

bicultural issues
... from the NSCBI

A regular column prepared by the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues which aims to inform readers about particular bicultural issues, and explain their implications for the activities of psychologists and for the practices and policies of the Society.

Developing a Bicultural Psychology for Aotearoa

A resource in gestation

In late April the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues circulated to departments of Education and Psychology copies of its report on the status of bicultural teaching of psychology based on a 1993 survey of departmental materials. From those materials we have begun to assemble a guide to steps different departments have taken on this matter. We now need to have feedback from interested departments, groups and individuals to direct subsequent development of what is intended to be generally useful resource for those teaching psychology and education courses in tertiary institutions. For this reason a slightly edited form of the draft that has been sent to departments is published here together with the first comment the committee has received.

It is important, at this point in the development of the resource, to acknowledge the efforts of those who have worked for the changes that it records. In particular we acknowledge the efforts

of Maori students who have worked so hard and have so rarely been acknowledged as the driving force behind of these changes. Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou ki to mahi i te tipuranga o te kaupapa Maori Psychology.

At this time the emphasis in the document is on improving the quality of the experience of Maori doing psychology. This Equal Educational Opportunity focus is important but, as Tereki Stewart describes so clearly, does not address issues of structure and power. Clearly this must be addressed if the document is to become an effective resource for teachers, students and practitioners of psychology.

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Developing a Bicultural Psychology for Aotearoa **A Resource Guide for the Teaching of Psychology and Education**

Introduction

During the 1980s developments within Maori communities and national Maori movements focused attention on the need to give Maori peoples their rightful status as the tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand. Acknowledgement of the human and cultural rights of Maori peoples requires changing practices that are culturally oppressive to Maori and that have dominated the institutions in New Zealand for many years. Equally important is recognition of the rights of Maori peoples confirmed by the Treaty of Waitangi. It is imperative that teaching practices in psychology and education evolve in ways which both acknowledge the status of Maori peoples as tangata whenua and address past and continuing injustices experienced by Maori.

This resource guide is intended for several audiences. These include:

- (a) Maori and non-Maori staff in tertiary institutions; and
- (b) Maori and non-Maori students enrolling in psychology and education courses.

General principles

The general principles and assumptions underlying the resource guide are:

- * That people living in Aotearoa should be expected to become bicultural in terms of everyday social and cultural skills. Being bicultural means all residents of New Zealand having some knowledge of Maori perspectives and cultural practices.
- * That many Maori are already bicultural

but few Pakeha have started developing such skills.

- * That policies and practices for bicultural development should be based on partnership between Maori and non-Maori.
- * That all the dominant institutions in New Zealand should develop practices that are culturally safe for Maori.
- * That tertiary education should be consistent with the spirit and intentions of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- * That Maori have the right to rangatiratanga and self-determination.

Bicultural understanding and practice

1. Departmental policies on biculturalism

Develop and publicise departmental policies on bicultural development. This will include:

- * Acknowledgment of the Treaty of Waitangi and its implications for the teaching of psychology and education
- * Bicultural procedures in the operation of the department (administration, teaching, research) - staff development
- * Cultural safety for Maori staff and students
- * Marking of assignments written in te reo Maori
- * Develop and maintain effective working relations with Maori resource people: Kaumatua, Kuia, practitioners. Consult with them about issues, needs and developments.
- * Give a public profile to the

bicultural initiatives/ events of the department, such as powhiri or special arrangements for Maori students by writing in the students' newspaper, departmental handbooks and reports.

Current actions

Otago Education publicises its commitment to "empowering Maori students in their taha Maori". They have developed a network of consultants in the local Maori and professional communities to guide their practice.

Education Departments at Canterbury and Victoria have each established a Bicultural Development Committee or Group. At Victoria the kaupapa is based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, at Canterbury it is responsible for achieving the departmental goal of "retaining Maori and Pacific Island students".

Auckland Psychology has an *Evolving Policy on the Treaty of Waitangi*.

Waikato Psychology makes a public commitment "to encourage and support the development of Kaupapa Maori", it also supports the Waikato University policy on the presentation and marking of student work in Maori.

2. Developing bicultural teaching materials

Developing teaching materials that feature both Maori and non-Maori people, perspectives and practices.

a. **The Maori language** has official status in this country. Departments can give important signals to students, new staff, and the community through Te Reo Rangatira.

