

Tūtira Mai: Making Change in Aotearoa New Zealand, David Belgrave and Giles Dodson (ed), Palmerston North: Massey University Press, 2021, 440pp, \$55 (paperback) ISBN 978-0-9951229-9-4.

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The recent occupation of the Parliament grounds in Wellington caused considerable concern for those observing, while also raising important questions about citizenship, rights and belonging in Aotearoa New Zealand. The range of people involved and the grievances presented were varied, although there were echoes of darker and more extreme movements in other countries (see Morelock and Ziotti Narita, 2022). Reflecting on the occupation forces us to consider what change is palatable and how it can best be achieved. Actions involving occupation have a place in contemporary society, what remains is a need to examine and weigh the claims being presented. Comparing the Wellington anti-mandate occupation (Vonash and Turp, 2022) with that of Ihumātao (Nairn et al, 2021) is illustrative in this regard, as we see apparently short-term issues and opportunism contrasting strongly with long-standing, historically rooted claims. Both can be presented as forms of active citizenship in their calls for change, which points us to the need to consider what constitutes active citizenship and what forms of change may be sought in contemporary Aotearoa.

In this book, Belgrave and Dodson have brought together a broad array of contributors to reflect on and unpack this puzzle. The book is comprised of 21 chapters and eight short case studies emerging from 'the Massey University course of the same name.' (416) Rather than simply focusing on visible forms of active citizenship, the book provides space to consider arenas and practices such as writing (Gerrard), theatre (Hazou), religion (Lineham), sport (Stewart-Withers and Hapeta), and feminist pedagogies (Beban and Cain) as avenues for change alongside more conventional forms of advocacy (Bennett), social movement organising (Boraman) and volunteering (Tennant). Opening the book, the editors (27) make the point that:

Active citizens in Aotearoa New Zealand are (to varying extents) part of an ongoing debate about how society should operate and are agents of change to improve their own lives and those of others. In our view, active citizenship is about public affairs and collective interests, not about change for the sake of change.

Setting out this perspective enables a focus on the everyday, the ways in which people attempt to bring about change, and their motivations for doing so. It also involves 'looking beyond the disciplinary boundaries of social movement politics, strategic campaign management or community development' (14) to consider and value other ways of seeing.

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Spaces and forms of active citizenship are clearly diverse, providing multiple avenues for participation. At the more conventional end of the spectrum are civil society organisations and social movements. Addressing the impact of social movements, Boraman (Chapter 17) examines the success of 'precarious young fast-food workers' (316). Drawing on a range of tactics, the Unite union was able to mobilise workers to highlight their plight, challenge their conditions, and introduce change. Boraman points to the use of symbolic power, particularly media oriented action to present and amplify claims. These tactics have become more significant as online tools have become more viable, leading Dodson (Chapter 4) to argue that this has also led to the formation of new political identities among young people. Through an examination of Generation Zero, Dodson points to the way these technological opportunities have created new forms of engagement in civic life. Together, these chapters capture the ways individuals organise in order to present claims, demonstrating that such actions are not static, responding to opportunities and changes in the external environment.

Turning from these more conventional approaches to active citizenship, the book opens up new avenues for consideration. Examining the potential for prison theatre to challenge issues of exclusion, Hazou (Chapter 8) questions ideas of what constitutes citizenship and in turn what this means for those who are incarcerated. For a group that is removed from society, theatre presents an opportunity for participants to convey their everyday experiences in ways that may be accessed by those outside. Stewart-Withers and Hapeta (Chapter 15) and Lineham (Chapter 16) point to another everyday, as they address the role of sport and religion respectively as avenues for active citizenship. In both cases, the authors argue that these shared endeavours can serve as forums for the development of collective action in the face of increased individualism. Where they appear to differ is in their assessment of the relative influence of these practices, with Stewart-Withers and Hapeta arguing for need to interrogate 'the frequently uncritical assumptions about sport's power to propel positive social change.' (274) Drawing a contrasting and more direct connection, Lineham suggests a link between 'the decline of faith... and the lack of involvement in volunteering and traditional community'. (296) These different perspectives raise important questions about who has the ability and motivation to engage in active citizenship behaviours and their ability to do so with or without broader social structures to support them.

In one of the more novel chapters, Gerrard (Chapter 6) considers the role of writing for different audiences and in varied formats in forging a sense of citizenship. Addressing the potential of the written word in shaping interactions and outcomes, Gerrard (138) argues that:

Writing is a key way that Aotearoa New Zealand act as agents of change. Whether that writing takes shape in online or print media... writing has the potential to build a sense of identity and community, and to engage people's behaviours on issues that matter.

