# **New Zealand Psychological Society Conference 2010**

The NZPsS Conference held in Rotorua this year had a broad range of international and local keynote, symposia and workshop contributors with over 430 delegates attending the conference and workshops.

We thank the Mental Health Commission for their gold sponsorship of the conference and also the Psychologists Board for their sponsorship support for the conference.

The following contributions from keynote speakers have been based on their keynote addresses.







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# **Treaty Framework for a Sustainable Future for Psychology: Cultural Competencies in Context**

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#### Abstract

Cultural understanding and competencies are considered fundamental to effective and ethical training and practice in psychology. However cultural competency training is often provided separately rather than being integrated into all aspects of professional activities. In Aotearoa New Zealand a review of the Articles of the Treaty of Waitangi suggests a framework that is applicable across cultures and countries and provides a basis for ongoing individual and agency responsibilities. Additionally, international research supports a three-pronged approach (skills, awareness and knowledge) in recognising and developing competencies that can be incorporated into ongoing professional activity. This approach will be discussed along with current developments and suggested future directions in professional practice training. Initiatives in Aotearoa New Zealand have pioneered bicultural work in psychology and wananga settings have promoted indigenous worldviews which can be recognised and acknowledged as contributing to a relevant and sustainable future for psychology. A future which will depend on understanding diverse worldviews in an increasingly multicultural environment.

#### E nga mana, e nga reo, e nga hau e wha i huihui mai nei koutou i runga i te kaupapa o te rō nei. Tēnā tatou katoa A sustainable future in a culturally diverse environment

In the course of this 2010 conference I have had the opportunity to observe and listen to an impressive diversity of presentations – from Professor Markowitsch' erudite contributions in the neuropsychology symposium to Ms Celia Hotene's enlightening presentation of her kaupapa Māori research into whānau hearing loss. The strength and maturity of the now well established bicultural symposium together with Māori researchers who presented in their domains of interest Lisa Stewart in the industrial and organisational division symposium, Armon Tamatea in the forensic

symposium and Dr Phillipa Pehi developing her psychology career in environment and kaitiakitanga. A number of research presentations from Bangkok, Thailand, have added to the diversity this year. The poverty reduction and psychology symposium here at conference also has particular relevance to my reflections on sustainability. A sustainable future for psychology is about developing a discipline that is relevant and meaningful for diverse groups. The various dictionary definitions of sustainability include both "to maintain and keep going continuously" and

also "to give strength - to encourage and support." To understand what may be useful and sustainable for the discipline of psychology in Aotearoa/ New Zealand is clearly related to understanding what is going on in the wider world.

Diamond (2005 p.519) provided an exhaustive analysis of societies which have become unsustainable (mainly through exploitation and lack of forward planning) and a description of other societies where the environment appeared to be sustainable (mainly through a sense of planning and control). He presented a graphic

illustration from the Dutch coastal lowlands - the polders - which are situated below sea level. An episode of mismanagement in 1953 led to extensive flooding and the deaths of 2,000 people. Successful management requires each farmer to maintain the pump on their land which feeds into the neighbouring polder and so on out to the coast. They have a saying in the Netherlands, "You have to be able to get along with your enemy because he may be the person operating the neighbouring pump in your polder". Clearly communication and relationships enhance sustainability in this scenario. However Diamond's rather alarming statement of civilisation as we know it as "an exponentially accelerating horse race of unknown outcome" (2005 p.522) sounds pretty scary. When asked whether he himself was optimistic or pessimistic about the future for the globe he suggested that he was 'a cautious optimist' with the provisos that "thinking and planning had to be long term and there had to be painful decisions about values." While there is clearly an understanding that knowledge about conservation practices is essential, the other values that emerged from these case studies were the importance of communication and relationships (even with your enemies).

