

## Rangatiratanga and Kawanatanga - Resetting our Future

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Within a Treaty of Waitangi framework, the Crown has a serious obligation to act in such a way that ensures the active protection of Maori, of rangatiratanga, and of Maori properties. If and when delegating its responsibilities to other bodies the Crown must do so in terms which ensure that its Treaty duty of active protection is fully realised. This is but one facet of the concept of kawanatanga.

The related concept of rangatiratanga guarantees Maori autonomy within the *minimum* parameters necessary for the operation of kawanatanga. Within the rangatiratanga-kawanatanga dynamic, common sense practices for peaceable co-existence, mutual benefit and development at all levels abound. Many of these practices have already been translated into health and social policy which have implications for quality psychological delivery within the Aotearoa/New Zealand ecology. However, little attention has been afforded by the discipline of psychology.<sup>1</sup>

E nga reo, e nga mana, e nga karangaranga maha, nga mihi o te wa kia koutou i runga i te kaupapa o te ra. Kia a korua, te minita me te ahurangi, tena korua mo o korua mihi mai. Kia ora tatou.

Duran, Eduardo & Duran, Bonnie. (1995). *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press

Ritchie, Jane & Ritchie James (1993). *Violence in New Zealand*. Wellington: Daphne Brasell.

This morning I dusted off my suit. Those who know me realise that this is a rare event. However, somewhere in the psychological research it says that the judgements dealt out by judges and juries to those charged with offences, are likely to be more lenient if the accused is well dressed! I trust that my wearing a suit influences your judgements.

The topic that I have chosen to address today is the dynamic of Kawanatanga and Rangatiratanga and what this means for our profession. Like all topics it is a difficult one to discuss in 40 minutes as most academics are more accustomed to talking in 50 minute sound bites. Over the last few weeks I have wondered about this abstract catching up with me. And today it has.

To begin with I wish to highlight and trace some of the efforts towards biculturalism taken by those within psychology.

### How the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues came into being

Considerable effort has been necessary to ensure that Maori people as a non-dominant ethnic group gain a voice within our profession. One of the earliest attempts to place the goals of Maori development on the agenda of the New Zealand Psychological Society occurred in 1978. Jules Older (see Older, 1978) called for the Society to work to increase the number of Maori psychologists to numbers at least proportional to the percentage of Maori in the general population. This proposal, in manuscript form, was rejected by the editorial board of the *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*.

Almost 10 years later, Max Abbott and Mason Durie (1987) noted the complete lack of Maori graduates from

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professional psychology programmes in Aotearoa over the previous two years, describing this as "probably the most monocultural, in terms of Maori representation, of all New Zealand professions." (p. 67). That their work was successfully published in the *New Zealand Journal of Psychology* perhaps reflected a shift in attitude within the profession towards one that was more self-conscious, if not self-evaluative.

In 1989, the Psychology Department at the University of Waikato appointed its first Maori staff members. These appointments provided opportunity to challenge the monocultural nature of psychology from within the academy, and to promote the goals of Maori development. Later that year three staff from Waikato who were members of the Social and Community Division of the Society submitted a remit to the annual general meeting of the Society, reiterating the challenge posed by Jules Older in 1978 and urging the Society to use its resources to train more Maori psychologists and to alleviate social problems plaguing Maori peoples.

Because this crucial remit was about Maori people the Social and Community Division moved that the only Maori person present at that 1989 AGM be allowed the right to speak to the motion being discussed. As that person, it certainly was fascinating to see and listen to people, other than Maori, decide our fate. Despite opposition to the remit, it was accepted and the Kaupapa Maori Working party was established to report back to the Society on ways that it might respond to those challenges that had been made by Abbott and Durie (1987). A report was prepared and was successfully tabled and accepted at the 1990 AGM, surviving substantial opposition and the obstructive manipulation of annual

general meeting procedures on the part of a conservative few.