* In the department handbook have the name of the department in both English and Maori. Education departments at Otago, Canterbury, Victoria and Waikato do this.

* Give a suitable mihi at the beginning of handbooks, course outlines etc. Auckland Psychology and Education Departments at Otago, Canterbury, Waikato and Auckland do this.

* In course outlines, present the course aims in both Maori and English.

* When giving local examples name Maori concepts in Maori. Education Departments at Victoria, Otago and Waikato do this.

b. Grounding Courses in Aotearoa

* Develop course materials and teaching examples that explicitly include Maori people, Maori literature, Maori settings and examples relevant to Maori.

* Find out what are Maori perspectives on the topic being taught, invite appropriate Maori speakers into the course. Canterbury Education Department specifically names a very prominent Maori educationist in the list of staff for the course.

3. Bringing a bicultural perspective to the department

Assisting those involved to learn of Maori perspectives and practices the social, historical context in which they are working.

* Establish a Bicultural Development Committee within the department which will promote bicultural perspectives and practices in all functions of the department. Interested students can be encouraged to participate. Education departments at Canterbury and Victoria have such committees.

* Develop a pamphlet oriented to Maori, to explain to students and their whanau what are the areas of study in psychology and their uses.

* Provide workshops, discussion groups and/or training seminars for staff and tutors which focus on the need for and how to implement bicultural developments in teaching. It may be necessary to engage community educators experienced in providing such courses, see for example Yensen & McCreanor (1994). An important aspect of such staff-development involves assisting non-Maori to identify culturally oppressive policies and practices, and to develop strategies for changing them.

a. Staff Development

* Departments should ensure that staff have opportunities to participate in bicultural and Treaty of Waitangi training.

* Staff are encouraged to obtain bicultural and Treaty training and to relate this to their research, teaching and administration.

A number of strategies are available for incorporating relevant material into courses, seminars and workshops. Check with local resource people who have been involved in community education and have developed suitable materials and procedures that create an understanding of cultural oppression. Some individuals may avoid dealing with these materials if the label "anti-racism" is used by claiming that they are not "racist". Initial courses should ensure that staff are adequately informed about:

* history of the Treaty of Waitangi

* implications of the Treaty of Waitangi
* assimilation and integration policies as denial of cultural rights
* land rights struggles since the 1970's

b. Ensuring cultural safety for Maori
Implementing teaching practices which are culturally safe for Maori.

Ensure that staff, tutors and non-Maori students do not use Maori people who are course members as "representatives" of Maori.

* Have a departmental policy that no student will be called on to provide a "representative" perspective in a teaching session. There should be an understanding of why it is inappropriate to call on a student to provide a Maori (or Chinese, or Samoan, etc.) perspective or explanation in any teaching context.

* Staff must understand that this is first and foremost culturally inappropriate as students are typically not of an age where they have the standing to speak as a representative.

* Secondly, cultural identity is more appropriately chosen than assigned and many young people have considerable reservation about their public identity.

* Finally "spotlighting" individuals in this way initiates some rather negative social processes.

* Departmental staff who teach about, and/or provide psychological or educational services, should develop bicultural objectives and practices for such services. Such bicultural objectives must identify both appropriate and unsafe procedures when working with Maori people and organisations.

* Departments should anticipate and counter any backlash from monocultural and racist non-Maori. Statements of departmental policy together with explanations and justification need to be prepared in advance and circulated widely (e.g., in departmental handbooks). Replies to comments critical of bicultural initiatives should be made as soon as possible after the comments. Staff must at least acknowledge the challenge and make their support for specific bicultural initiatives clear.

4. Attracting, Supporting and Retaining Maori Students

a. Encouraging Maori students to enrol

* Ensure that liaison and support staff (e.g., school liaison officers) are briefed on what courses psychology/education has to offer and keep support staff informed about developments. Advice on how to encourage Maori students to study psychology and/or education should be sought from Maori staff and existing students. Make sure that such staff have copies of the pamphlet prepared by the Bicultural Development Committee

* Establish recruitment efforts in schools, especially schools which have a high proportion of Maori students. If possible, Maori university students should be financially supported to participate in recruitment visits to schools.

b. Supporting Maori students

* Orientation week: send personal letters to all new Maori students for a powhiri/mihi at the beginning of the year.

