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Background

The Maori and Psychology Research Unit (MPRU) was established in August of 1997. The unit is designed to provide a catalyst and support network for enhancing research concerning the psychological needs, aspirations, and priorities of Maori people. The MPRU is well situated to draw together skilled and experienced interdisciplinary research groups by networking and establishing working relationships with staff and students within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the University, and the wider community.

An important role played by the MPRU is in providing invaluable practical experience to both Maori and non-Maori students through involvement in Maori focussed research, planning and management, and professional development activities. Through winning grants and awards, the Unit helps to provide options for students to further their academic development and scholarly pursuits, and to supplement their income.

The MPRU runs an advisory service to assist researchers in writing research proposals that will result in research products useful to Maori development. A particular focus is on constructing procedures that are culturally appropriate and practical for use with Maori. Increasingly, review committees require that the ethical standard of research be measured against Treaty of Waitangi principles and provisions. The MPRU provides advice on how to achieve these standards.

The MPRU facilitates contact with others experienced in conducting Maori focussed research, potential participants in communities of interest, and end-users, to illicit feedback and comment on the usefulness, practicality, validity and support for research ideas and methods to be employed. This contributes to a more robust research endeavour.

A recruitment and training service for the employment of research assistants ensures an available source of people to assist with research projects.
Goals

- To provide a support structure which encourages Maori focussed research in psychology.

- To serve as a scholarly resource to support Maori focussed research projects and to promote new research initiatives among staff, undergraduate and graduate psychology students.

- To seek out new sources of research funding, respond to requests for proposals and tenders relevant to Maori issues, and to obtain continued external funding for Maori focussed psychological research.

- To facilitate the professional development of Maori researchers and to continue to develop future leaders in Maori focussed research and psychology.

- To provide a foundation for the teaching of psychology by enhancing availability and access to Maori focussed research experience and products.

- To promote the use of Maori focussed research products into the Department of Psychology’s curriculum.

- To facilitate internal and external lectures and research seminars to support the development of new projects and disseminate the work of scholars in the Unit.

- To host visiting researchers and scholars.

- To encourage collaborative research in Maori focussed projects across disciplines.
**MPRU Researchers**

**Emeritus Professor**  Prof James Ritchie  
**Director**  Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora  
**Research Officer**  Mohi Rua

**Principal Investigators**  
Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora  
Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts  
Mohi Rua  
Bridgette Masters  
Dr Neville Robertson  
Dr Ottilie Stolte  
Prof Kerry Chamberlain (Massey University, Albany)  
Prof Alan Radley (Loughborough University, England)  
Dr Eci Nabalarua (University of South Pacific, Fiji)

**Associates**  
Dr Michelle Levy  
Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Centre for Maori & Pacific Development Research)  
Rolinda Karapu (Admin Mgr, Centre for Maori & Pacific Development Research)  
Waikaremoana Waitoki (PhD)
Dr Pauline Guerin (University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia)

Research Team Members

Des Ellis (MA student), Shiloh Groot (PhD student), Te Waimarie Kapea, Robert Loto (MA Student), Karyn McRae (MA Student), Jane McCaughey, Saburo Omura (PhD Student) & Yvonne Te Pohe
Highlights

Since its establishment in 1997, the MPRU has successfully competed for and won external research funds in excess of $3 million. A significant success rate for external funds contested points to the high calibre of proposals written, the increasing public profile of the MPRU, and the recognition by funding agencies of those areas of staff/student interest and expertise.

- The Marsden Funded Ta Moko research group published its book, *Mau Moko: The World of Maori Tattoo* (Te Awekotuku, Nikora, Rua & Karapu, 2007). The book was launched on December 5, 2007 at the Academy of Performing Arts with special guests including Kingi Tuheitia me te kahui ariki, Geoff Walker (Publishing Director, Penguin Group NZ), Prof Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Pro Vice Chancellor Maori, University of Waikato), Becky Nunes (Commissioned photographer of the book) and the many moko wearers, practitioners, supporters, as well as University staff and students. The evening began with a pōhiri, blessing of the book, speeches, food, drinks and signing session. Since then, *Mau Moko* has made into New Zealand top ten sellers list and is undergoing translation into French for distribution to French Polynesia.

- The Maori and Psychology Research Unit were honoured to organise the first ever National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium (Kingsgate Hotel, Hamilton 23rd & 24th November, 2007). It was the inaugural meeting of Maori and Pacific psychologists, graduates of psychology and psychology students in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The theme for this symposium was "Claiming Spaces". Here in Aotearoa we have the potential to be pioneers in the development of psychologies relevant and applicable to Māori and Pacific peoples, and to better understand what science, culture and practice means when indigenous and cultural worldviews are prioritised. The symposium was open to all who wished to hear presentations led by Maori and Pacific psychologists, graduates of psychology and psychology students. Many thanks to the leadership of Dr Michelle Levy and her organizing committee (Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora, Bridgette
Awatere-Masters, Waikaremoana Waitoki, Mohi Rua, Tansy Brown & Siautu Alefaio).

- The MPRU was well represented by student researchers and investigators at the New Zealand Psychological Society (NZPS) Conference held at the University of Waikato, Hamilton (23rd – 26th August, 2007). Linda Waimarie Nikora delivered a keynote address that highlighted the need for psychologists to be conscious of the ‘deep’ context within which Maori construct their lives.

- Our kaupapa Maori student psychology group (Te Roopu Hinengaro) organised noho marae for both conferences mentioned above. During the NZPS Conference, the student body stayed at Kirikiriroa marae (Dey St, Hillcrest) and for the National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium the student body stayed at the Te Kohinga Marama marae (University of Waikato). On both occasions MPRU students invited staff and students from other universities to stay at the marae (Massey University, Palmerston North & Albany Campuses; Auckland University, Victoria University, Canterbury University; Otago University; University of South Pacific, Fiji) as an exercise in whanaungatanga. The noho became opportunities for ‘our’ students to mix and mingle with staff and students of other universities and organizations.

