

Book Reviews

Ka Tū, Ka Oho: Visions of a Bicultural Partnership in Psychology. Invited Keynotes: Revisiting the Past to Reset the Future.

Edited by Raymond Nairn, Phillipa Pehi, Roseanne Black, and Waikaremoana Waitoki

(Wellington: NZPsS. 317 pages. \$45.00 (NZPsS Members), \$68.00 (Non-Members) ISBN: 978-0-473-20665-9)

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Book Review Editor's Note:

Delegates at the 2012 Annual Conference of the NZPsS were given the opportunity to witness the release of what will surely become a landmark publication for the Society. *Ka Tū, Ka Oho* collects together and extends most of the Māori keynote conference presentations over the last two decades. In doing so it allows us both to relive and review the various lines 'drawn in the sand'. We are assisted in this reviewing process by the two excellent reviews published here. The first is provided by Clive Banks, a truly bi-cultural clinical practitioner and scholar. The second is provided by Ian Evans, now retired professor of psychology from Massey University, and long-time supporter of the search for a 'local' psychology for Aotearoa New Zealand.

Review by Clive Banks

I must confess that I am not a great reader of books related to our profession and am more often to be found with my nose stuck in a science fiction novel. However, the offer to review this publication was too good to refuse given the mana of the editors and contributors.

Ka Tū, Ka Oho contains 15 bicultural keynote addresses given to the New Zealand Psychological Society, at its annual conference, over the past 20 years. On its own this would be a considerable collection of accumulated wisdom, but the editors have greatly increased the value of this publication by interviewing the speakers and obtaining

their reflections on their thinking at the time of the keynote address, and now. These reflections were particularly useful as they gave the speakers an opportunity to expand on themes and arguments, as well as add fresh developments. The deeper I got into the book, the more it felt like being at the ultimate bicultural psychology dinner-party; all these interesting people throwing ideas around amongst peers.

The keynote presenters are from a range of ethnicities, cover diverse academic and professional backgrounds, and all have valuable experience and insight from working at the bicultural coal-face. So many theoretical perspectives are traversed that at times it felt like mental yoga, with my thinking being stretched in the nicest possible way. The book reinforces the idea that so often, what we see depends on where we stand. It takes an effort to imagine what we would see if we were standing somewhere different. This publication emphasises the importance of knowing where we stand professionally and culturally, as a starting point for seeing things from the perspective of others. It was also pointed out how this can assist us to find spaces in which to work successfully, across cultures.

The book is structured with some information about the editors and a foreword, followed by a general introduction. The keynotes are delivered in four sections. Section one addresses colonisation, its impacts on Māori and the development of our nation. Section two introduces keynotes that are more focussed on the importance of recognising different needs and how to respond to them. Section three looks at how solutions for Māori need to have foundations in mutual respect between psychology and Māori knowledge. Retaining and growing our strengths for mutual benefit. Section four contains keynotes that are more practice based. I found that there was overlap between the sections, but the non-chronological order worked well. The way the keynotes seemed to build on each other added momentum and interest to my reading.

I found the general introduction to be a little heavy going and dense but it did its job of setting the scene. I particularly enjoyed Ray Nairn's reflection on Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith's kina metaphor. Determined to acquire the taste, he persisted for many years until:

*"The flavour was like a symphony.
The kina tasted sweet and briny.
There was a creamy texture too.
The parting flavour reminded
me of rosehips. I had acquired
the taste for kina. I persevered
simply because I wanted to know
what others experienced when
they ate kina. This is how it can
be for those seeking to work with
Māori"* (p. 21).

Hand on heart, I have never read psychological material that left me so hungry for more.

This publication succeeds in cutting across disciplines and ethnicity to deliver valuable, and at times touching, perspectives on bicultural partnership in psychology. It has affirmed for me that we in New Zealand are well positioned to become international powerhouses in modern psychology, if we seize the opportunities so tantalisingly displayed here. Buy this book and hop on the bus. At the very least, reading it will assist in reflecting on the "Diversity, Culture and the Treaty of Waitangi" competency component of the Continuing Competence Programme.

The following whakataurangi (proverb) captures the opportunity here:

*Te manu e kai ana i te miro, nona te ngahere.
Te manu e kai ana i te maturaanga, nona te ao.*

*The bird that eats of the miro, has the forest.
The bird who partakes of knowledge has access to the world.*

The contributors, editors and the NSCBI deserve congratulations for having the foresight to preserve and collate these keynotes. The follow-up interviews are the relish in the gourmet sandwich.