All key staff members should attend. provides opportunities for students to meet staff and other Maori students. Canterbury Education Department does this.

* Ensure that all Maori students become familiar with the facilities and assistance available in the university and department. For example, arrange library tours and make special effort to show them where psychology/education texts and journals are held.

* Ensure they meet the study skills advisor, department secretaries, and are clear on how to make contact with the department's lecturers. Identify staff and tutors from whom Maori students can seek advice and support. Psychology departments at Otago, Waikato and Auckland (City Campus) have a Maori Student Advisor, Massey Psychology and Canterbury Education departments have individuals who perform this role.

* Employ Maori staff and tutors to provide support (and role models) for Maori students. One Psychology Department advertisement for such a position identified both general academic support; which included publicising the services that were available, arranging workshops to enhance important skills, being available for consultation, and liaising with Kaupapa Maori sessional assistants. Specific academic support included; facilitating study groups and/or study camps for specific courses in psychology, and to facilitate regular study reviews for specific courses. There was also the requirement that the individual provide non-academic support through referral to appropriate services.

* Have a set of tutorials staffed by senior Maori students. Education departments

at Auckland, Otago and Victoria and Psychology departments at Waikato and Auckland (City Campus) do this.

* Arrange tutorials so that Maori students are not the only Maori person at a tutorial, i.e. try to allocate several Maori students in the same tutorial. Make it known to Maori students that they can bring a friend or friends to a tutorial if they wish. Education departments at Auckland and Canterbury do this.

* Provide a kohanga or study space administered by the Maori tutor(s) as is done at Auckland Psychology (City Campus). Facilitate the development of study groups for Maori students.

c. Retention of Maori students

* Make a personal approach to successful Maori students encouraging them to consider more advanced study in the department as is done at Canterbury (Education) and Waikato (Psychology). At the end of the year send a personal letter to each Maori student who passes her/his courses to congratulate them, and invite them to continue their studies in education/psychology. Information about courses and enrolment advice could be enclosed with this letter. For students who do not pass their courses, send an appropriately worded letter encouraging them to come and talk to a sympathetic person about assistance for the following year.

* In departmental handbooks, outline for each course what recognition is given to kaupapa Maori in terms of course content and process.

* Establish a system to monitor the progress of Maori students through their course. This provides information about

potential tutors and sessional assistants and should enable the department to anticipate the need for specialist resources such as Maori language examiners for theses in sufficient time to ensure they are available.

Recommended reading

- Cram, Fiona & McCreanor, Tim (1993, March). Towards a psychology for Aotearoa. *Bulletin* (of the New Zealand Psychological Society), No. 76, 34-37.
- Nikora, L.W. (Ed), (1994). *Cultural Justice and Ethics*. Psychology Department, Waikato University: NSCBI.
- Thomas, D. R. & Nikora, L. W. (1992). From assimilation to biculturalism: Changing patterns in Maori-Pakeha relationships. In D. Thomas & A. Venno (Eds.), *Psychology and social change: Creating an international agenda*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Yensen, H. & McCreanor, T. (1994) Pakeha students and a pro-Treaty analysis. In Nikora, L.W. (ed) *Cultural Justice and Ethics*. Psychology Department, Waikato University: NSCBI.

Comment

. . . From Tereki Stewart, *Ngapuhi*

Since the establishment of the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues (NSCBI) much discussion has focussed around the teaching of psychology as it relates to 'bicultural development'. One of the results has been the compilation of the document subtitled "A Resource Guide for the Teaching of Psychology and Education". While I support the overall intent of the document there are, I believe, a few omissions

that are integral to the development of the teaching and learning of psychology in New Zealand. It is my intention here to outline these concerns briefly.

