersection and the President had his photo opportunity.

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[17] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lBQOQVsdzbE

[18] https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000007168615/washington-dc-church-tear-gas-protests.html?smid=pl-share

(Doug Mills - New York Times 2020)

The picture speaks volumes. Both President Trump and the bible look awkward and out of place. Trump is scowling and looking as though he would rather be somewhere else, whilst the bible is being held in an awkward position above Trump's right-hand shoulder. In fact, it appears that Trump's body is slightly tilted to his left and is leaning away from the bible. I would describe this latter example of political action as cynical contrivance frozen in the act of trying to appear to be sincere. Trump's scowl and his awkward pose are the *point* being made by the photograph. By way of contrast, I think that Obama has genuinely not been able to find the words to address the people grieving in the South Carolina church and watching live on television - grieving for lost friends and yet another senseless hate crime. He may have planned it upon discovering that words failed him, but he decided to act rather than to be yet another talking head politician, and he decided to act from a place of sincerity within himself – his personal faith. People were deeply moved by the Obama event and outraged by the Trump event.

There is a banality to the Trump photo that seems to support Clark's thesis on 'political deeds,' and yet there is a sincerity and empathy in Obama's action that appears to contradict this, so clearly is it a display of a politician acting with the conviction of his purpose. These two situations seem redolent with gestural symbolism and political action – albeit one successfully and one strained, and seemingly lacking conviction.

Another misfire in the political action context would be that of Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison in the aftermath of the bushfires in New South Wales in early 2020. Deaf to the entreaty from a fire-fighter, "I don't really want to," Morrison insists on shaking his hand anyway,

and then pats him on the shoulder, completely dismissive of the fire-fighters wishes. He repeated the action a little later when meeting a woman who said that she would only shake his hand if he gave more funding to the RFS (Rural Fire Service). Morrison bent down and took the woman's hand from where it was resting against her leg and shook it anyway (Guardian News 2020)[19]. This behaviour is neither empathetic nor sympathetic, in fact one might call it socially inappropriate. A staggering gaffe considering that Morrison was present to assist and recognise a community in suffering after intense bushfires had ravaged both their properties and their lives.

Another interesting example, also captured on photograph and similarly receiving international and domestic New Zealand attention, is that of Ardern (clearly pregnant) meeting Queen Elizabeth II in April 2018 in London at the Commonwealth Summit. Ardern is wearing a *korowai* (presented to her by London's Maori community). The *korowai* is a traditional and ceremonial Maori cloak festooned with feathers. The wearing of the cloak was interpreted by New Zealanders as 'an acknowledgment of [Ardern's] relationship with the Maori people' with the cloak itself signifying an 'acknowledgement of the prestige and power of a woman' (Illmer 2018). Victoria University of Wellington's Maori Studies academic Olsen-Reeder commented that 'Korowai are a very special form of cloak. There are lots of different kinds of cloaks, but the korowai is the one with the highest prestige' (Illmer 2018).

(BBC News - PA 2018)

[19] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kePvZkV-Zcs

It is worth noting the significance of Ardern wearing of the *korowai* in the context of New Zealand as a country with an indigenous Maori population and a colonial heritage where, despite independence, The Queen still remains as New Zealand's Head of State. This action both acknowledges New Zealand's Maori heritage and culture and takes it unashamedly onto the world stage. It makes one think about the Treaty of Waitangi and the fact that the Queen represents the colonial power that signed the treaty, a legally enforceable contract with the Maori people. Therefore, Ardern's wearing of the *korowai* is not only significant in a domestic New Zealand context. There is also the significance of New Zealand's contemporary Prime Minister meeting the head of the Commonwealth with the wearing of the korowai being a clear indication of the respect New Zealand has for its Maori culture and the integration of that Maori culture as an intrinsic aspect of contemporary New Zealand's culture – a major distinction from its British colonial heritage. For the New Zealand Maori, whose culture is now being nurtured and encouraged (Te Reo is an official language of New Zealand), this exposure would be an important recognition, in Young's parlance, a *normative* moment breaking barriers of *difference* – significant iconography of their cultural tradition adorning the Prime Minister as she greets The Queen.

In Sushil Aaron's Opinion (Chapter Three) it is apparent that there are times when Ardern's *action* has captured international attention. Response to these actions has often ascribed meaning; meaning read from the apparent gestural symbolism that is evident. Some of these moments have been shared around the globe in photographs and video, however as discussed earlier, the pre-eminent image captures the embrace that Jacinda Ardern shared with a Muslim woman in the days following the attack. As Aaron noted, not only was this image beamed around the world, but it also found a place, via HH Sheik Mohammad of the United Arab Emirates, projected onto the side of the world's tallest building, the Burj Kalifa located in Dubai.

(Mohammed 2019)

There is substantial research into the symbolism of gestures and human action and physicality as a communicative augmentation to spoken language. In fact there are findings that assert that symbolic gestures and spoken language are processed by a common neural system (Xu et al. 2009) and further research into the political dimensions of touch (Manning 2007).

(Getty Images 2019)

In Xu et al there are actions that are referred to as ‘pantomimes’ which are used to augment speech. For instance, hand gestures that mimic the opening of a jar, or a raised palm signifying “Stop!” It is beyond the scope of this thesis to exhaustively map the symbolic meanings behind Ardern’s embrace in any objective fashion, instead I will record a subjective interpretation of the information conveyed to me by the image of the embrace.

The first noticeable feature is that Ardern’s eyes are closed. This suggests that she feels safe, but also that she has focused her attention inward. It is apparent that she has drawn the woman into a close embrace, her arms wrap the woman tightly and their heads are drawn together touching, side by side – they are not standing off from each other. This embrace is like the embraces seen at funerals, and in the greetings of family and loved ones at airports. I find symbolism in Ardern’s wearing of the *hajib*, which I read as a show of respect for the context of their meeting within the Muslim community in Christchurch. It is clear that not only is Ardern embracing the woman, but that she is being embraced back. From the close intimacy of the embrace, which appears reciprocal, I think it is reasonable to deduce that for both women this is a heartfelt moment which is layered with their grief for the recent tragic events.

But Ardern was not embracing the woman as a private citizen, but as the Prime Minister of New Zealand, and as we have seen in Chapter Three, in her address in Christchurch she communicated a stern rebuke for the racist hate crime that had occurred. She delivered a clear message that this act was perpetrated on New Zealanders, and that irrespective of their religious beliefs, ‘They are us’ and ‘Ko tātou tātou’ (We are one) (Ardern 2019b, pp. 3, 4). As a symbolic gesture, the embrace abolishes ‘difference’ and bodily acknowledges the injustice that has

occurred. There is a strong sense in which the Prime Minister's embrace draws in all New Zealand Muslims, a symbolism that was clearly not lost on HH Sheik Mohammad when he tweeted his thanks to Ardern 'for your sincere empathy and support that has won the respect of 1.5 billion Muslims' (2019) and organised for the image to be projected. The image also found its way to Melbourne, Australia, where artist Loretta Lizzio painted it onto the side of a grain silo. These are the actions of people who are responding to witnessing something they find meaningful.

(Loretta Lizzio - Picture: Getty Images 2019)

Ardern's language at the Remembrance Service and her action of the embrace substitute the binary *us* and *them* by asserting a singularity. This echoes the sentiment expressed in her UNGA speech where Ardern inserted the statement, (not recorded in the officially lodged speech document published by the UNGA, but present in the video), *Me too, must become We too.* Except that in this instance it is not a wish for the future, but rather a statement of reality for the present. It is this that is the sort of performance that Clark draws our attention to. A seizing of the moment combined with the awareness that there is a considerable audience both scrutinising and looking for guidance and leadership – a *momentous* occasion. This is not subliminal messaging; it is direct language, embodied messaging, and visual communication. Ardern also tells us (explicitly) how to conceptualise and contextualise her message of moving into the future and beyond tragedy, 'The answer lies in our humanity' (Ardern 2019b, p. 4).

Returning to Joyan, the Australian Muslim girl who wrote to the ABC, it is apparent that she is responding not only to Ardern's words, but also to her actions. She acknowledges that for her and her friends in the witnessing of Ardern 'this has been the first time that we have ever felt part of the fabric of a community' and goes on to observe that Ardern's 'leadership has brought the world together' (Joyan 2019, p. 2). In Joyan's case, the power of Ardern's example has reached across an ocean and provided her, as a young Muslim girl, with a sense of belonging. She has had a tangible and important experience of belonging and inclusion, of defying the barriers of difference.

The old epithet, *a picture is worth a thousand words,* comes to mind. Surely then such actions and the images that capture them and spread the message far and wide are also political communication. Politicians regularly employ both a visual iconography and gestural language, albeit at various times spontaneous and at others strained and forced, verging on the banal. As discussed in Chapter Two, Clark contends that political speech is poetic, that we can deconstruct and decipher it by employing poetic analysis. Arguing that this 'poetic dimension greatly enables us as critics to appraise whether a given utterance upholds standards of honesty.' That section quoted the following examples of questions that Clark suggested a critique of political speech might ask:

> Does it seek to help listeners come to their own considered judgements on questions? Does it invite negotiation with alternate points of view rather than effacing or obliterating them? Does it bore (Clark 2012, p. 126)?