This is a necessarily brief summary of the actual process, which involved many long hours of discussion, numerous hui, angst and hard work by many people both within the Society, the profession, and those outside. A group that deserves acknowledgement are the Maori students of both that time and those of the present. Your constant challenging of the rules, questioning of the paradigms and methods, and risk-taking does result in changes. Kia ora koutou!

### **Establishment and achievements of the NSCBI**

Those activities described above foreshadowed the establishment of the Society's National Standing Committee on Bicultural issues - the NSCBI.

The mission of the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues is to "cause change to happen". It provides support to those seeking to work in bicultural and Maori focussed ways and monitors the development of bicultural initiatives. The committee's approach is not that of a 'big brother', rather the committee seeks to realise its objectives by organising symposia at Society conferences, by disseminating information on issues relevant to Maori development, and by 'causing' publications to appear in places like the Society's *Bulletin*. Of necessity, it is an open committee. All are welcome to attend its meetings and to contribute to the achievement of its goals. This allows Maori students and the few practitioners that we do have, a place to link with the Society and a safe avenue through which our concerns can be heard and acted upon.

The NSCBI has also made significant contributions to other activities in the life of the Society. These include:

- Review of the Code of Ethics
- Review of the Psychologists Act
- Increase publications
- NSCBI Bulletin column
- Increase professional development activities
- Retention and recruitment of Maori
- The establishment of the President's Scholarship

- The inclusion of Bicultural Directors on the executive of the Society, nominated by the NSCBI in collaboration with the Maori Psychologists Network.
- Treaty training for the Executive
- Key note speakers at conferences!

Having achieved these things, what comes next? What further challenges await us?

### **Challenges to those working within Rangatiratanga-Kawanatanga dynamic**

Imagine the engine propellers of an aeroplane. The aeroplane sits on a runway - silent. It is a collection of various metallic 'bits and pieces' that fit together in a particular way. As an object, it is just that. It's function is yet to be achieved. But let's carry this analogy a bit further. Imagine that on one propeller we have the idea of rangatiratanga, on the other, that of kawanatanga. When the propellers start to spin a dynamic begins to occur. The blades whirl around in a frenzy of activity until the blades are indistinguishable from each other. Indeed they disappear, no longer perceivable. Instead, at the centre of rotation is a blackness, a void, a third space. It is a space from which potential, possibility and new ways of doing and being may reside. It is a space that can be occupied within the Rangatiratanga/Kawanatanga dynamic where we can be creative, imaginative and transformational.

Back to the aeroplane, no longer is the object on the runway just a collection of bits. It has function, purpose and - provided that all parts are balanced and in tune with each other - direction. The aeroplane moves off down the runway in a way that is finely attuned to the pressures and forces that are upon it. Take off is achieved and a destination is reached for. But sometimes things are not tuned as well as they might be. Sometimes the engines of the plane cough and splutter, sometimes the cabin pressure is not adequately balanced and we feel it on our ear drums. Other things may also occur in ways that tell us that things are not quite right. Irrespective of these

happenings, most of the time we do arrive at our intended destinations.

Continuous breaches of the Treaty, the imposition of different value systems and institutions, the major changes in population composition have all contributed towards a seriously unbalanced and inequitable relationship between Maori and settler groups. The Rangatiratanga/Kawanatanga dynamic has coughed, spluttered and choked along for about 160 years and there are many things that facilitate the continuance of this situation. I now wish to address one of these facilitators.

### **The Effects of Rhetoric**

Much of what I have to say next may well be misinterpreted or used in ways that I do not intend. So, I will attempt to make these points as clear as possible. The discourse around the Treaty of Waitangi, biculturalism, Rangatiratanga, Kawanatanga, Maori self-determination, Maori for Maori services and the like, has resulted in a belief that non-Maori New Zealanders should stay out of anything related to Maori. Putting it succinctly, the message within the rhetoric is "this is Maori business to be dealt with by Maori people - only".