Clive Banks
Ngati Porou and Pakeha.
Registered Clinical Psychologist: Ora Toa Mauriora.
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Review by Ian Evans

The context for this powerful new book arises, as you can see by the subtitle, from past invited keynote addresses to the New Zealand Psychological Society's (NZPS) annual conferences, engaging issues relevant to Māori and psychology and the bicultural imperative in Aotearoa New Zealand. Not all of the speakers identify as Māori; four of the fifteen speakers recorded in this work do not, although all four have made outstanding contributions to the cultural conversation in professional psychology. However I was on the Society's Executive Committee when we decided that at least one of the conference keynotes every year must be delivered by a Māori scholar—a thoroughly well-intentioned affirmative action that fits uncomfortably well into the regrettable "us versus them" division. Nevertheless, these keynote addresses now exist, and the editors have done us a marvellous service by bringing them together in one volume. I attended all but three of the fifteen presentations and it is fascinating as well as informative to have them gathered in one place. Some have been published before, but in this collection there is for each address a unique follow-up interview with the author, asking him or her to reflect on the context of the talk, to revisit its message, and to suggest how it might be constituted differently today (2010). What an innovative way to reset the dialogue and keep it fresh.

Imagine how challenging it would have been at the time to craft any such address in the hope of informing without patronising, challenging without insulting, inspiring without offending a relatively homogeneous and largely self-satisfied audience? The passion and commitment of these keynote speakers is evident and the book provides a profound sense of encouragement, of movement, of gains achieved, however torpid they may appear to some. I would go so far as to say that this volume marks the coming of age of organised psychology in New Zealand. To quote Winston Churchill, we will look back on this publication as "the end of the beginning."

I assert this because it is possibly the first New Zealand book about psychology that could not just

as easily have been written in Britain, the USA, Canada, or Australia. This is about us, and our psychology, and our struggles to make the discipline accessible and relevant to all. It really should be required reading for every postgraduate psychology student in the country. Not because I agree with all the content, but because, as the end of the beginning, it throws down the gauntlet that results from embracing Te Tiriti o Waitangi—which we must do. It says so in our Code of Ethics. How much longer will our academic departments ape those of overseas, their staff publish only in obscure foreign journals and agonize about their H-index? We could at the stroke of a pen, change a lot of PBRF¹ scores by suggesting that at least one of every academic psychologist's Nominated Research Outputs has something relevant to illuminate the psychological diversity of te ao Aotearoa!

The editors, being less preposterous, have performed a skilful job of organising the presentations into four major themes, the first is that colonisation continues and affects all people. I would suggest that that is now well understood and accepted in our profession and so attention needs to turn to what psychology has to offer with respect to mitigating these negative effects. I did not do a formal count, but I had the impression that most contributors acknowledged that were they to present their talk today they might be less strident (Charles Waldegrave said "soften", Linda Tuhiwai Smith said "reflect") and more constructive. Yet simple solutions still elude us all, often entwined, as explained poetically and politically by Ngahuia Te Awakotuku, in policy and legislative controls.

One relatively straightforward solution is improving the demographics of our profession, commented on by a number of authors. There are some truths that I consider self-evident, and one is that attracting to the science and practice of psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand Māori scholars and participants in numbers no less than their proportion in the population must be achieved, and rapidly. While there are Māori

¹ Performance Based Research Funding, for which the Tertiary Education Commission rates the research productivity of all academic staff in New Zealand.

professors in academic departments of psychology, there are no Māori full professors of psychology. There are no Māori directors of clinical training programmes or other leading applied psychology programmes. This is despite the increasingly large number of Māori postgraduates with doctoral degrees. Yes, they will doubtless climb their way through the academic ranks and fill senior leadership positions in the future, but we have waited a long time just to get ourselves to this present modest position. No-one can talk with greater authority on these issues than Mason Durie, who not only challenged the profession in 1987, but has created such highly successful workforce development programmes as Te Rau Puawai, and the formation of the Māori academy, Manu Ao.