I think that Clark's frame of reference can be expanded to include political action and that this same critique can still be applied. That it is possible to recognize that a myriad of meanings can be derived from the images of politicians going about their business, be it in what they choose to wear, how they interact with people, or their general countenance, and that this is capable of being more nuanced than the simply 'symbolic performance, of acting' (Clark 2012, p. 26). The fact that some of these actions may subsequently be appraised as banal, as sincere or insincere, as awkward or confident, is simply more evidence of the fact that interpretations of meaning are formed by witnesses to the events that come before them, whether encountered live (in person), via videotape played on the TV news, or in photographs published by the media. In fact, there seems to be a vibrant catalogue of imagery surrounding the representation of politicians going about their business, an imagery equally capable of capturing them at their best and at their worst.

I think that how Ardern is witnessed in action, and the visual depictions of these actions, also provides clues to aid a poetic deconstruction of her policy and rhetoric; of the particulars of the politics she represents, and of what *she* represents - a leader capable of bringing the very human dimension of love into a restorative politics. A political leader with a personal practice of kindness who has managed to embed *kindness* into governance.

This finding opens a new line of enquiry for social research into the world of politics, rhetoric and action. It constitutes a pragmatic result that has arisen out of pursuing a synthetic process of critique and analysis. The research has been led from inquiry into Ardern's political speeches concentrated on *kindness* and *collectivism* to the awareness that equally important are the *seductive* qualities (Sornig 1989, p. 97) of how Ardern has gone about delivering her message, and that sometimes this does not involve language but instead, *action*. A recognition that in Ardern's case, *staying on message* applies not only to her political speech but also to how she comports and deports herself, to how she embodies the very message that she is concentrating on delivering. This finding provides for a useful expansion of Clark's theoretical frame of reference to now include political action alongside the poetic deconstruction of political speech.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

Now that there is a completed *mise en scène,* what has been arrived at? This thesis set out to examine the proposition of *kindness as a paradigm for governance* employing the Pragmatic Method of 'radical critical inquiry' (Crotty 1998, pp. 158-9). Its intent was to examine Ardern's brand of *kindness* and *collectivism* to discover the meaning inherent in Ardern's usage of the terms. But its corollary objective was to discover what this social research project could unveil through a process of synthetic analysis of selected cultural and political theory and the combined data of Ardern's speeches, and responses to her speeches and actions as represented in Opinion and Op-ed articles. At the heart of this, is the question, is Ardern providing a template and paradigm for governance and social transformation? An aspect of the research, that I was particularly interested in allowing to develop, was based around a question of whether the social and political contexts discussed by Saul and Young could be addressed and positively improved upon. In other words, was Ardern's *kindness* and *collectivism* initiative one that might begin to shift difference bound social inequalities and injustices, and could it provide a political shift filtered through humanistic qualities towards *a politics of public interest*? Could it be a catalyst for social transformation?

The synthetic processing of data, theory, and inquiry have indeed revealed meaning in Ardern's rhetoric and action, but it has also revealed that there are possibilities for successfully addressing some of the problematic issues raised by both Saul and Young. It does appear as though Ardern is creating a politics of public interest, and that in going down this path she has begun to demonstrate that it is possible to reinvest *we the people* into politics, and to tackle 'structural injustice[s] and the politics of difference' head on - and make a difference. In addition, per Chapter Five, the research has revealed that meaningful poetic interpretations of political action can be formulated, and that these actions are quite capable of conveying subtleties of *the message*, (but equally capable of sabotaging it).

It is clear that the political environment is not straightforward. Political facts are really opinions, and their purpose is to rally people behind core ideas; political facts are really nothing more than ways of seeing and arranging that can be incomplete and need not correspond to notions of truth. But politics isn't just about one *modus operandi*, and, for example, the difference between Trump's approach to politics and Ardern's could hardly be more extreme. So, whilst it must not be forgotten that Ardern is a politician, that is not commensurate with an assertion that therefore, for her brand of politics, truth is as equally expendable as it is for Trump. In fact, *truth-telling* is arguably one of the attributes that has led to Ardern's success thus far. People appear

to appreciate her as a straight talker who tells the truth and who is not afraid to state the *facts* as she sees them, to reveal uncomfortable truths and face uncomfortable realities. More than that, it is arguable that for many people her quality of truth-telling also appears to be tantamount to a display of the qualities of leadership. These aspects of Ardern seem to have been enjoyed as a refreshing change, especially for a citizenry that is disillusioned with politics and politicians. So, when a politician puts forth initiatives that clearly have the wellbeing of the people at heart it is little wonder that they are successful, especially if they also confront the *inconvenient truths,* the difficulties that stand in the way of the future and of progressing the public interest. But this also speaks to the dialogue Ardern has with her audience, to the aspect that, per Kock (2018), Ardern is providing a deliberative discourse that not only involves her audience, but begs a response from them to the questions and 'message' she delivers.

Saul spoke about a tendency to address the symptoms rather than the causes of society's problems (2002, p. 273). With Ardern, it is apparent that she is a politician who is not afraid to drill down to the cause, even when doing so exposes her to risk. Her success may at least in part be due to her ability to carefully control the narrative and to be attuned to broader public opinion, to manufacture momentous performance with immaculate timing and sensitivity to the broader currents at play; putting her 'finger on the moment we're in' as Obama described it (Clark 2019, pp. 10-1). And as we have seen, in the view of political commentators expressed via Opinion and Op-ed pages, the reach and effectiveness of Ardern's messaging has been both international and convincing. Some of the commentators have latched onto qualities that they have identified in Ardern that make her worthy of special attention and consideration. For example, this thesis has presented Hage's *Guardian* Opinion, 'You can't copy love: why other politicians fall short of Jacinda Ardern' (2019) where he sets out some of the difficulties associated with politicians attempting to deal with structural injustice and discusses Ardern's uniquely effective approach, but also introduces Ardern's *hau*, the unique energetic quality that Ardern brings to politics, a quality founded on principles of unconditional love.

The headline of the *Time Magazine* article 'Know Us By Our Deeds' reminds again about the significance of political action.[20] Of course, in the context it was uttered, it is applicable in relation to the accomplishments of a government achieving legislative results and progressive reformations. However, there is also the matter, discussed above, of the actions of the politician as an individual and the subsequent interpretations of these actions alongside their political speech, or rhetoric, a reading of poetics per Clark. I do think that it appears as though Ardern performs symbolic actions, the wearing of the Maori cloak to greet the Queen, and again at the Christchurch Remembrance Service, and her wearing of the *hajib* whilst engaging with Muslim

[20] The '100 days challenge with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern' is a light-hearted example of how serious Ardern is about accomplishing her agenda.

mourners. It is apparent that these actions, such as they are, have significance attached to them by observers and commentators alike, as seen in the nature of the discussion about her wearing of both the *korowai* and the *hajib*.. I also think that people read actions on a more personable level, a more character revealing level, and that in this context Ardern's embrace of the Muslim woman has had a significant impact because of the way in which it appears to convey sensitivity, empathy, and sincerity. It is a signpost of Ardern's character, and quite probably was important in Hage's reflections behind 'You can't copy love', that Arden's is:

> the more difficult love, the love that is able to cross cultural boundaries and encompass multiplicity and difference rather than remain entrenched within the boundaries of oneself (2019, p. 2).

This is a significant observation to make about Ardern that at least partially explains why she is so popular within an international context. As Joyan's letter revealed, the Muslim population is not accustomed to western leaders reaching out and embracing and acknowledging their culture in this way, and Ardern's actions in this regard have formed a lasting impression with them.

To reiterate, within this context of a poetical reading of political action per Clark, I think that Ardern's actions do assist an audience to reach 'considered judgements.' To the second point, 'does it invite negotiation with alternate points of view rather than effacing or obliterating them?' (Clark 2012, p. 126), I think her actions certainly provide a counterpoint to the actions of politicians, actions that people are accustomed to seeing on the television news, for example. The counterpoint is sincerity and genuineness, which is refreshing, but it is also a manifestation of *kindness* which Ardern delivers to both the collective and to the individual.

