

Faculty of Environment, Society and Design Summer Research Scholarships 2021-2022

PROJECT DETAILS

Supervisor(s): Sylvia Nissen and Lloyd Carpenter

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Funder: Marsden Fund (T2: 22776)

Contact person: Sylvia Nissen

Project title: Youth civic engagement through emergency

Project Description:

Our environments are said to be increasingly characterised by emergency – both in the form of sudden on-set events (like flooding or a pandemic) and the ‘long emergency’ of climate change. This project for TWO summer scholars examines young people’s civic engagement within these emergency contexts.

Emergency governance has conventionally involved top-down hierarchical control, with young people often peripheral to or excluded from their governance. Yet the last year alone has seen young people involved in multiple emergency responses, including cleaning up after flooding, helping with vaccine roll-out during a pandemic, and ongoing activism associated with the climate crisis.

We are particularly interested to see if responses to emergencies have particular cultural aspects, considering whakawhanaungatanga, manaakitanga, whakakotahitanga and other aspects of tikanga – and their Pasifika and other ethnicity equivalents – among volunteers, examining motivations, responses, activism, long-term commitments and how these differ from the quotidian in terms of community engagement.

Each summer scholar, in discussion with the supervisors, will select a case study that they want to investigate, and will interview youth leaders and other key informants involved. They will also undertake data analysis of the results their interviews and contribute towards the drafting of a journal article.

Project Outcomes:

This project contributes to our understanding of the diversity of emergent forms of youth civic action in contexts of crisis, including among Māori, Pasifika and young people from other ethnic backgrounds.

Tasks to be performed by student:

- Identifying potential participants and setting up and undertaking interviews (n=15-20).
- Transcribing some of the interviews (others will be transcribed externally).
- Coding the interviews to identify core themes.
- Contribute towards the drafting of a journal article, through helping to synthesise relevant literature and evaluate the significance of the data.
- To carry out all these tasks following ethical practice.

Prerequisite skills (if applicable):

- Demonstration of a high level of analytical ability through their study.
- Willingness to participate in qualitative fieldwork.
- Experience with in-depth interviewing is beneficial, but not required.
- Completion of SOCI204 or SOCI602 is beneficial, but not required.
- Patience and tolerance in engaging with ethnic diversity and expression.

Please indicate if Ethics Approval is necessary:

Yes. This will be completed in advance of the project beginning by Sylvia Nissen and Lloyd Carpenter.

Date: 26/8/21