Educational sociologists make a useful distinction between 'structural' and 'cultural' notions when examining policies and initiatives in educational change (Gibson, 1986). These positions are useful to explore in relation to the changes that are proposed in the NSCBI document. The 'structural' position argues that human behaviour is determined by the structures (both physical and ideological) of society that impinge on each person as a member of the collective. To affect change then, it is necessary to identify and transform those structures which are oppressive to the particular group. On the other hand, the 'cultural' position assumes that individual human behaviour alone is capable of affecting and transforming oppressive situations. Consequently, in terms of creating change, 'structuralists' would argue for the revamping of the system while 'culturalists' would tend to focus solutions at the individual, people-oriented level. It is widely argued, and seems fairly commonsensical, that both types of change are necessary if effective change is to be created and maintained (Gibson, 1986).

The changes and initiatives presented in the NSCBI document clearly emphasise the 'cultural', at a relatively cosmetic level. Directives are provided to, among many; facilitate (Pakeha) staff development on Treaty matters; provide a mihi and departmental name in Maori in the handbook; to include materials and

teaching examples relevant to Maori; to establish relationships with Maori people to act as consultants; to encourage Maori students to enrol in psychology by operating a preferential entry scheme; to support Maori students by providing a powhiri, tutorials staffed by senior Maori students, study space, and sending personalised letters to Maori students; retaining Maori students by making a personal approach to them at the end of their courses. The overall flavour of the document is the 'cultural' aspects of change. These are indeed important, but they are no more important than the 'structural' aspects of change which are largely absent.

This predominant focus on 'cultural' aspects of change is problematic because it attempts solely to fit Maori within existing structures and frameworks. It fails to address concerns already raised by Maori authors and theorists in this area (eg. Stanley, 1993; Stewart, 1993; Lawson-Te Aho, 1994). For example, rather than advocating for development of a "kaupapa Maori psychology" (Lawson-Te Aho, 1994) the NSCBI document recommends "find[ing] out what are Maori perspectives on the topic being taught". There is a subtle, yet important distinction between developing theoretical frameworks, introducing new epistemological understandings, and providing a perspective on existing topics.

Likewise, rather than pushing for the appointment of Maori staff within psychology departments the document proposes that staff should "develop and maintain effective working relations with Maori resource people: Kaumatua, Kuia,

practitioners. Consult with them about issues, needs and developments". Consultative mechanisms such as this are important but alone they ensure that Maori remain on the fringes of the discipline, never quite able to break into the ranks of the psychological fraternity. Psychology's first point of reference should be to those Maori who are graduates of the discipline. If we are talking of 'bicultural development' these people are the ones who are often in the best position to walk between the 'two worlds' - the Maori world and the world of psychology (both Maori and non-Maori).

In sum I believe there needs to be a re-examination of the proposals as they relate to not just 'bicultural development' but Maori development as well. There is a danger in the current initiatives of travelling down the same path as the "taha Maori" initiatives introduced into schools in the the 1980s. "Taha Maori" was to be:

"the inclusion of Maori language and culture in the philosophy, the organisation and the content of the school" (Ministry of Education, 1984, p1)

What resulted however were a whole lot of cosmetic changes with, for example, itinerant teachers of Maori who came to school to teach a few Maori words and songs. The programme became more concerned with educating non-Maori children than doing anything real for Maori children (Smith, 1985). It is important that we as a discipline do not repeat these mistakes and misunderstandings if we are serious about addressing the challenges laid down in the teaching of psychology to both Maori and non-Maori.

As a final point I would like to draw on the experience of implementing these initiatives at The University of Auckland. Many of the recommendations contained in the NSCBI document have been actioned over the past five years and while there has been considerable success in attracting Maori students into psychology at Stage I level they have done little to retain these students in latter years. Maori students are either not passing the papers at Stage I level or are choosing not to pursue psychology further due to their uncomfortable experiences in the discipline (Stewart, 1993). I would argue that this is because we have only just begun to address the 'structural' issues mentioned earlier in this commentary. The 'cultural' changes have served well in encouraging students to enter psychology training but, if we hope to retain these students then it is imperative that we address the 'structural' considerations as well.

References

- Gibson, R. (1986) Critical Theory and Education. London: Hodder & Stoughton.
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- Smith, G.H. (1985) Taha Maori: A Pakeha Privilege. In G.H. Smith (Ed.), Nga Kete Wananga Reader in Maori Education: Maori Perspectives on Taha Maori. Auckland: Auckland College of Education.
- Stanley, P. (1993) The power, the glory, & the great white hunter. NZPsS Bulletin, 76, 18-20.
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