The picture that emerges is of a leader who is as finely attuned to the contemporary social issues facing the world as she is to its existential threats. Whilst the initiatives of *kindness* and *collectivism* that inform her government's Wellbeing Budget (and her request that citizens perform *daily acts of kindness*) are important steps taken towards addressing the problems Young outlined in 'Structural Injustice and the Politics of Difference,' I suspect that in the final analysis they are not the defining features of Ardern as a politician. I think that these will prove to be about leadership, sincerity, empathy, and humility, coupled with a nuanced capability for communication and communicating – for inspiring with her vision. These are qualities of humanism that are entirely consistent with Ardern's initiatives of *kindness* and *collectivism*. This is not to downplay the significance of these initiatives, but rather to acknowledge that Ardern has suggested a different way to be a politician and a leader. I think that Ardern's contrasting example has also revealed that citizens may need to pay more heed and give more care to whom they elect as democratic representatives, and that the time might have come to be electing different kinds of people to government. For example, people who have a deep regard and appreciation of humanity and civilisation and who will prioritise these cares and concerns above all else. These are people

who will nurture the wellbeing of humanity with *kindness* and seek counsel from subject matter experts; people who will foster *a politics of the public interest.*

Saul's contentions regarding civilisation's collective unconsciousness, about virtually broken democracies doing the bidding of corporatism's *private interests,* and a stoic resistance to examine these issues with clarity, ought to be cause for pause and attention. It is arguable from his position that societies have not been paying attention to the nurturing of civilisation and its future. These issues are compounded by the global challenges of climate change and pandemic, but the systemic failure to adequately protect democracies and the world from the rampant corporatism Saul describes leaves them ill-equipped to deal coherently and cohesively with even fundamental problems such as providing health care, clean water, food, clothing, and shelter to people in dire need. This is an ironic situation for a world that has never been richer, never been more technologically advanced, never had such efficient transportation and logistics systems, and that has never been better educated or medically advanced. Because these challenges are so big and loom so large over the future it is appropriate to look for methodologies that might provide assistance with navigating them.

Plato suggested that a healthy democracy needed Guardians to protect it from what he saw as the inevitable conflict between public and private interests. This is really a call for people who are both wise and *disinterested* to adjudicate on behalf of the people and their democratic society. Ardern echoed this when she discussed *Kaitiakanga* (the Te Reo word for guardianship)- a duty of care (2018). As an additional safeguard, I suggest that Saul's six qualities of equilibrium be brought to bear in order to formulate a *guardianship of awareness,* by applying them, as Saul suggested, as a governance filter through which to plan and evaluate decision-making and policy processes. This is a filter to ensure that the decisions of government are in the *public interest*, and that they are progressive, efficacious, and will not repeat mistakes of the past.

As I discussed in Chapter One, I have attempted to employ Saul's six qualities of equilibrium (2002) as a guide and formula for critical analysis. This has mainly focused on using Saul's nuanced *intuition*, *imagination*, *memory* and *reason* to look for allusions and connections in the materials but without drawing overt attention to the underlying mechanics of process. But also, and importantly, to arrive at a destination that is informed by *ethics* and *common sense.* As I stated at the outset, the rationale for this approach rests with Ardern's statement in her Christchurch speech, 'the answer lies in our humanity' (Ardern 2019b) and in Saul's idea that to properly understand *where we are* and constructively steer a path to *where we want to be* it is necessary to understand our human civilisation, and the continuum that it represents (notwithstanding the need for a shared vision of that destination). In a social and cultural sense it is arguable that civilisation tells the story of our humanity and my intent has been to place this inquiry into that continuum. One aspect that this has revealed is that the Greek philosophers,

Aristotle, Plato and Socrates can still be employed to make meaning 2500 years later. This is not to say that humanity has made no progress, but rather, to illuminate that there are constants, characteristics that remain essentially unchanged.

This research has led me to the conclusion that when Ardern says, 'the answer lies in our humanity' (2019b) that she is referring to these core characteristics, and that like Saul she is reminding us to be reflective and to ask what we want; asking that collectively we remember civilisation and concentrate on what unites us and will take us forward, rather than being diverted by what divides us and holds us back. Ardern is warning that we ignore this at our peril, but that by taking steps forwards with *kindness* and *collectivism* we can reconnect with that continuum and our humanity. This is how we arrive at lasting and positive social transformation.

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Appendix One

New Zealand Statement, UNGA, 27th September, 2018[21] [22]

NB. Citations in the body text of the thesis that cite the speeches and Opinion and Op-ed use the original pagination as per their publication and NOT the page number of the appendix page that they appear on in this document.

[21] https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/73/nz_en.pdf

[22] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiobwkovZWw

New Zealand Permanent Mission
To The United Nations

Te Mangai o Aotearoa

United Nations General Assembly, 73rd Session

New Zealand Statement

Delivered by Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister of New Zealand

27 September 2018

Check against delivery

NEWZEALAND

E nga mana nui o nga whenua o te ao Tena koutou katoa

Nei rate reo mihi maioha o Aotearoa Tena tatau i nga kaupapa korero

Ka arahina e tatau Mete ngakau pono

Mete kotahitanga o te tangata

Mr Secretary-General,

Friends in the global community.

My opening remarks were in Te Reo Maori, the language of the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand. As is tradition, I acknowledged those who are here, why we are here, and the importance of our work.

It seems a fitting place to start.

I'm struck as a leader attending my first United Nations General Assembly by the power and potential that resides here.

But in New Zealand, we have always been acutely aware of that.

We are a remote nation at the bottom of the South Pacific. Our nearest neighbours take 3 hours to reach by plane, and anywhere that takes less than 12 hours is considered close. I have no doubt though, that our geographic isolation has contributed to our values.

We are a self-deprecating people. We're not ones for status. We'll celebrate the local person who volunteers at their sports club as much as we will the successful entrepreneur. Our empathy and strong sense of justice is matched only by our pragmatism. We are, after all, a country made up of two main islands - one simply named North and the other, South.

For all of that, our isolation has not made us insular.

In fact, our engagement with the world has helped shape who we are.

I am a child of the 80's. A period in New Zealand's history where we didn't just observe international events, we challenged them. Whether it was apartheid in South

Africa, or nuclear testing in the Pacific, I grew up learning about my country and who we were, by the way that we reacted to international events. Whether it was taking to the streets or changing our laws, we have seen ourselves as members of a community, and one that we have a duty to use our voice within.

I am an incredibly proud New Zealander, but much of that pride has come from being a strong and active member of our international community, not in spite of it.

And at the heart of that international community, has been this place.

Emerging from a catastrophic war, we have collectively established through convention, charters and rules a set of international norms and human rights. All of these are an acknowledgement that we are not isolated, governments do have obligations to their people and each other, and that our actions have a global effect.

In 1945, New Zealand Prime Minister Peter Fraser said that the UN Charter offered perhaps a last opportunity to work in unison to realise the hope in the hearts of all of us, for a peace that would be real, lasting, and worthy of human dignity.

But none of these founding principles should be consigned to the history books. In fact, given the challenges we face today, and how truly global they are in their nature and impact, the need for collective action and multilateralism has never been clearer.

And yet, for all of that, the debate and dialogue we hear globally is not centred on the relevance and importance of our international institutions. Instead, we find ourselves having to defend their very existence.

That surely leaves us all with the question, how did we get here, and how do we get out?

If anything unites us politically in this place right now it is this - globalisation has had a massive impact on our nations and the people we serve.

While that impact has been positive for many, for others it has not. The transitions our economies have made have often been jarring, and the consequences harsh. And so

amongst unprecedented global economic growth, we have still seen a growing sense of isolation, dislocation, and a sense of insecurity and the erosion of hope.

As politicians and governments, we all have choices in how we respond to these challenges. We can use the environment to blame nameless, faceless 'other', to feed the sense of insecurity, to retreat into greater levels of isolationism. Or we can acknowledge the problems we have and seek to fix them.

Generational Change

In New Zealand, going it alone is not an option.

Aside from our history, we are also a trading nation. And proudly so. But even without those founding principles, there are not just questions of nationhood to consider. There are generational demands upon us too.

It should hardly come as a surprise that we have seen a global trend of young people showing dissatisfaction with our political systems, and calling on us to do things differently - why wouldn't they when they themselves have had to adapt so rapidly to a changing world.

Within a few short decades we now have a generation who will grow up more connected than ever before. Digital transformation will determine whether the jobs they are training for will even exist in two decades. In education or the job market, they won't just compete with their neighbour, but their neighbouring country.

This generation is a borderless one - at least in a virtual sense. One that increasingly see themselves as global citizens. And as their reality changes, they expect ours to as well - that we'll see and understand our collective impact, and that we'll change the way we use our power.

And if we're looking for an example of where the next generation is calling on us to make that change, we need look no further than climate change.

Global Challenges

Two weeks ago, Pacific Island leaders gathered together at the Pacific Islands Forum.

It was at this meeting, on the small island nation of Nauru, that climate change was declared the single biggest threat to the security of the Pacific. Please, just think about this for a moment.

Of all of the challenges we debate and discuss, rising sea levels present the single biggest threat to our region.

For those who live in the South Pacific, the impacts of climate change are not academic, or even arguable. They are watching the sea levels rise, the extreme weather events increase, and the impact on their water supply and food crops. We can talk all we like about the science and what it means, what temperature rises we need to limit in order to survive, but there is a grinding reality in hearing someone from a Pacific island talk about where the sea was when they were a child, and potential loss of their entire village as an adult.

Our action in the wake of this global challenge remains optional. But the impact of inaction does not. Nations like Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands, or Kiribati - small countries who've contributed the least to global climate change - are and will suffer the full force of a warming planet.