Sometimes, even I get confused by this rhetoric, especially when it is around problems that plague Maori communities that are not necessarily of our own creation. Yet many Maori quickly claim ownership of such problems. I would suggest that the over-representation of Maori in negative health, education, and employment statistics are in fact a reflection of a Rangatiratanga/Kawanatanga dynamic gone wrong. The claiming process that underlies the rhetoric around so called "Maori business" might then be seen as an attempt at striking a new balance.

Let's take a more specific example to highlight the consequences of following some of these rhetorical messages through.

**Example: Who supervises Maori students:** The example that I wish to focus on is that of a non-Maori academic engaging in a supervisory relationship with a Maori student who has chosen to engage in Maori focussed research. The mere act of

engaging in such a relationship draws criticism and engenders doubt. Questions are asked: Does the supervisor truly understand the Maori student? Can they really provide the insight, advice and care required to guide the student to achieve a quality outcome? Will the supervisor be able to transcend their own cultural baggage? Will the supervisor be able to counter the criticism that is likely to come from adherents of a Maori for Maori approach?

Let's flip this around. Let's say that the supervisor is Maori, and the student is non-Maori. Does this mean

- that Maori students must only be supervised by Maori staff?
- that Maori staff cannot supervise non-Maori students?
- that Maori staff have to pursue the interests of Maori students rather than their own?

I suggest that this is not only an untenable position for both staff members and students, but a dangerous one. Why? There are simply not enough trained Maori staff to go around. I suggest that such a position restricts Maori student options and their professional development to those areas in which Maori staff actually work. This may cause the unhealthy and ironic phenomenon of 'cloning'.

A further concern is that the Maori staff member is required to be eclectic in meeting Maori student demands. She or he must be a Maori generalist, conversant in everything, but a specialist in nothing. So what if she or he wants to investigate neo-celtic body modification in Northern Europe? Within the rhetorical discourse described earlier, there is no possibility or permission for such inquiry.

The issues highlighted by this example are also found in other contexts such as the psychologist-client relationship, the human resource management field, and the service delivery area.

### Buying into the rhetoric

Many of us as teachers, practitioners, managers, researchers and policy analysts, to name a few of our roles have succumbed to the pressure of

being politically correct. It is always safe to remove oneself from the firing line and plead fear, incompetence, sensitivity, and caution. Sometimes even 'respect'. I understand this position often comes from a genuine sense of supporting Maori opportunity. It may also be an act of submission to the rhetoric of the time. Having tasted the fear, and experienced the anxiety and self-doubt of possible engagement with Maori, the next move from this position can only be forward, with Maori.

### Maori focussed research - problem areas, reasons why people don't engage etc

The Maori and Psychology research Unit at the University of Waikato embodies the principle of moving forward together. By drawing upon the strengths of both Maori and Pakeha researchers that energy can be productively focussed on concerns and issues facing the Maori world. But the relationships have to explicitly acknowledge the expertise of each contributor, with each knowing when and how to engage the other. Or disengage when the process or issue IS Maori business, or within the competencies of others in the team.

The principles of kawanatanga and tino rangatiratanga inform the research practices and protocols of the unit. Partnership recognises the skills and deficits that each party brings to the endeavour. It is exciting, productive and sometimes stressful; it is never boring. From this volatile place new ideas, perspectives, approaches, and risks emerge.

This is what was anticipated by the NSCBI on submitting to the Society the adoption of Rule 3. Rule 3 reads:

*In giving effect to the objects for which the Society is established the Society shall encourage policies and practices that reflect New Zealand's cultural diversity and shall, in particular, have due regard to the provisions of, and to the spirit and intent of, the Treaty of Waitangi (NZ Psychology Society Rules, 1993).*

Trust and rapport - they are the goals of relationship establishment. Without them therapeutic relationships cannot be established, research cannot

proceed, and learning cannot emerge. Trust and rapport are foundational to our profession, just as they are to the kawanatanga-rangatiratanga dynamic. With the presence of Rule 3 we have a standard against which to measure our performance as a Society and profession that is engaged in the kawanatanga-rangatiratanga dynamic.