In highlighting the role of writing, Gerrard draws further attention to the ways in which public engagement evolves and shifts in response to opportunities and affordances. The growth of digital spaces requires such a rethinking, as they enable the rapid spread of information, while also carrying risks. Recent work by Awcock (2021) on protest stickers and Hána and Šel (2021) on graffiti push the notion of the written form further, requiring consideration of how they may also contribute to ongoing debates, while also reinforcing

identities and claiming space. Giving attention to these broader forms of ‘writing’ and how they have the potential to shape the world around us would deepen the consideration of how writing shapes the social world.

An important thread that runs through the book is the position of Māori in these debates and how active citizenship in Aotearoa New Zealand needs to reflect this. Te Momo (Chapter 2) tackles the issue of citizenship and how Māori engage with it. Setting out the argument, Te Momo (57) states that:

Throughout Aotearoa New Zealand’s colonial history, Māori have deconstructed, constructed and debated the notion of citizenship and how they would retain tino rangatiratanga under the mantle of European nationhood.

In capturing these developments, Te Momo points to the contested nature of citizenship and how it evolves. This recognition of the experiences and views of Māori resonates through the book, as reflected in Belgrave and Dodson’s (Introduction) claim that ‘Māori can and do draw on resources that exist within the Māori world [when navigating]... the bureaucratic and legalistic world of government and public affairs.’ (18) This careful navigation is clearly illustrated in Bennett’s (Chapter 14) examination of local opposition to the extension of a permit for AFFCO to discharge wastewater into the Ōroua River. Central to this case was the struggle by the local iwi – Ngāti Kauwhata – and environmental advocates to challenge the consent process, bringing cultural capital to balance the certainties of scientific knowledge and challenge established viewpoints. This sits alongside work by Borrell (et al, 2019) that points to the potential for the application of Kaupapa Māori paradigms to provide more embracing and equitable understandings of contemporary society in Aotearoa. Weaving Māori perspectives through the chapters in the book therefore further demonstrates how and why these varied ways of seeing need to be accommodated for citizenship to be more fully representative and meaningful.

Active citizenship is characterised as a positive feature of society, supporting the development of inclusive communities. However, as Schouten (Chapter 3) notes, rather than being an uncritical and neutral process, morally conscious decision-making is required to bring about and support more active forms of citizenship. Illustrating this point, Schouten (79) argues:

We all shape, and are shaped by, the institutions which govern the society we live in. So it is important to ask not only what it would be like for our society to be just but also to think about the obligations you have as an individual to try and achieve institutional change.

Focusing on the role of change, Schouten highlights the complex processes involved in determining what change is desirable and right. This is amplified when reflecting on the underlying drivers of the Parliament occupation, pointing to the need for such debates and discussions to be inclusive and grounded in reality. As noted above, activism is not solely the preserve of progressive agendas. Spoonley (Chapter 5) highlights this by pointing to the evolution of the far right ‘away from overt gang and Nazi symbolism towards more mainstream political imagery.’ (114) Attempts by anti-mandate protesters to present an approachable, non-violent face, despite calls for politicians, academics and others to be hung, points to the centrality of such symbolism (Hall, 2022). The motivations and claims

being presented in support of active citizenship therefore need to be carefully assessed, determining who and what is valued.

This book presents a diverse and nuanced approach to representations of active citizenship in Aotearoa New Zealand. Each of the chapters is grounded in research that is used to draw out the issues being examined in ways that are meaningful for readers. The mixture of chapters and case studies enables the book to combine extended analyses of forms of active citizenship with case study pieces that capture personal experiences and provoke further consideration. This is reflected in Holden's (Case Study 3) 'Critique my Dick Pic', which uses humour to challenge and question offensive behaviours and Kahu's (Case Study 7) 'Fighting For Our School', reflecting on a campaign to save a local school from closure. The multidisciplinary approach also means that the book could serve well as a text for undergraduate courses seeking to push students to think beyond established disciplinary boundaries. As with any edited collection, the standard of the chapters varies, with some developing much clearer arguments and connections to the concept of active citizenship. The content is mapped out in the introduction but the absence of a conclusion means that the editors are not able to revisit the key themes and craft a narrative that can serve to bridge the contributions. These minor points aside, the books as a whole does raise some important questions about what forms active citizenship in Aotearoa New Zealand can (and should) take.

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