If my Pacific neighbours do not have the option of opting out of the effects of climate change, why should we be able to opt out of taking action to stop it?

Any disintegration of multilateralism - any undermining of climate related targets and agreements - aren't interesting footnotes in geopolitical history. They are catastrophic.

In New Zealand we are determined to play our part. We will not issue any further offshore oil and gas exploration permits. We have set a goal of 100% renewable energy generation by 2035, established a green infrastructure fund to encourage

innovation, and rolled out an initiative to plant one billion trees over the next 10 years.

These plans are unashamedly ambitious. The threat climate change poses demands it.

But we only represent less than 0.2% of global emissions.

That's why, as a global community, not since the inception of the United Nations has there been a greater example of the importance of collective action and multilateralism, than climate change. It should be a rallying cry to all of us.

And yet there is a hesitance we can ill afford. A calculation of personal cost, of self-interest. But this is not the only challenge where domestic self-interest is the first response, and where an international or collective approach has been diluted at best, or rejected at worst.

Rebuilding Mulitlateralism

But it would be both unfair and naive to argue that retreating to our own borders and interests has meant turning our backs on a perfect system. The international institutions we have committed ourselves to have not been perfect.

But they can be fixed.

And that is why the challenge I wish to issue today is this - together, we must rebuild and recommit to multilateralism.

We must redouble our efforts to work as a global community.

We must rediscover our shared belief in the value, rather than the harm, of connectedness.

We must demonstrate that collective international action not only works, but that it is in all of our best interests.

We must show the next generation that we are listening, and that we have heard them.

Connectedness

But if we're truly going to take on a reform agenda, we need to acknowledge the failings that led us to this cross road.

International **trade** for instance, has helped bring millions of people out of poverty around the world. But some have felt their standard of living slide. In New Zealand, we ourselves have seen the hesitancy around trade agreements amongst our own population.

The correct response to this is not to repeat mistakes of the past and be seduced by the false promises of protectionism. Rather, we must all work to ensure that the benefits of trade are distributed fairly across our societies.

We can't rely on international institutions to do this, in the same way as we cannot blame them if they haven't delivered these benefits. It is incumbent on us to build productive, sustainable, inclusive economies, and demonstrate to our peoples that when done right, international economic integration can make us all better off.

And if we want to ensure anyone is better off, surely it should be the most vulnerable.

In New Zealand we have set ourselves an ambitious goal. We want to be the best place in the world to be a child. It's hardly the stuff of hard and fast measures - after all, how do you measure play, a feeling of security, happiness?

But we can measure material deprivation, and we can measure poverty, and so we will. And not only that, we are making it law that we report on those numbers every single year alongside our budgets. What better way to hold ourselves to account, and what better group to do that [for than] children. [Sic]

But if we are focused on nurturing that next generation, we have to equally worry about what it is we are handing down to them too - including our environment.

In the Maori language there is a word that captures the importance of that role - Kaitiakitanga. It means guardianship. The idea that we have been entrusted with our environment, and wehave a duty of care. For us, that has meant taking action to address degradation, likesetting standards to make our rivers swimmable, reducing waste and phasing out single-use plastic bags, right through to eradicating predators and protecting our biodiversity.

The race to grow our economies and increase wealth makes us all the poorer if it comes at the cost of our environment. In New Zealand, we are determined to prove that it doesn't have to be this way.

But these are all actions and initiatives that we can take domestically that ease the blame and pressure on our international institutions. That doesn't mean they don't need fixing.

Reforming the UN

As the heart of the multilateral system, the United Nations must lead the way.

We strongly support the **Secretary-General's reform efforts** to make the UN more responsive and effective, modernised so that it is capable of dealing with today's challenges. We encourage him to be ambitious. And we stand with him in that ambition.

But ultimately it is up to us - the Member States - to drive change at the UN.

This includes reforming the Security Council. If we want the Council to fulfil its purpose of maintaining international peace and security, its practices need to be updated so it is not hamstrung by the use of the veto.

New thinking will also be needed if we are to achieve the vision encapsulated in the Sustainable Development Goals. In New Zealand, we have sought to embed the principles behind the SDGs in a new living standards framework that is guiding

policy making, and the management of our resources. And we remain committed to supporting the roll out of the SDGs alongside international partner through a significant increase in our Official Development Assistance budget.

Universal Values

But revitalising our international rules-based system isn't just about the mechanics of how we work together. It also means renewing our commitment to our values.

The UN Charter recalls that the Organisation was formed to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which through two World Wars had brought untold sorrow to humanity. If we forget this history and the principles which drove the creation of the UN we will be doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past.

In an increasingly uncertain world it is more important than ever that we remember the core values on which the UN was built.

That all people are equal.

That everyone is entitled to have their dignity and human rights respected.

That we must strive to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

And we must consistently hold ourselves to account on each.

Amongst renewing this commitment though, we have to acknowledge where accountability must continue - and that is especially the case when it comes to equality.

So many gains have been made, each worthy of celebration. In New Zealand we have just marked the 125th year since women were granted the right to vote. We

were the first in the world to do so. As a girl I never ever grew up believing that my gender would stand in the way of me achieving whatever I wanted to in life. I am, after all, not the first, but the third female Prime Minister of New Zealand.

But for all of that, we still have a gender pay gap, an over representation of women in low paid work, and domestic violence. And we are not alone.

It seems surprising that in this modern age we have to recommit ourselves to gender equality, but we do. And I for one will never celebrate the gains we have made for women domestically, while internationally other women and girls experience a lack of the most basic of opportunity and dignity.

We are all in this together.

Conclusion

I accept that the list of demands on all of us is long. Be it domestic, or international, we are operating in challenging times. We face what we call in New Zealand 'wicked problems'. Ones that are intertwined and interrelated.

Perhaps then it is time to step back from the chaos and ask what we want. It is in that space that we'll find simplicity. The simplicity of peace, of prosperity, of fairness. If I could distil it down into one concept that we are pursuing in New Zealand it is simple and it is this. Kindness.

In the face of isolationism, protectionism, racism - the simple concept of looking outwardly and beyond ourselves, of kindness and collectivism, might just be as good a starting point as any. So let's start here with the institutions that have served us well in times of need, and will do so again.

In the meantime, I can assure all of you, New Zealand remains committed to continue to do our part to building and sustaining international peace and security. To promoting and defending an open, inclusive, and rules-based international order based on universal values.

To being pragmatic, empathetic, strong and kind.

The next generation after all, deserves no less.

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa.

Appendix Two

Christchurch Remembrance Service Speech

NB. Citations in the body text of the thesis that cite the speeches and Opinion and Op-ed use the original pagination as per their publication and NOT the page number of the appendix page that they appear on in this document.

Jacinda Ardern's speech at Christchurch memorial – full transcript
March 29th, 2019.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/29/jacinda-arderns-speech-at-christchurch-memorial-full-transcript

New Zealand PM addressed a crowd of thousands who had gathered for a memorial service at Hagley Park two weeks after the mosque attacks [23]

"E rau rangatira mā, e ngā reo, e ngā mana. Tēnā koutou katoa.

(I acknowledge amongst us today our distinguished leaders, speakers and those who bear authority.)

Ngāi Tahu Whānui, tēnā koutou.

(My greetings to the whole of Ngāi Tahu.)

E papaki tū ana ngā tai o maumahara ki runga o Ōtautahi.

(The tides of remembrance flow over Christchurch today.)

Haere mai tātou me te aroha, me te rangimārie, ki te whānau nei, e ora mārire ai anō rātau, e ora mārire ai anō, tātou katoa.

(So let us gather with love, i*n peace, for this family, so that they may truly live again, so that we all may truly live again.)* [24]

We gather here, 14 days on from our darkest of hours. In the days that have followed the terrorist

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[23] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdGq3frFsRo

[24] The live Television New Zealand coverage included subtitled translation for the Te Reo opening of this speech. It is unclear who provided that translation, Ardern's staff or TVNZ staff.

attack on the 15th of March, we have often found ourselves without words.

What words adequately express the pain and suffering of 50 men, women and children lost, and so many injured? What words capture the anguish of our Muslim community being the target of hatred and violence? What words express the grief of a city that has already known so much pain?

I thought there were none. And then I came here and was met with this simple greeting. As-salaam Alaikum. Peace be upon you.

They were simple words, repeated by community leaders who witnessed the loss of their friends and loved ones.

Simple words, whispered by the injured from their hospital beds. Simple words, spoken by the bereaved and everyone I met who has been affected by this attack.

As-salaam Alaikum. Peace be upon you.

They were words spoken by a community who, in the face of hate and violence, had every right to express anger but instead opened their doors for all of us to grieve with them. And so we say to those who have lost the most, we may not have always had the words.

We may have left flowers, performed the haka, sung songs or simply embraced. But even when we had no words, we still heard yours, and they have left us humbled and they have left us united.

Over the past two weeks we have heard the stories of those impacted by this terrorist attack. They were stories of bravery. They were stories of those who were born here,

grew up here, or who had made New Zealand their home. Who had sought refuge, or sought a better life for themselves or their families.