Sustainability also has social and economic underpinnings. Wilkinson & Pickett (2010) found that 'economic inequality' kills. These researchers presented data from developed Western countries together with African, Asian, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and Pacific countries and showed that people died younger in countries with greater inequalities in income. They noted that only in its early stages does economic development boost life expectancy. The more significant statement is that the current data showed that inequality in incomes is

the new poverty index. Based on years of research Wilkinson and Pickett showed how almost everything - from life expectancy to mental health, from violence to illiteracy - is affected not by how wealthy a society is, but how equal it is.

Societies with a bigger gap between rich and poor are bad for everyone in them - including the well-off. These authors

suggested that we need to find positive solutions and move towards a happier, fairer future.

Since World War II Japan has reduced economic inequalities and increased life expectancy. Sweden also enjoys relatively small economic differences and is highly rated on health outcomes. Japan and Sweden achieved similar outcomes by different mechanisms - Japan by restricting income differences and Sweden by targeted tax regimes and benefits distribution. The opposite occurred in North America and these authors showed that the United States is now the most economically unequal society in the Western world. Aotearoa/New Zealand is also identified as a country with increasing economic inequalities (Poata-Smith, 2006). More than 10 years ago Judge Mick Brown retiring from the Youth Court in Auckland stated that during his time serving as a judge he had seen the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. He saw the impacts first hand in the Youth Court. Families where violence, illiteracy, teenage pregnancies were the norm. He stated at the time that these increasing income inequalities were the greatest challenge facing New Zealand society.

It is postulated that it is not actual wealth per se - but relativity between individuals and groups that underpins the problems. Wilkinson and Pickett agreed that the mechanisms of the health outcomes are complex and include social and psychological factors described as *feelings* of *inferiority*. They stated that ethnic differences are not intrinsically negative in society, but where there are marked inequalities in income these ethnic differences become markers in the same way as economic differences. In other words - ethnic differences do not underpin negative statistics but in an unequal society these

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> differences can compound inequality. For psychologists in Aotearoa/New Zealand our Code of Ethics (2002) does,

in fact, support the values of fairness and equitable outcomes. The four principles in the current Code expressed as: Respect for the dignity of persons and peoples; Responsible caring; Integrity in relationships; and Social justice and responsibility to society are meaningful - particularly the principle of Social justice and responsibility to society. The explicit social justice value is not prominent in other Western codes and Nairn (2007) describes this New Zealand position as unique and predicated on the formal inclusion of the Treaty of Waitangi in the rules of the New Zealand Psychological Society.

## The New Zealand experience: The **Treaty of Waitangi**

One of the strategies for predicting success in the future is to consider the past. This can be expressed as – *titiro* whakamuri – ahu whakamua – look back and understand history and move forward building on strengths. Perhaps Mãori have some advantage in this journey as for us history is in front of us, it is seen, known and remembered and therefore must be in front of us. The future is unknown and not seen and is therefore behind us. This conceptualisation is not unique to Māori and is shared with a number of other indigenous societies. The alternative paradigm of the past and the future are a useful reminder about different world views. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi (TOW) is an agreement between iwi/ hapū in Aotearoa/ New Zealand and the Crown embracing sovereignty, governance, identity and rights to land and resources. The Treaty still has neither formal legal nor constitutional status (Kawharu, 1989), and yet in 2010 the TOW is popularly considered the foundation document for Aotearoa/ New Zealand. While the TOW is

essentially a Pākehā document outlining an agreement between the British Crown and some (not all) hapū and iwi it has become a unique and distinctive feature of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The enduring nature of this agreement and partnership thanks largely to Māori patience and perseverance - suggests a relational framework for

extending our understanding of cultural competence. Cultural competence is

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not just a protocol for understanding difference and diversity, but provides a forum and a mechanism to improving understanding, communication and relationships, and ultimately addressing inequalities.

The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 established the Waitangi Tribunal and the hearings and evidence presented by Māori have evolved important principles derived from the original Articles – the principles of partnership, protection, and participation (Kawharu, 1989). Reflecting on the various definitions of sustainability including "to maintain and keep going continuously" and "to give strength - to encourage and support", we can see the TOW as a document that is uniquely positioned as giving effect to these qualities. Recent commentaries show that for Māori the Treaty of Waitangi has become embedded in the life of the nation. Durie (Debates on the Treaty of Waitangi, National Radio, 2008 February 5) outlined the broader implications of the TOW in the history of Aotearoa/ New Zealand. He suggested that over the last 2-3 decades the Treaty has led a dramatic transformation for Māori with legal, social and economic settlements which have come to equate with establishing more equitable Māori participation in society.