Durie touched with assurance on a much more complex issue, which is the relationship between conventional science and indigenous perspectives on the natural order. A number of the other authors struggled with this issue, with little success. Psychology's methods of discovery, thrashed out for well over a hundred years of powerful intellectual debate, cannot be summarily dismissed as some sort of Western plot to negate indigenous worldviews. Psychology as a discipline is large, multi-faceted, international, and most of what has the legitimated label psychology fits the empirical standards of a natural science and the holistic expectations of a social science. It can respect and study spiritual beliefs and religious faith, but it is neither spiritual nor based on faith. It has a debatable and constantly analysed philosophy of science and its methods are under regular scrutiny, but it is not a derivative of philosophy, dualistic mentalism, or any particular world view or constricting set of specific values. It can study attitudes, feelings, opinions, families, developmental abnormalities, consciousness, and social influence, but is not constrained by any of them. There is a vast domain of psychological knowledge in the world—it isn't privileged, anyone can access it with adequate preparation and training, and it is to my mind foolish to ignore it or to try to create a different version. Psychology as a discipline has *always* been aware of the importance of culture

in human society and functioning, ever since Wundt, the founder of modern experimental psychology, began to move into enquiring how culture enters into psychological processes.

One reason, I believe, these issues are handled less deftly in this book is because fewer than half the contributors are actually psychologists. A good example of some limitation in understanding can be seen when authors tried to address the problems surrounding mental health services and the extent to which, as few would deny, organised mental health fails the Māori community. It may be the case that psychology has failed to influence the mental health system in accordance with the intensive level of knowledge and understanding we have regarding causes and solutions to psychological distress, but the failure of the system itself are the failures of a totally incompatible medical model of problems and services. In her chapter, epidemiologist Joanne Baxter quotes figures on Māori mental health inequities, such as Māori rates of hospitalisation for schizophrenia being 3.5 times that of non-Māori. Despite quoting them, she deplores reading negative statistics about Māori, as do many of us, since, as Tim McCreanor emphasises so well in his contribution, the anti-Māori discourse in this country (the extent of which is extraordinary to those of us who did not grow up here) contributes to ongoing prejudice, antagonism, and just plain ignorance that are commonplace experiences for many Māori. But the high rate of hospitalisation for schizophrenia has nothing to do with psychology, whose knowledge base, were it to be truly implemented, would radically change psychiatric services, as John Read (2010) has articulated over and over again.

I found the frequent assumption that psychology is *primarily* an applied field and a helping profession disconcerting, because the really interesting discussions about the interface between kaupapa Māori research, cultural perspectives, and contemporary psychology take place around highly transparent research methods and ways of expanding our discipline's understanding of the human condition. It was not surprising to me

that the best informed chapters were all written by psychologists and were the final four papers of the final section, called *Practicing better*. I did not in this review want to pick out winners among the authors since it might imply losers, but the authors of this last section really do show us the way. Angus Macfarlane offers a creative model for blending conventional and Māori psychological themes, but not, as the editors comment, by “amalgamating (or assimilating) them into a singular ‘whole’...irrespective of culture” (p. 148). Averil Herbert describes in detail her research methods and findings that kept her empirical studies of effective parenting true to a Māori kaupapa. And Linda Nikora, in a prescient address now twelve years old, after giving some background to the NSCBI² and the Māori and Psychology Research Unit (MPRU) at Waikato, offers valuable advice to Māori students: “There are many different pathways through psychology that Māori have yet to explore. We need to know about all that psychology may have to offer” (p. 253).

I have to re-affirm that Linda Nikora, who is always so modest and self-effacing (maybe she takes seriously *kaore te kumara e korero mo tona ake reka!*) is the true hero of academic bicultural progress for both Māori and Pākehā students and staff. Her ability to stay positive and focused despite the glacial progress we are making has enabled the University of Waikato to become the only genuine academic leader in the effort to help us wake up and stand together in the future (*ka tū, ka oho*).

There are many other interesting discussions, all reflective and informative and would allow most non-Māori psychologists, both seasoned and those still in training, to have a greater understanding of the Māori vision and experience (*te ao Māori*, the theme of Section 3). However I am not assuming that only one side of the bicultural partnership needs enlightenment. What this book illustrates so well, and why it is so satisfying, is that it presents some of the fruits of Māori scholarship and thinking in a way that can be consumed by everyone. Perhaps this

² National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues within the NZPsS.

is the genius of the young and old, Māori and Pākehā, North Island and South Island, editorial team. As Charles Waldegrave suggests (p. 119), the concept “cultural competence” might give us all a false sense of security, with cultural sensitivity or awareness being the desirable goal. This innovative and carefully presented volume can facilitate its attainment by all of us.

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Reference

Read, J. (2010). Can poverty drive you mad? ‘Schizophrenia’, socio-economic status and the case for primary prevention. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 39 (2), 7-19

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