These stories, they now form part of our collective memories. They will remain with us forever.

They are us.

But with that memory comes a responsibility. A responsibility to be the place that we wish to be. A place that is diverse, that is welcoming, that is kind and compassionate. Those values represent the very best of us.

But even the ugliest of viruses can exist in places they are not welcome. Racism exists, but it is not welcome here. An assault on the freedom of any one of us who practices their faith or

religion, is not welcome here. Violence, and extremism in all its forms, is not welcome here. And over the last two weeks we have shown that, you have shown that, in your actions.

From the thousands at vigils to the 95 year old man who took four buses to attend a rally because he couldn't sleep from the sadness of seeing the hurt and suffering of others. Our challenge now is to make the very best of us, a daily reality.

Because we are not immune to the viruses of hate, of fear, of other. We never have been. But we can be the nation that discovers the cure.

And so to each of us as we go from here, we have work to do, but do not leave the job of combatting hate to the government alone. We each hold the power, in our words and in our actions, in our daily acts of kindness. Let that be the legacy of the 15th of March. To be the nation we believe ourselves to be.

To the global community who have joined us today, who reached out to embrace New Zealand, and our Muslim community, to all of those who have gathered here today, we say thank you.

And we also ask that the condemnation of violence and terrorism turns now to a collective response. The world has been stuck in a vicious cycle of extremism breeding extremism and it must end.

We cannot confront these issues alone, none of us can. But the answer to them lies in a simple concept that is not bound by domestic borders, that isn't based on ethnicity, power base or even forms of governance. The answer lies in our humanity.

But for now, we will remember those who have left this place. We will remember the first responders who gave so much of themselves to save others.

We will remember the tears of our nation, and the new resolve we have formed.

And we remember, that ours is a home that does not and cannot claim perfection. But we can strive to be true to the words embedded in our national anthem:

Men of every creed and race,

Gather here before Thy face,

Asking Thee to bless this place God defend our free land

From dissension, envy, hate And corruption, guard our state

Make our country good and great God defend New Zealand

Ko tātou tātou

As-salaam Alaikum

Appendix Three

Opinion & Op-ed

NB. Citations in the body text of the thesis that cite the speeches and Opinion and Op-ed use the original pagination as per their publication and NOT the page number of the appendix page that they appear on in this document.

You can't copy love: why other politicians fall short of Jacinda Ardern

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/26/the-difficult-love-of-jacinda-ardern- cannot-be-easily-emulated-not-by-white-australian-culture-loving-itself

Ghassan Hage

The New Zealand prime minister's politics can heal rather than entrench divisions

Tue 26 Mar 2019 11.24 AEDT Last modified on Wed 1 May 2019 08.48 AEST

When doing my fieldwork with Christian Lebanese fighters in the middle of the Lebanese civil war, I witnessed a conversation concerning what to do with prisoners captured following a successful overrunning of a Palestinian camp.

The conversation was casually happening while the fighters were having dinner at a well-known precinct underneath a Maronite monastery in the hills to the north of Beirut.

There, a woman, Salma, who had a reputation as someone exceptionally loving and totally devoted to caring for the militiamen, opened a rest house where she cooked for them, served them and washed after them.

During that conversation, one militiamen suggested it was perhaps best if they put the prisoners in trucks and offload them across the warzone's frontline as they had done before.

At that moment Salma, who was putting a jug of water on the table, turned around and casually said: "Why? So that they'll come back and kill us? These are children of the devil, finish them, finish (howdeh wlehd el sheetahn khlaso mennun khlaso)".

The moment remained with me ever since; it was impossible to forget how someone who oozed so much love and affection was also able to express such venomous exterminatory desires.

It gave me a permanently disenchanted view, perhaps a too disenchanted and devalorising

view, of the facile virtues of those who “love their own people”.

To me the love that is worthy of our attention and admiration is the more difficult love, the love that is able to cross cultural boundaries and encompass multiplicity and difference rather than remain entrenched within the boundaries of oneself.

I am reminded of this as I think of the many political actions and proposals by Jacinda Ardern in the wake of the Christchurch massacre. Like many I am watching her politics unfold full of admiration for its multidimensional restorative potential.

But most of all I am full of admiration because the kind of love she has exhibited and that runs through everything she has done is precisely the kind of love I have come to valorise.

Most of us who work on white nationalist racism know that like all ethno- nationalist racism it works as a shattering force. Even when it is not physically violent, it can shatter the psyche of the people it is directed to and it can shatter communities. It is a centripetal force that works to fragment and disperse.

There is no doubt that ethno-nationalist racists consciously use it as a weapon aimed at producing such fragmentation and dispersal. Racists aim to shatter the psyche and the social makeup of the people and the communities at which their racism is directed.

We Australians only have to look at colonial racism’s effect on Indigenous Australians as individuals and as communities to recognise in this racism, not only a weapon of economic dispossession but also a weapon of mass psychosocial destruction and communal disintegration.

This is why dealing with the effect of structural racism – a racism that has unleashed, and is continuing to unleash, its disintegrative effects on people and society – is such a difficult endeavour. It requires more than cosmetic notions of “closing gaps”.

It requires a fundamental and sustained politics of restoration that unleashes all the possible economic, practical and affective centrifugal forces to counter the corrosive effects of the disintegrative politics that has prevailed for so long. But, as importantly, it also requires a special kind of love.

While love on its own leads us nowhere, a restorative politics is not complete without it being permeated by a deeply felt love, a love that can cross rather than erect cultural boundaries and that can heal rather than entrench divisions.

It is in this regard that Jacinda Ardern's restorative politics is so crucial. At a time when politicians are moved by a soulless pragmatism that transforms even their demonstrations of affect into flat affectless pronouncements, it does provide a glimmer of hope that a politics that heals the shattering effects of white ethno-nationalist racism is possible.

The problem is that such a politics is not easy to emulate if the love that moves it is not genuinely and deeply felt. Anthropology students across the world learn about "gift economies": societies predominantly structured by the exchange of gifts as opposed to the circulation of commodities.

They learn that in those gifts and offerings resides a hau (pronounced ho). A concept that anthropologists have taken, appropriately enough for us here, from Māori culture. The hau is the spirit of the giver present in the gift. It is here that we get to the reason why the politics of Ardern cannot be easily emulated.

It cannot because at its heart it is a gift and an offering. As such it carries in it Ardern's spirit as a giver. If another politician tries to copy her but is not genuinely moved by a healing, cross-cultural love of the multiplicity, no matter what they give, the spirit with which they have given, their hau, will reveal itself in the undertone of what they offer.

As such, their gift will lack the healing, integrative effect that it should otherwise have. You only need to hear Scott Morrison speak about Indigenous Australians or about Muslims to understand what I am talking about.

The hau that is present in what Ardern offers is not hers alone. It is also the spirit of the

various social forces she has come to embody. If there is in her a desire and a capacity for healing, it is because she conjures what is best and healing in New Zealand society.

There is no doubt that there is in Australia a similar articulation of social forces, white and non-white, who together can offer a healing non-racist transformative force. Unfortunately, very few Australian politicians in positions of leadership have chosen to connect with such a space.

For that reason very few have been able over the years to offer a politics that is remotely similar to that of Jacinda Ardern.

Even when they say all the right things, the spirit of what they say is present in their offering. And regrettably for all of us, this spirit remains the spirit of narcissistic love, the spirit of white Australian culture loving itself.

Editors Note:
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Guardian News & Media Limited.

America Deserves a Leader as Good as Jacinda Ardern

https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/21/opinion/new-zealand-ardern.html?searchResultPosition=49

New Zealand's prime minister moved swiftly to ban weapons of mass killing after a gunman attacked two mosques.

By The Editorial Board

The editorial board represents the opinions of the board, its editor and the publisher. It is separate from the newsroom and the Op-ed section.

March 21, 2019

The murder of 50 Muslim worshipers in New Zealand, allegedly by a 28-year-old Australian white supremacist, will be long scrutinized for the way violent hatreds are spawned and staged on social media and the internet. But now the world should learn from the way Jacinda Ardern, New Zealand's prime minister, has responded to the horror.

Almost immediately after last Friday's killings, Ms. Ardern listened to her constituents' outrage and declared that within days her government would introduce new controls on the military-style weapons that the Christchurch shooter and many of the mass killers in the United States have used on their rampages. And she delivered.

On Thursday, Ms. Ardern announced a ban on all military-style semiautomatic and automatic weapons, parts that can be used to turn other rifles into such weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines. "It's about all of us," she said, "it's in the national interest and it's about safety."

Earlier in the week, she told Parliament that social media sites must address the ease with which the internet can be used to spew hate and images of violence. "We cannot simply sit back and accept that these platforms just exist and that what is said on them is not the responsibility of the place where they are published," she said. "It cannot be a case of all profit, no responsibility."