Two years later in 2010, Durie (Debates on the Treaty of Waitangi, National Radio, 2010 February 7) commented on what he described as, "A new era of Treaty relevance." He saw the Treaty as aligned to the future rather than the past with possibilities in forestry, geothermal, carbon farms - and plans for the next 100 years. He drew attention to the 2009 Central North Island (CNI) forestry settlement as historic with eight tribes forming the consortium - working across iwi. Again, the importance of communication and relationships (with your neighbours even if they are your enemy) to ensure sustainability and to develop a role in a global future. The potential of the Waitangi Tribunal in

recognising modern arrangements in settling Treaty breaches and grievances gives expression to the sustainability directives of long term planning, building relationships and communication with national and international goals. Perhaps it is timely to remind ourselves that the key to understanding diversity is as much about understanding the dynamics of power as understanding cultural differences. Sir Paul Reeves summed this up as: To Pākehā, biculturalism means being sensitive to Māori; to Māori it means power-sharing" (Reeves, 1998)

When the Māori Health Hui were convened in 1984 and then in 1994 after the Decade of Māori Health Awareness, the clear message was that Māori health is about politics and power – put us in charge of the systems. The distinctive contribution of Aotearoa/ New Zealand in developing the issues of communication and relationships in managing diversity is the mechanism of managing power and self-determination within existing societies. It is significant that the TOW is the first requirement in the Standards of Cultural Competence

relational framework for extending our understanding of cultural competence not just as a protocol for understanding difference and diversity but as a negotiation between dominant and non-dominant groups, as a mechanism to redistribute power and resources between the powerful and the powerless, and to create an environment to alter and enhance dominant cultures with cultural exchanges. Examples of cultural exchanges also emphasise the value of relationships and communication. In other words, the value of learning from each other while maintaining the integrity of each partner. The language exchanges are an example of non-dominant practices migrating into dominant culture. For example – kia ora, aroha, tangi, whānau. Black and Huygens (2007) provided another example of cultural migration with the following abbreviated excerpt: Focus group participant: I don't want to be called Pākehā – it has derogatory use. I don't want to be called by a Māori name. I'm not Māori and I don't want to be called by a Māori name. Facilitator: So how do you define yourself?

Focus group participant: *I'm a Kiwi!* Oh yes. I suppose it was a Māori word but it's not now! Black & Huygens (2007, p. 54)

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in the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Antearoa/New Zealand (New Zealand Psychological Society, 2002). As a framework the TOW has clear broad provisions for Māori recognition and self determination.

Article I: A PRESENCE in inclusive overall governance & resourcing Article II: SELF DETERMINATION with enshrined indigenous protection Article III: EQUAL RIGHTS with inclusive citizenship through access, fairness, and equity.

In addition, the Treaty provides a

national development. In the domain of cultural competency the TOW has enabled two cultures – Māori and Pākehā - with distinctive histories the opportunity to embrace mutual understanding and power sharing, and to provide a functional framework for multicultural practice. Cultural competency training can underpin an environment to develop individual, institutional and professional understanding of diversity and diverse world views which are essential for considering a sustainable future for psychology.

### Aligning psychology with the Treaty of Waitangi

"Cultural competence refers to behaviour, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and structures that are required to work effectively across groups from diverse backgrounds. It encompasses a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that comprise a system by which an agency or practice is enabled to work effectively in cross-cultural

was a Māori in Statistics conference being held at Waikato University. Among other speakers Hekia Parata was impressive in applying a Treaty framework to census statistical data the gathering, interpretation, and access and public use of statistical and demographic data. Contextualising and understanding the origin and meaning of groups of data can begin to portray a fairer and more accurate depiction of different communities in Aotearoa/

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situations." (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs in Whealin & Ruzek, 2008 p. 320).