At times the dynamic will land heavily on one side, at other times, to the other. For a long time Maori have been watching the succession of Governments, Crown agents, psychologists and other professions make mistakes and get it wrong. However, Maori must be allowed the opportunity to participate AND to make mistakes too (as the Hon. Minister Tariana Turia stated yesterday). This needs to happen to allow new ways of relating to each other in the conduct of our profession, that is, to make a positive difference to peoples lives.

### Messages for Psychology

In moving forward, let's look at a few things that we can be working on within our various sub-disciplines.

**Academics:** We have not done a good job of recruiting and retaining Maori teaching staff. One university psychology department has failed to retain three Maori staff. We can not afford such attrition. Furthermore, at least 3 other department have no Maori staff at all. This situation urgently needs to change. It is not good enough to say that there are no Maori available to take up teaching positions. We have to commit to ensure that they are trained. Our academic institutions have positions available for these purposes. Let's use them.

**I/O Psychology and personnel selection:** Many positions require commitment to and ability to work within a Treaty of Waitangi framework. Many require familiarity with te reo Maori, tikanga Maori and with Maori communities. How this knowledge base and associated skills and abilities are assessed by those in the personnel selection and human resource management fields is unclear. To my knowledge, no one has attended to this issue seriously.

**Clinical Psychology:** We desperately need more Maori clinicians. The Closing the Gaps report issued by Te Puni Kokiri has highlighted the vicious cycle of hardship, poverty and distress that many Maori suffer through. This situation suggests that we should be recruiting Maori students in a way that is proportional to the client-base, not the population. In some cases this will mean that at least 50% of people in any one intake should be Maori. I challenge those who recruit and select students into clinical training to do so.

**Behavioural/Experimental:** There have been a number of papers presented at this conference that clearly demonstrate that the experimental method can, and is being used to make a difference in the lives of Maori. We do not have to restrict ourselves to qualitative methods, to face-to-face interviews, to focus groups or hui alone. Although there is a need to be wary of biases, ethnocentric interpretations, and underlying value positions, what is perhaps just as important is how the researcher or practitioner applies their method. The challenge to those working the behavioural/experimental areas is to turn your attention and methods to finding answers to issues and concerns facing the Maori world. You too can make a difference.

**Community Psychology:** This is the field that has nurtured me through psychology. To my colleagues I simply say, take more risks!

#### Messages for Maori

Lastly to Maori students I say, do not be confined to those roles that present

as being an obvious route to working with Maori people and on Maori issues. Obvious routes are not the only ones. There are many different pathways through psychology that Maori have yet to explore. We need to know about all that psychology may have to offer. We can only find that out by extending across all the fields and levels of psychology and not be restricted to a limited few. We need to explore work with opossums, hens and rats and all those other fascinating aspects of the behaviour-analysis field. We need to know about the wide range of equipment available to psychologists such as eye-trackers and computer simulated experiments in the field of perception. Discover the world of work and stress in Industrial/Organisation psychology. We need to people in all these fields.

#### Conclusion

In her presidential address to the Society in 1989, Dr Freda Walker reflected on her role as president. She said:

*...a press report about the Social welfare enquiry on the death of a Maori infant came over the radio. All of a sudden I realised that I was the person who should be speaking out on behalf of my profession yet I had neither background data nor had I established contacts within the Society to whom I could refer (The Bulletin, 1989, p. 13)*

Perhaps the only thing that has changed since 1989 is that we have a new President. I certainly hope that he has a good press secretary. However,

Maori children are still dying. This is a symptom of the severity of the problems facing not only the Maori world but Aotearoa/New Zealand society. It is not only a Maori problem. This problem is the responsibility of Aotearoa/New Zealand society as a whole. On our own we face an up hill battle that I suggest may never see an end. Together there may be some hope.

Thank you.

#### References

- Abbott, M. W., & Durie, M. H. (1987). A whiter shade of pale: Taha Maori and professional psychology training. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 16(2), 58-71.
- Older, J. (1978). *The Pakeha papers*. Dunedin: McIndoe.

#### Note

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