Ms. Ardern didn't propose immediate measures to limit the reach of Facebook, Twitter and other internet publishers, and it's not obvious what could be done without trampling freedom of speech. But she made clear that she believed that those social media platforms, like gun manufacturers and dealers, bore some responsibility for the carnage visited on Christchurch and so many communities in recent years.

The new gun proposal will require considerable fine-tuning and defining before it becomes law. New Zealand's existing laws are relatively lenient, and a large percentage of the estimated 1.2 million to 1.5 million firearms owned by about 250,000 people are not registered. It is not known how many of these will become illegal under the new laws.

But the display of what one deranged man can do with weapons designed for combat seemed to persuade a majority of New Zealanders, and a strong majority in Parliament, of the need to ban rapid-firing weapons.

That attitude stood in stark contrast to the way the National Rifle Association and its political allies in the United States have resisted any restrictions on weapons like the AR-15, the semiautomatic rifle used in several mass killings.

In New Zealand, it took one mass shooting to awaken the government. In the United States, even a string of mass killings — 26 dead in a school in Newtown, Conn.; 49 in a nightclub in Orlando; 58 at a concert in Las Vegas; 17 in a school in Parkland, Fla. — has not been enough. Nor has the fact that 73 percent of Americans say that more needs to be done to curb gun violence, according to recent polling.

The ban on terrorists' weapon of choice was only one of the areas in which Ms. Ardern showed what leadership looks like in time of crisis. In lieu of trite messages, she donned a black head scarf and led a group of politicians to visit victims' families; speaking without a script to a school some of the victims attended, she urged the pupils to "let New Zealand be a place where there is no tolerance for racism. Ever." She told grieving families, "We cannot know your grief, but we can walk with you at every stage."

And in a striking gesture, she refused to utter the name of the suspected killer. "He may

have sought notoriety, but we in New Zealand will give him nothing," she said. "Not even his name."

After this and any such atrocity, the world's leaders should unite in clearly condemning racism, sharing in the grief of the victims and stripping the haters of their weapons. Ms. Ardern has shown the way.

A version of this article appears in print on March 22, 2019, Section A, Page 22 of the New York edition with the headline: When Government Works

New Zealand P.M. Jacinda Ardern Is the Leader We've Been Waiting For

https://www.forbes.com/sites/ericaarielfox/2019/03/22/how-do-you-lead-in-a-crisis-new-zealands-p-m-shows-how-its-done/#31a7b3dd31f3

17,767 views | Mar 22, 2019, 08:18am

Erica Ariel Fox Contributor Leadership Strategy

We look to leaders when disaster strikes. Indeed, response to a crisis goes to the very root of leadership. New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern demonstrates four pillars of leading in times of great need. Connection. Compassion. Clarification. Conviction.

Connection

Prime Minister Ardern knows that in dark times, you don't pit people against each other. She knows that terrorists are the "enemy of the people" and denies them the

notoriety they seek. She tells all New Zealanders they're welcome there, guiding diverse groups to find common ground. In these ways she brings to life the reflection Nelson Mandela offered when he said "my hunger for the freedom of my own people became a hunger for the freedom of all people." Her approach affirms that a crisis is no time for leaders to fuel "us vs. them."

Compassion

In this moment of public agony, Ardern didn't leave her heart at the door. We could see it on her face. She knew that the grieving community wanted their loved ones back. They had religious concerns about the burials. They needed a safe place to worship. As the elected official responsible for their physical security, she also took steps to protect their personal vulnerability.

Throughout this ordeal, Ardern chose compassion over stoicism. She didn't distance herself. She came in close, reaching out her arms to hold mosque members as they cried. She came to them dressed in the black clothing of mourners. She wore a headscarf. In her moment of strength she allowed everyone to see and feel her tenderness. She didn't offer "thoughts and prayers" as leaders often do. She gave love

Clarification

Empathy is crucial. But it's not enough when people's heads are spinning. In a crisis leaders need to explain what's happening. Ardern didn't take the safe road by calling the attack a "mass shooting" or a "hate crime." She had the tenacity to call domestic terrorism by its name. Calling a spade a spade calms the sensation of feeling lost. It doesn't soften the hurt. But it does ease the shock and confusion.

Then laser-like clarity needs to determine what matters most right now. If polarization gives an issue sharp edges, decision-makers need to recognize competing perspectives and account for them in setting priorities. In her sweeping reforms yesterday, Ardern targeted military-style assault weapons, parts that convert them into high-capacity magazines, and assault rifles. Measured debate on other gun-related policy can wait for later. She concluded it was most urgent to get these weapons of war off the streets.

Conviction

A crisis also demands the conviction to act. So often in tragedies like this one, Americans share a momentary outpouring of grief. But then people move on. Law-abiding gun owners feel wrongly judged and misunderstood. Victimized communities feel left behind in their demand for justice. In the end, nothing happens, so nothing gets better.

Not everyone believes that changing gun laws can prevent tragedies like the deaths i Christchurch. But I suspect everyone can agree that some concrete action must be sought. Ardern galvanized her Cabinet to align on principles of reform in 72 hours. Yesterday, new laws went into effect – one short week after the brutal attack. Simply jumping into action is not enough. At the same time, firm action is required.

Finding a Path Forward

When I look around I see a world fraying at the edges, even falling apart. How can leadership help? Fear and suffering lurk around every corner. What does it take tolead an increasingly fractured, angry, and broken society?

In the past week, New Zealand's Prime Minister showed us a leadership path through dark woods: connection; compassion; clarification; and conviction. She showed us a world held together through common humanity, sincere empathy, thoughtful consideration, and fierce resolve. That's a way forward.

Erica Ariel Fox

I am a senior advisor to CEOs and top teams, and a lecturer at Harvard Law School.

Make Kindness a Priority in Politics

https://edition.cnn.com/2019/02/04/opinions/kindness-needs-to-be-a-priority-in-politics-kerry/index.html

BY VANESSA KERRY
Updated 1445 GMT February 5th, 2019

Editor's Note: *Vanessa Kerry, MD, MSc, is co-founder and CEO of Seed Global Health, a nonprofit that invests in building human health care capacity in resource-limited countries to improve health for generations in resource-constrained settings. She is currently a physician at Mass General and serves as the Associate Director of Partnerships and Global Initiatives at the Mass General Center for Global Health. She is an associate professor at the Harvard Medical School. The views expressed here are solely hers.*

Kindness is not a term well recognized in 2019.

I was reflecting on this after reading two very different articles Thursday morning. Flipping through my Twitter feed, I began reading David Axelrod's commentary for CNN on Beto O'Rourke's political process. In the article, Axelrod ponders if O'Rourke's message of reconciliation might not sit well with Democrats who are eager to seek recourse against Donald Trump's divisive, angry tone and the damage he has done with his reactive policies. It is a fair question given the political climate in Washington right now.

Diving deeper into the social media abyss, I saw a second article on a new social media campaign by Hello!, a British tabloid, called #hellotokindness. While it began as a response to the increased and abusive comments targeted at the Royal Family, the campaign serves a much wider and more important purpose: reintroducing the concept of kindness into how we think, speak and most importantly, act.

It is easy to understand why kindness feels lost of late in our daily lives. I grew up in part -- while my father, John Kerry, served in the Senate -- in the halls of a Senate that was about reaching common understanding, shared goals, but most importantly, mutual respect for differing viewpoints. It is an example my father demonstrated throughout his career.

Today, our government is overwhelmingly setting an example of contempt for differences, name calling, one- upmanship and a politicization of each other's values. I am not surprised we just witnessed our longest shut down in history.

I am especially appalled by the positions of the Trump administration. They reflect the exact "un-empathy" and unkindness that I feel has become all too common inside and outside of Washington. We have witnessed thousands of families being separated at our border, inflicting deep set trauma on those individuals and the nation. We have seen millions become uninsured, according to the Gallup-Sharecare Well-Being Index, at the end of 2017. The US Census Bureau estimated that in the same year, the amount of uninsured children increased by about 276,000 -- making the total of uninsured children in 2017 nearly four million.

Many just survived without a pay check for weeks on account of an unnecessarily long governmental shutdown. All leaving us to wonder who is the administration actually trying to help? If trying to uplift the citizens of this country, our leaders would be celebrating sectors like clean energy, health care, and technology -- where some of the fastest-growing and highest-paying jobs are in America. They would provide more comprehensive health care, invest in our education system and, critically, affirm the very real, irrefutable climate change and make an energy policy that protects our citizens and the world for years.

Leaders should govern with honesty and with humility, acknowledge hard truths and adapt to our evolving future. That is kindness.

But neither political party is solely at fault for lack of kindness and the culture of bullying that seem pervasive. We now live in a digital age of shallow interaction – email. text message, social media, swipe-left -- modes of communication that dilute the humanness of connection. According to a 2018 study, phones and tablets are an increasing source of emotional distress for children, as parents are distracted by devices, or worse, use screen time as a way to avoid social interaction and connection with the real world.

Additionally, cyberbullying is a real and damaging phenomenon. Almost 60% of young Americans have been affected by online harassment, according to a 2018 poll by Pew.