- In September, MPRU Staff (Mohi Rua) and students (Tamati Amuketi, Yvonne Te Pohe, Lynley Uerata, Shiloh Groot, Catherine Lane & Tatiana Hohepa) were invited by Prof Kerry Chamberlain to visit Massey University (Albany Campus) and talk about pathways to successful employment, to discuss issues around successful journeys for Maori in psychology, to also hear from psychologists working in the field about their research and to meet and network with Maori students and staff from Massey University.
Contracts & Grants

Projects in progress

**Title:** Health & Homelessness: Social reintegration in Aotearoa  
**Investigators:** Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts, Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora, Prof Kerry Chamberlain, Dr Eci Nabalarua & Prof Alan Radley.  
**Grant Agency:** Marsden Fund, Royal Society of New Zealand

**Title:** Strangers in Town: The health & social needs of Ngati Haua young people.  
**Investigators:** Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora & Mohi Rua  
**Grant agency:** Foundation for Research, Science and Technology.  
**Descriptor:** To establish the nature of the health and social service needs of Ngati Haua young people moving into and out of rural areas.

**Title:** Increased uptake of energy conservation in households and communities  
**Investigators:** Mohi Rua & Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora  
**Grant agency:** Foundation for Research, Science and Technology.

**Title:** The Meanings in Ethnic Labels  
**Investigators:** Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora, Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts, Dr Neville Robertson, Mohi Rua with Saburo Omura

**Title:** Defining Pakeha Culture  
**Investigators:** Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora, Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts, Dr Neville Robertson, Mohi Rua with Saburo Omura

**Title:** Hei arahi atu: Transforming cultural concepts for the millennium  
**Investigators:** Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora & Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku

Projects Completed

**Title:** What does it mean to be a man today? "Bloke Culture" and the Media  
**Investigators:** Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts and Mohi Rua
Grant agency: Fast Start Marsden Fund, Royal Society of New Zealand

Title: Ta Moko: Culture, body modification and the psychology of identity.
Investigators: Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora
Grant Agency: Marsden Fund, Royal Society of New Zealand

Student Supervision

Shiloh Groot (PhD), Mohi Rua (PhD), Bridgette Masters (PhD), Waikaremoana Waitoki (PhD), Dave Snell (PhD), Wei Li (PhD), Des Ellis (Directed study, Hons), Karyn McRae (MA), Yvonne Pohe (Directed Study, Hons), Rob Loto (MA).

New Proposals

Title: Medications in Everyday Life: Understandings and social practice
Investigators: Prof Kerry Chamberlain (Massey University, Albany), Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts, Dr Pauline Norris (University of Otago), Assoc Prof Kevin Dew (University of Otago), Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora, Prof Jonathan Gabe (Royal Holloway, University of London), Prof Alan Radley (University of Loughborough) & Ms Helen Madden (Massey University, Albany)
Grant agency: Health Research Council

Title: ‘A pill for every ill’: The domestic life of medications in consumer society
Investigators: Prof Kerry Chamberlain (Massey University, Albany), Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts, Dr Pauline Norris (University of Otago), Assoc Prof Kevin Dew (University of Otago), Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora, Prof Jonathan Gabe (Royal Holloway, University of London), Prof Alan Radley (University of Loughborough) & Ms Helen Madden (Massey University, Albany)
Grant agency: The Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund

Title: Kiwi Youth 2026: Opportunities and challenges in the more diverse society.
**Investigators:** Dr Elsie Ho, Prof Dick Bedford, Dr Linda Nikora, Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts, Dr Gareth Schott, Mohi Rua, Muriaroha Muntz & Jenine Cooper.

**Grant agency:** Foundation for Research, Science and Technology.

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**Research Outputs**

**Books**


**Journal Articles**


### Conference Presentations


Rua, M., Kapa, T. W., Nikora, L. W., & Te Awekotuku, N. (2007, 15-17 May). Ngati Haua Rangatahi: Visions and Futures - A work in


Poster Presentations


Invited Presentations


Rua, M. R. (2007). Excellence in Research - A Panel Presentation. Invited panel address to The University of Waikato Maori Staff


Reports


Theses


Towards 2008

☐ Better supporting Maori and Pacific students through an individual case management approach

☐ Consolidating our research agenda to be better positioned to win longer-term programme grants.

☐ Expanding our collaborations across the University and other research institutions

☐ Closer working relationships through joint projects and activities with the Centre for Maori and Pacific Development Research
Some photos for the year 2007

MPRU staff, students and friends, Te Kohinga Marama Marae, Hamilton (National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium)

Students from the University of South Pacific (Fiji) and MPRU (National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium dinner, Kingsgate Hotel, Hamilton)
Staff and students from Massey University (National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium)

Pro Vice Chancellor Maori Prof Linda Smith facilitating final discussion panel (National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium)
Prof Jane & James Ritchie with Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium)

MPRU students Des Ellis, Karyn McRae and Rob Loto following paper presentations (National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium)
MPRU and Massey University students (Annual Conference of the NZ Psychological Society, Hamilton).

MPRU students Lynley Uerata, Tatiana Hohepa and Tamati Amuketi (Maori in Psychology symposia, Massey University, Albany Campus).
Staff and students of MPRU and Massey University (Maori in Psychology symposia, Massey University, Albany Campus)

Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Director for the Centre for Maori & Pacific Development Research) and Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora (Director of MPRU) (National Maori & Pacific Psychologies Symposium)