



The New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study 2015 Newsletter



*emailed to NZAVS participants on 21/22 August 2015

Dear [NZAVS Participant],

I'm Dr. Chris Sibley, the Lead Investigator for the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study (or NZAVS). On behalf of the NZAVS research team and myself, I would like to thank you for your continued participation in the study. Your responses are very important, and have already helped to answer a number of research questions about significant issues facing New Zealand. We would also like to send our congratulations to the three winners of our most recent prize draw.

This newsletter summarises some of the latest findings from the NZAVS. As a participant in the study, you have directly helped in making this research possible. This is only a snapshot of all the great work that comes out of the NZAVS every year.

Watch Chris Talk About the NZAVS



[Click here](#) to watch the video.

Other Useful Links

Thanks again for taking part in the study,



Dr. Chris Sibley

[Click here](#) to look at our Frequently Asked Questions page

[Click here](#) to see the official NZAVS website.

[Click here](#) to update your contact details.

New Zealanders are Becoming Increasingly Warm Towards People of Asian Descent

How do New Zealanders feel about people of Asian descent living in New Zealand? Research from the NZAVS, using responses from people all across New Zealand who completed our questionnaire each year for the past five years, has found that New Zealanders are becoming increasingly warm toward people of Asian descent.

In 2009, the average score for warmth toward people of Asian descent was 4.3 but by 2014, this had increased to 4.5. More specifically, before 2011, warmth was quite stable but since 2011, there has been a gradual and steady increase in warmth. While this seems like a small change, it is statistically significant. The findings also indicate that while change is happening, people's attitudes tend to change gradually over fairly long periods of time.

The next step for this research is to examine a range of factors that might be influencing this upward trend of warmth toward people of Asian descent in New Zealand and to continue tracking these changes.

[Click here](#) to see media coverage of this research.

(Research led by Nicole Satherley, Masters Student)

Personality Resilience Following a Major Natural Disaster

People's personality can be summarised in six distinct and core dimensions:

Extraversion – one's friendliness and sociability

Agreeableness – one's tolerance and cooperation

Conscientiousness – one's diligence and planning

Openness to Experience – one's curiousness and creativity

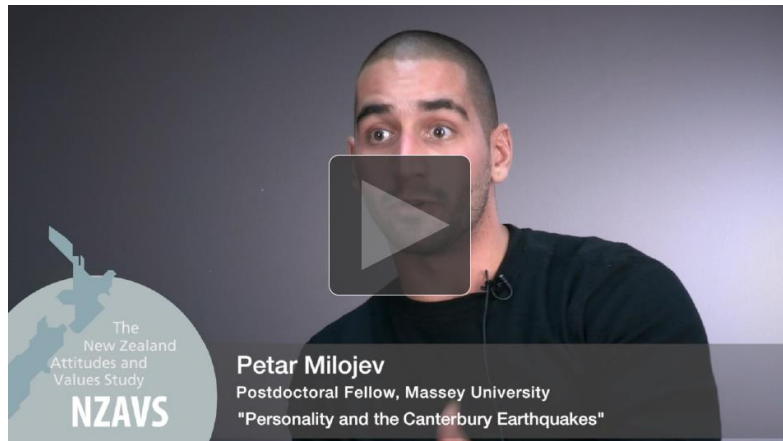
Honesty-Humility – one's altruism and sincerity

Emotional Stability – one's ability to deal with stress.

Research by the NZAVS team found that in the wake of the 2010/2011 Christchurch Earthquakes, the personalities of Cantabrians were found to be remarkably resilient. The bottom line: people's core personality didn't change following the earthquakes.

[Watch the video](#) to find out more.

(Research led by Petar Milojev, Post-Doctoral Fellow)



Why Wealthier People Think People Are Wealthier, and Why It Matters

How well-off do you think other New Zealanders are in general? NZAVS researchers in the United Kingdom and New Zealand have shown that how people answer this question depends on how wealthy people in their immediate social circle are.

The researchers showed that people tend to make judgements about others using a psychological process known as 'social sampling.' Social sampling is something that happens when people are asked to make judgements about how other people in society are doing—and they tend to base those judgements on people they actually know. The key here is that wealthy people tend to have more wealthy friends, and so their overall estimate of how well off other New Zealanders are in general tends to be inflated because they know more wealthy people, and tend to think they are more representative of the broader population than they actually are. This is important because social sampling can in turn affect how much wealthier people support or oppose policies aimed to help the poor.

[Click here](#) to see media coverage of this research.