As a parent, physician and leader, I worry about a world where kindness is so rare and so many factors are working to undermine its presence.

However, kindness has a lot going for it and there's reason for hope.

Despite its endangered status, there are important social and professional benefits to kindness. For example, data supports that kindness has physical and emotional benefits. It can increase energy, boost brain function, and also produces critical neurotransmitters like serotonin and hormones like oxytocin. In simpler terms, kindness provides an anti-depressant effect as well as increased feeling of self-esteem and connection, respectively. It can also lower blood pressure, increase heart health and even possibly increase lifespan.

For those who care more about their position on the corporate ladder than the health pyramid, kindness also contributes to stronger and more empowering leadership. I would encourage everyone to consider the links between kindness and success. Kindness, it turns out, can promote learning and creativity, nurture trust, increase likability and following, increase sales and even support negotiation.

Perhaps the most encouraging piece is that kindness can be contagious. Nicholas Christakis, Yale's Sol Goldman Family Professor of Social and Natural Science, and colleagues have helped map the power of social networks to spread good in a 2010 study. Their findings suggest that contributions to public good can be consequently tripled through direct and indirect influence. In essence, it's an example of the butterfly theory of chaos, an idea in which I have long been a believer and one I prefer to promote as a theory of change. We can flap our wings in one spot and participate in a hurricane of change across the world.

So I am intrigued and grateful to campaigns like #hellotokindness that are taking responsibility to shift our cultural approach to interactions. We need to return to kindness as a society. And I am refreshed by an approach of reconciliation by those who do not want to fuel the continued vitriolic tone. A leader showing kindness might be one of the most important "policies" they can put in place.

Right now America needs leadership in all sectors that can heal our deep divides and pave the way to make decisions that will truly make us safer in every sense -- climate, health, economy, national security and so on. When it comes to implementing what is needed for this country, being tough should not be confounded with a need to be aggressive and confrontational. Tough is taking the road less travelled to invest in building consensus, and it ultimately starts with promoting kindness.

Why Jacinda Ardern Matters

https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/19/opinion/jacinda-ardern-new-zealand.html

New Zealand's prime minister is emerging as the progressive antithesis to right-wing strongmen like Trump, Orban and Modi, whose careers thrive on illiberal, anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant rhetoric.

By Sushil Aaron
March 19, 2019.

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Jacinda Ardern, the prime minister of New Zealand, has been exemplary in her response to the massacre in Christchurch, where 50 Muslims were killed in two mosques by an Australian white supremacist and his accomplices.

Ms. Arden provided a frame for national grief by embracing the Muslim immigrant community and by firmly insisting, in a tweet after the attack, "Many of those affected will be members of our migrant communities — New Zealand is their home — they are us." She set the tone for the country's response, framed the incident as a terrorist attack and insisted that her country will reject violent extremism.

Ms. Ardern, 38, took over as prime minister in October 2017, after generating a measure of "Jacindamania" and leading her New Zealand Labour Party to victory. Her stature as a serious progressive politician has not been affected by her celebrity status; Ms. Ardern leads in polls even as some of her policies receive mixed reviews.

Christchurch marks a turning point for Ms. Ardern and for New Zealand. She has set high benchmarks for messaging and leadership during this crisis. She is expected to unveil specific proposals to reform the country's gun laws before Monday. Ms Ardern, wearing a black scarf, comforted families of the victims — a remarkable gesture given the reactions Muslim women's headgear provokes in many Western countries.

New Zealanders have followed their leader's example. Citizens are declaring that the attacker does not speak for them, donations are pouring in for families, condolence books are being signed, flowers placed in front of mosques. On Sunday, church congregations sang New Zealand's soaring national anthem that speaks about "men of every creed and race" gathering before God's face in a "free land."

Through the aftermath, Ms. Ardern has consciously sought to reinforce state ideology and elevate it above private prejudice. She recognizes politics as the domain that decides a nation's values and is providing strong narrative direction for a society suddenly dealing with exposed fault lines. She is reminding Kiwis to come to terms with the altered composition of her nation and, in fact, told Donald Trump that the best way he could support New Zealand was by offering "sympathy and love for all Muslim communities."

On Tuesday, while speaking in the Parliament, she told the grieving families, "We cannot know your grief, but we can walk with you at every stage." And in a pathbreaking gesture, Ms. Ardern said she will never mention the name of the terrorist, thus withholding the notoriety he sought. She implored others to "speak the names of those who were lost, rather than name of the man who took them."

Ms. Ardern is emerging as the definitive progressive antithesis to the crowded field of right-wing strongmen like President Trump, Viktor Orban of Hungary and Narendra Modi of India, whose careers thrive on illiberal, anti-Muslim rhetoric.

Like its exceptional prime minister, New Zealand has a national culture unlike any other in Europe or the Americas. Its isolation and distance make its distinctiveness possible, and the difference is palpable. It is a spectacularly beautiful country with a population of five million occupying an area larger than Britain. Though an urbanized country with a stable developed economy, it has a pace and an outlook of life that seem at odds with the extractive demands of modernity.

Migrants from developing countries relate easily to friendly Kiwis and are often surprised to see children and adults walk the streets barefoot. There are superb public libraries and innumerable public spaces in the form of beaches, bays and parks. Community ties are crucial, work-life balance matters, long weekends are sacred.

Public-funded advice bureaus help migrants settle in. The streets are safe, schools are free and university costs are relatively modest. Kiwis complain about lack of public investment in specialized health care but it is already impressive for a foreigner: a full course of prescribed antibiotics costs $3.43. New Zealand grapples with neoliberal pressures but is attempting to hold on to its social democracy.

Of course, the country has its problems. Lack of housing is a serious concern, attributed to a property market spiked reportedly by Chinese investors over the years. Maori communities seek compensation for historical dispossession, which is being addressed by a tribunal and conscious promotion of indigenous culture. Mental health comes up as an underdiscussed issue and public infrastructure needs more investment.

Cities like Auckland grew rapidly in the last decade owing to thousands of foreign students and workers, which increased pressure on services in ways that Kiwis did not expect. Many New Zealanders are still getting used to diversity and often regret that "the country has changed." This yields resentment among some that right-wing figures seek to stoke. Muslims have been subject to racial slurs and hate speech since the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States, but as Mohamed Hassan, a Kiwi journalist put it, not in ways that one's "life would be on the line."

But there is a vibrant political debate on immigration and about the need to import skilled labor without provoking domestic tensions — all conducted without rancor or vitriol. Migrants will not deny sensing subtle forms of exclusion in securing jobs or promotions at work, but the ingrained commitment to everyday civility among New Zealanders is something an immigrant appreciates the most.

Ms. Ardern has a tough road ahead to ensure that the country's "profile" does not change. The challenges she faces resonate with those in other democracies. It remains to be seen if in her case normative habits and deliberative practice can prevail over nasty rightwing subcultures that are amplified by technology, social media and weapons.

Combating bigotry and prejudice entails both law enforcement and cultural change. The former is easier, the latter less so. Ms. Ardern will need to use her country's civility to confront social divisions rather than allow it to foster silences that block a fuller expression of equality for marginal groups.

Her government will need to craft newer meanings of national belonging to translate the tolerated and unwanted into the desirable. Democratic discourses must ultimately aim to bridge ethnic silos and parallel cultural lives. It is a challenge fraught with risk for a liberal politician, as a perceived overreach in social engineering can provoke a conservative backlash. It is not easy dealing with both a grieving community and a nation whose self-image has been dented. Right now her moral clarity is inspiring the world.

Editors Note: Sushil Aaron is an Indian journalist currently based in New Zealand.

"Dear Prime Minister …": An Open Letter to Jacinda Ardern

https://www.abc.net.au/religion/letter-from-a-muslim-girl-to-prime-minister-jacinda-ardern/10922442

Summer Joyan

Posted Wed 20 Mar 2019, 9:45pm

Updated Thu 20 Jun 2019, 3:07pm

Dear Prime Minister Ardern,

I am a 13-year-old Muslim girl from Australia and I would like to publicly share my appreciation with you. I belong to the generation that was born after 11 September 2001. I have never really contemplated how dark the anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant language is that permeates Australian society, because it is all I have ever known. I guess I've become used to hearing political leaders use that same language.

But then, after seeing the way you have responded to the terrorist attack in Christchurch, I realised that I now know what the role of a leader truly is. So I want to thank you on behalf of the Muslim community in this country for all that you've done since Friday. The way you have expressed support and genuine empathy for the Muslim community, and your care for the people of New Zealand as a whole, have been magnificent to see. And I wanted you to know how much it means to me.

Today I watched a video of you talking to the students at Cashmere High School regarding the terrorist attack. You showed such strength and kindness, and it made me wish I could experience the same thing in Australia. In my high school, not a single teacher or figure of authority even mentioned the attacks. They didn't acknowledge that a white supremacist murdered 50 innocent Muslim men, women and children in a usually peaceful place of worship. They didn't offer support or reach out to the Muslim girls in my school or even provide counselling services for grief and support.