Further, the definition of cultural safety from the New Zealand Psychologists Board (2006) Standards of cultural competence for psychologists registered under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 includes the statement: "effective psychological education and practice as applied to a person, family or group from another culture, and as determined by that person, family or group."

Fifteen years ago I had the opportunity to consider ways of developing and integrating cultural perspectives in clinical psychology training at Waikato University. While the international literature had established the useful multi-faceted approach of including both the knowledge-based and the personal experiential dimensions, the precursor of understanding difference and diversity was the awareness of white privilege and the recognition of racism. Roysircar (2004) considered this awareness and recognition as essential to changes in professional practice.

Cultural safety workshops being run in the 1980's and 1990's were instrumental in promoting education and awareness of white privilege and racism. Establishing cultural perspectives to be sustainable in a teaching programme needed to consider a framework that was meaningful and relevant and able to be applied and understood in a range of settings. Coincidentally at that time (1996) there

New Zealand. In particular to separate the culture of Māori from the culture of poverty and to observe and note resiliency and capacity in a colonised culture.

Subsequent planning for clinical training began to make sense under Treaty imperatives. The co-existing three Articles of the TOW clearly delineated that the governance and resourcing (for Māori and others) under Article I Partnership as an institutional and organisational responsibility. Thus institutions and organisations need to understand the history and social background to TOW relationships and the relevance to a bicultural perspective. Organisations can accept responsibilities by establishing structures to accommodate TOW and a bicultural system, and identify and implement practical actions consistent with these views (Herbert, 2002). Training programmes can acknowledge Article II Protection by establishing networks and guest speakers including kaumatua and tohunga to present dimensions of (psychological) Māori knowledge which as described by Durie (2005 p.138) "recognises the interrelatedness of all things, draws on observations

from the natural environment, and is imbued with a life force (mauri) and a spirituality (tapu)". Article III Participation embodies the responsibility for fair access and fair treatment for all. A Māori-friendly curriculum and Māori-friendly assignments including, for example, marae-based assignments are a legitimate approach in teaching (Herbert, 2002). In other words - the integration of cultural issues into regular teaching and study as part of the day-to-day bicultural environment. Other distinctive concepts include: mana whenua, raising awareness of cultural racism, recognising diversity and an emphasis on personal development.

Class feedback to the questions, "How has the course increased your understanding of the Treaty and bicultural issues?" included the following comments

"A great deal. Most importantly, it has made me see that Māori culture has to be integrated into every aspect."

"It was entirely valuable to be introduced to bicultural issues on different levels - not just academic."

"This multi-faceted approach has produced many 'aha' reactions.'

"Increased awareness and sensitivity. It opened a new perspective for me"

"This has been a rich experience which has enhanced my learning from undergraduate years."

"My understanding continues to deepen." (Herbert, 2002 pp.114-115)

#### The TOW in a global context

A sustainable future for psychology is about establishing and maintaining relevance in societies and communities. It is not about social control but about relationships – learning to get on with your neighbours - and identifying the barriers to relevance and acceptability. Psychology has to understand the people - the people don't have to understand psychology. People belong to and relate to their communities

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which are diverse. This suggests that psychology has to be diverse. The distinctive contribution from the psychology of Aotearoa/ New Zealand is the demonstration that diversity can be managed in a relational framework and it can be managed in a TOW framework including self-determination for each diverse group.

Moghaddam (1987 p.912) summarised a version of the worlds in which psychologists research and practice. She described the First World as consisting of the United States, the Second World comprising other industrialised nations such as the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and Canada (and including Australia and New Zealand and the Third World including developing nations such as Bangladesh, Cuba and Nigeria. Nikora and others (in Allwood & Berry, 2006 p.254) identified a Fourth World of nations comprising indigenous communities positioned within First and Second World nations, for example Hawai'ians, Aboriginals, and Māori the original inhabitants of the lands in which they dwell.