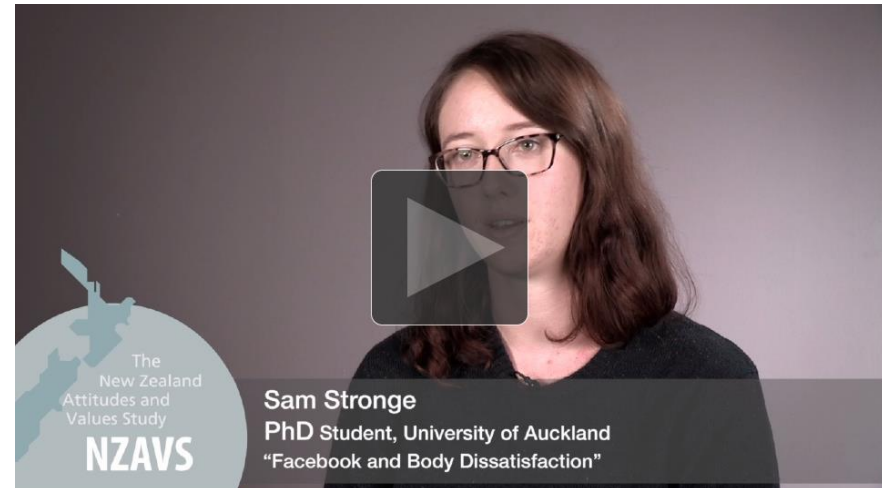
(Research led by Rael Dawtry, PhD Student)

Facebook and Body Satisfaction

How does using Facebook make you feel about yourself? Research from the NZAVS found that people who use Facebook were less satisfied with their bodies than people who don't. This was true for both men and women, although men generally reported higher body satisfaction than women overall. This research is important because it provides a key insight into how our changing society, and the changing ways in which we communicate, may be affecting our psychological well-being.

[Watch the video](#) to find out more.

(Research led by Samantha Stronge, PhD Student)



The Value of Charity



Why is it that people who are religious also tend to have higher life satisfaction? Research from the NZAVS suggests that this is related to how much people donate to charity. People who are religious tend to donate more to charity. Interestingly, those who aren't religious but who also donate more to charity tend to have levels of life satisfaction that are similar to people who are religious. So part of the puzzle of understanding what increases people's wellbeing may be about how much they donate to charity or engage in charitable behaviour.

[Watch the video](#) to find out more.

(Research led by Joseph Bulbulia, Associate Professor)

Regional Differences in Psychological Recovery of Christchurch Residents Following the Earthquake

Years after the devastating earthquakes that shook the Canterbury region, residents continue to work on rebuilding their community. The NZAVS research team looked at how Christchurch residents were recovering psychologically in the years following the 2010/2011 earthquakes.

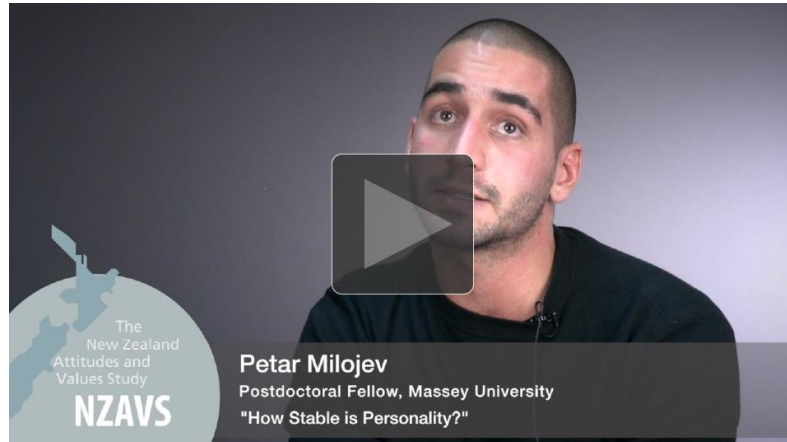
Our research team did this by measuring the levels of psychological distress of residents who lived in Christchurch during and after the years of the earthquakes, and looking at changes over time.

[Watch the video](#) to find out more.

(Research led by Lara Greaves, PhD Student)



Personality Stability Across the Life Span



How much do people's personalities change as they age? NZAVS research has helped to answer some big questions in the field of personality research by mapping out how people change in traits like extraversion and openness to novelty over time. This research has helped to disentangle developmental change in personality from cohort effects (differences based on the period in which people grew up). The research shows that personality is fairly malleable amount young adults, then stabilises and changes very little among people in their 30s-50s, and then becomes more malleable again among older-aged persons.

[Watch the video](#) to find out more.

(Research led by Petar Milojev, Post-Doctoral Fellow)



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[Click here](#) to update your contact details.

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