In a country that is so similar to New Zealand, and yet also so different, can you imagine the comfort that my Muslim friends and I felt, knowing there was one leader in a neighbouring country that was on our side? My friends and I are Muslim; we were all born in Australian and it is the only place we have ever known. But this has been the first time we have ever felt like

we were part of the fabric of a community, and it breaks my heart that this feeling of belonging has come at the cost of 50 lives. If only more politicians had the courage to stand up to injustices and knew when to stop playing political games with the lives of people who depend on them.

Your leadership has brought the world together. By supporting the New Zealand community, no matter what their religion, you have shown what a great leader you are — not just in the good times, but when the times are as dark as can be. I cannot imagine any other political leader doing what you have done. I think that you deserve the Nobel Peace Prize! Many world leaders could learn a lot from the way you have held your nation together and comforted those who are grieving.

I'm sure you will remain Prime Minister of New Zealand for a long time. But if not, do you think maybe you could move to Australia and become our Prime Minister? That would be a dream come true.

Thank you again for all that you have done.

From, an Australian-Muslim girl who now knows what real leadership looks like,

Summer Joyan

Jacinda Ardern is showing the world what real leadership is - sympathy, love and integrity

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/18/jacinda-ardern-is-showing-the-world-what-real-leadership-is-sympathy-love-and-integrity

Suzanne Moore
Mon 18 Mar 2019 23.23 AEDT

The New Zealand prime minister has reacted to the Christchurch shootings with steel, compassion and absolute clarity. And she has given us a vision of a better world

Out of the horror inflicted by those who cannot accept the world as it is, comes a vision of a better world. It comes from above and it comes from below. It comes from ordinary people. Supermarkets in Wellington suburbs have sold out of flowers, tough old football coaches are talking about love and, most powerful of all, there are the stories of the Christchurch shooting survivors themselves. Those who risked –and lost – their lives to save their fellow worshippers or – astonishingly – found it in their hearts to forgive the gunman.

Then there is this 38-year-old woman: the prime minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern. We have watched as she shows the world what real leadership is. Jacinda–mania had died down since 2017, when she became the country's youngest prime minister. She gave birth in office, taking her baby to the United Nations general assembly meeting. She became something of a celebrity, appearing on US chatshows. But was there any substance to her? That question is asked of all women leaders. What is underneath? Where is the steel?

Now, in the most horrific of circumstances, we have seen the steel. We have seen the qualities that define leadership in such a way that it is clear she is a lioness and that to call so many of our current leaders donkeys is a disservice to hardworking donkeys the world over.

She has communicated quickly and immediately, giving New Zealanders as much information as she could. She has given them a language in which to talk about the unspeakable, to vocalise the shock and sadness. "They are us," she said simply of the dead and wounded. The "othering" of Muslims as separate, as somehow different, as not quite belonging, was felled in one swoop. "They are us." New Zealand had been chosen because it was safe, because it was no place for hatred or racism. "Because we represent diversity, kindness, compassion, home for those who share our values. Refuge for those who need it."

These values would not be shaken by the murders. To the killer, she said with absolute clarity: “You may have chosen us – we utterly reject and condemn you.”

This was swiftly followed by a promise to tighten gun laws, making sure that costs of the funerals were paid and that there was financial assistance for those affected. The next day, she went to Christchurch, taking leaders of all political parties, not just her own. She stood with Islamic leaders and hugged the grieving. This showed respect and real compassion, and those striking images flew around the world. A counter to the picture of the stubby bullish killer who was still flashing signs apparently to white supremacists.

Asked directly whether she agreed with Donald Trump that right-wing terrorism was not growing, she answered clearly: “No.” How could the US help? “Sympathy and love for all Muslim communities.”

Sympathy and love, what kind of leader talks like that in a world where to be tough is to build walls and imprison children or, on our own shores, elevate intransigence and prevarication to new heights?

Trump threatens all with the military in his quasi–Mussolini style. While Theresa May could not communicate any of this warmth or leadership in the aftermath of Grenfell.

That leadership could be about compassion and that overused word “empathy” feels freeing to us now. It wasn’t always this way. Dwight Eisenhower once said: “The supreme quality of leadership is unquestionably integrity.” Ardern embodies this; meaning what she says, saying what she means, unafraid and unbowed.

Māori doing their immensely powerful haka, Ardern’s face full of sorrow but also fearlessness, ordinary citizens with aftershocks of expression of love and bravery – this will stay with me.

Martin Luther King said genuine leaders did not search for consensus but moulded it.

Ardern has moulded a different consensus, demonstrating action, care, unity. Terrorism sees difference and wants to annihilate it. Ardern sees difference and wants to respect it, embrace it and connect with it. Here is an agnostic showing that love will dismantle hate. This is leadership, this light she shines, guiding us though to a world where we see the best of us as well as the worst.

This article was amended on 19 March 2019 to state that Ardern is an agnostic not an atheist.

How to Stop the Next Christchurch Massacre

https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/11/opinion/sunday/jacinda-ardern-social-media.html

Social media needs reform. No one should be able to broadcast mass murder.

By Jacinda Ardern
Ms. Ardern is the prime minister of New Zealand.
May 11, 2019

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — At 1:40 p.m. on Friday, March 15, a gunman entered a mosque in the city of Christchurch and shot dead 41 people as they worshiped.

He then drove for six minutes to another mosque where, at 1:52 p.m., he entered and took the lives of another seven worshipers in just three minutes. Three more people died of their injuries after the attack.

For New Zealand this was an unprecedented act of terror. It shattered our small country on what was otherwise an ordinary Friday afternoon. I was on my way to visit a new school, people were preparing for the weekend, and Kiwi Muslims were answering their call to prayer. Fifty men, women and children were killed that day. Thirty-nine others were injured; one died in the hospital weeks later, and some will never recover.

This attack was part of a horrifying new trend that seems to be spreading around the world: It was designed to be broadcast on the internet.

The entire event was live-streamed — for 16 minutes and 55 seconds — by the terrorist on social media. Original footage of the live stream was viewed some 4,000 times before being removed from Facebook. Within the first 24 hours, 1.5 million copies of the video had been taken down from the platform. There was one upload per second to YouTube in the first 24 hours.

The scale of this horrific video's reach was staggering. Many people report seeing it autoplay on their social media feeds and not realizing what it was — after all, how could something so heinous be so available? I use and manage my social media just like anyone else. I know the reach of this video was vast, because I too inadvertently saw it.

We can quantify the reach of this act of terror online, but we cannot quantify its

impact. What we do know is that in the first week and a half after the attack, 8,000 people who saw it called mental health support lines here in New Zealand.

My job in the immediate aftermath was to ensure the safety of all New Zealanders and to provide whatever assistance and comfort I could to those affected. The world grieved with us. The outpouring of sorrow and support from New Zealanders and from around the globe was immense. But we didn't just want grief; we wanted action.

Our first move was to pass a law banning the military-style semiautomatic guns the terrorist used. That was the tangible weapon.

But the terrorist's other weapon was live-streaming the attack on social media to spread his hateful vision and inspire fear. He wanted his chilling beliefs and actions to attract attention, and he chose social media as his tool.

We need to address this, too, to ensure that a terrorist attack like this never happens anywhere else. That is why I am leading, with President Emmanuel Macron of France, a gathering in Paris on Wednesday not just for politicians and heads of state but also the leaders of technology companies. We may have our differences, but none of us wants to see digital platforms used for terrorism.

Our aim may not be simple, but it is clearly focused: to end terrorist and violent extremist content online. This can succeed only if we collaborate.

Numerous world leaders have committed to going to Paris, and the tech industry says it is open to working more closely with us on this issue — and I hope they do. This is not about undermining or limiting freedom of speech. It is about these companies and how they operate.

I use Facebook, Instagram and occasionally Twitter. There's no denying the power they have and the value they can provide. I'll never forget a few days after the March 15 attack a group of high school students telling me how they had used social media to organize and gather in a public park in Christchurch to support their school friends who had been affected by the massacre.

Social media connects people. And so we must ensure that in our attempts to prevent harm that we do not compromise the integral pillar of society that is freedom of expression.

But that right does not include the freedom to broadcast mass murder.

And so, New Zealand will present a call to action in the name of Christchurch, asking both nations and private corporations to make changes to prevent the posting of terrorist content online, to ensure its efficient and fast removal and to prevent the use of live- streaming as a tool for broadcasting terrorist attacks. We also hope to see more investment in research into technology that can help address these issues.

The Christchurch call to action will build on work already being undertaken around the world by other international organizations. It will be a voluntary framework that commits signatories to counter the drivers of terrorism and put in place specific measures to prevent the uploading of terrorist content.

A terrorist attack like the one in Christchurch could happen again unless we change. New Zealand could reform its gun laws, and we did. We can tackle racism and discrimination, which we must. We can review our security and intelligence settings, and we are. But we can't fix the proliferation of violent content online by ourselves. We need to ensure that an attack like this never happens again in our country or anywhere else.

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