A feature of Second, Third and Fourth World psychologies is the extent to which psychological knowledge is 'imported' from, in particular, the First World to other nations. 'Imported knowledge' is culture-bound with First World values. Additionally, the indigenous worldviews are seen as separate and generally not relevant to mainstream developments. Allwood & Berry (2006) explored the origins and development of indigenous psychology from a range of international perspectives and summarised the importance of diversity and its significance for First World or mainstream psychology. Their views

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were that indigenous psychology had a number of advantages including being able to build theories from the "bottom up" on the basis of local phenomena. Many Pākehā now embrace the Treaty and perceive it not as a threat but as providing the tools for distinctive national development.

This meant that indigenous communities were much more effective in solving local problems. These authors maintained that by presenting more flexibility and incorporating different worldviews indigenous psychology was able to open up and invigorate mainstream psychology. Thus, rather than an either (mainstream) or (indigenous) approach, the TOW has a framework for negotiation and communication, alongside protection and self determination for indigenous and special interest communities in an inclusive discipline. More significantly, the TOW is based on differences between dominant and non-dominant, more powerful and less powerful and now has the evidence of cultural exchanges with examples of non-dominant culture migrating into the dominant culture. The TOW example in Aotearoa/New Zealand demonstrates knowledge and cultural migration between Fourth World - Māori communities - and Second World (Pākehā New Zealand). My suggestion is that these experiences and exchanges are relevant and feasible across and within other worldviews in Moghaddam's Worlds of psychology.

From a Fourth World perspective the discipline of psychology continues to be aligned with a First World position. A First World perspective has imbalances in dominance and resourcing, and therefore has a need to extend relationships and communications – perhaps become an importer – and to consider global values and actions in planning for sustainability become a reality. In Aotearoa/New Zealand we have in place

- a relational framework that recognises diverse world views
- provides for shared governance
- accommodates self determination
- values fairness and equity

Nikora (2001) in her keynote address described how The NZ Psychological Society was challenged in 1989 to put preaching into practice by accommodating Māori psychologists as a kaupapa Māori group. Subsequent accommodation led to the formation of the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues (NSCBI) in 1991 and eventually to the acceptance by the New Zealand Psychological Society in 1993 of Rule 3:

"to encourage the policies and practices that reflect New Zealand's cultural diversity ... and to have due regard for the provision, spirit and intent of the Treaty of Waitangi."

The NSCBI continues to have a pivotal and important role in the development of psychology in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The chairing and membership of this committee has always reflected the responsibility of Pākehā picking up the challenges and working alongside Māori researchers and psychologists. Establishing a presence for Māori in the discipline in print, at conferences, and reflected in the Rules of the Society, and most significantly as an advisory in the President's Foreword in the Society's Professional Practice of Practice of Psychology in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Nairn, 2007), "I encourage the readers to become familiar with the NSCBI guidelines and to utilise the questions about cultural preconceptions and assumptions as they engage with this body of work."

A sustainable future for the discipline of psychology - "to maintain and keep going continuously" and "to give strength - to encourage and support" - depends on understanding and embracing diversity:

- Distinctive psychologies located within diverse world views
- Respect for and recognition of selfdetermination
- Psychologies alongside each other with shared decision-making for a shared global future

With your contributions and mine we can build strengths for the future.

Ki to rourou, ki taku rourou, ka ora te iwi

Kia ora koutou katoa

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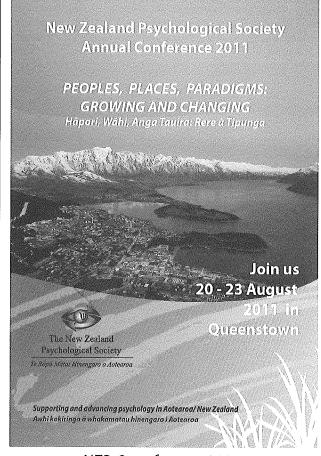
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Eva Anderson Kete whakairo courtesy of the artist's family Photo: Alan Marchant



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