Maori & Psychology Research Unit
Annual Report 2009

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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.
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.
The Maori & Psychology Research Unit was established in 1997. I was appointed as the Unit’s first Director. I had no prior experience running a research unit. In our first decade we lurched from one research contract to another often wondering about the meaning and usefulness of the work we were doing and the direction we were headed.

During these times, Professor James Ritchie was a tower of strength and well of enduring patience. We often discussed his experiences with the Centre for Maori Studies and Research and as the founding professor of psychology here at Waikato. Influenced by the first professor of psychology in New Zealand, Ernest Beaglehole, Jim, as he as affectionately known, envisioned an applied discipline that was useful and made a difference to the everyday lives of people and their communities; a discipline that responded to people in ways considerate of their contexts and cultures, and importantly, a discipline critically concerned with social justice, and understanding and bringing about change. The research presently engaged in by MPRU researchers is clearly situated within Jim’s vision.

Jim provided my colleagues in the MPRU and students who have worked with the MPRU over the years and I, with wise counsel, clear vision, challenging discussion and when things got a bit complicated ‘just do it’ support. Sometimes, we just had to do it, to understand what he meant!

Many of the gifts Jim shared with us will resonate through our yet to be had experiences. We look forward to those encounters knowing that Jim has provided us with a solid foundation on which to move forward. While we will miss Jim, his legacy and vision will remain in the work we do.

E te rangatira, moe mai.

Associate Professor Linda Waimarie Nikora

Director, Maori & Psychology Research Unit
MPRU RESEARCHERS

**Director**
Assoc Prof Linda Waimarie Nikora

**Senior Research Officer**
Mohi Rua

**Post Doctoral Fellow**
Dr Tess Moeke-Maxwell

**Principal Investigators**
Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts  
Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Centre for Maori & Pacific Development Research)  
Bridgette Masters-Awatere  
Dr Michelle Levy  
Dr Neville Robertson  
Dr Ottilie Stolte

**Research Associates**
Rolinda Karapu (Admin Mgr, Centre for Maori & Pacific Development Research)  
Dr Shaun Awatere (Landcare Research, Hamilton)  
Prof Bernard Guerin and Dr Pauline Guerin (University of South Australia, Adelaide)  
Prof Pauline Norris (University of Otago)  
Prof Kevin Dew (University of Otago)  
Prof Jonathan Gabe (Royal Holloway, University of London)  
Helen Madden (Massey University, Albany)

**PhD Students**
Shiloh Groot, Keriata Patterson, Bridgette Masters-Awatere, Mohi Rua, Wen Li, Amanda Young-Hauser, Dave Snell, Waikaremoana Waitoki

**MSoSc Students**
Diana Johnson, Jerrie Hill, Des Ellis, Karyn McRae, Teah Carlson, Lolohea Tongi, Sally Mueller, Ana Scanlan

**Directed Studies**
Kiri Edge, Hemaima Wihongi, Catherine Lane, Te Whaiwhaia Ritchie

**Visitors to MPRU**
Wendy Nolan is the Deputy Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies and Senior Lecturer in Indigenous Education at Charles Sturt University, NSW, Australia.

Dr Rob Ranzijn is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology and the leader of the Psychology and Indigenous Australians project team at the University of South Australia, Adelaide.

Wendy and Rob presented to staff, students and members of the community on teaching cultural competence in relation to Indigenous Australians.
HIGHLIGHTS

The MPRU is a leading international indigenous psychology research/teaching entity. Since 2004 the MPRU has generated over $5 million in external research income from The Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund, the New Zealand Health Research Council, Nga Pae o te Maramatanga and the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, and $500k in external scholarships. In that time the MPRU has produced five books, 58 journal articles and abstracts, 9 chapters, 14 keynotes, 174 presentations, 21 reports, and one conference proceedings. The MPRU graduates the largest cohort of Māori PhD and Masters psychology students in New Zealand. These students benefit from our ongoing contact with local community groups, research teams in other New Zealand locations and abroad to Loughborough University, Victoria University of Melbourne, University of South Australia and the London School Economics and Political Sciences.

Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Funding

Project title: ‘Apakura: The Maori Way of Death’

The Centre for Maori and Pacific Development Research (CMPDR) lead by Professor Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Assoc Prof Linda Waimarie Nikora from the Maori & Psychology Research Unit, has been awarded Marsden funding to investigate ‘Apakura: The Maori Way of Death’ worth $950,000 over three years. The Marsden project will begin 1 February 2010 to 30 January 2013. Research Associates for this project include Prof Pou Temara (SMPD), Te Kahautu Maxwell (SMPD), Mohi Rua (MPRU) and Rolinda Karapu (CMPDR).

Nga Pae o te Maramatanga - New Zealand’s Maori Centre of Research Excellence Funding

Project title: ‘Aitua: Death in a changing Maori World’

The Centre for Maori and Pacific Development Research (CMPDR) lead by Professor Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Assoc Prof Linda Waimarie Nikora from the Maori & Psychology Research Unit, has been awarded Nga Pae funding to investigate ‘Aitua: Death in a changing Maori world’ worth $250,000 over two years. The Nga Pae project began 1 June 2009 and expected completion date is 31 May 2011. Research Associates for this project include Prof Pou Temara (SMPD), Te Kahautu Maxwell (SMPD) and Enoka Murphy (SMPD).

Project Title: Whatukura: A bioengineered model of the human eye.

Dr Jason Turuwhenua and Bridgette Masters (MPRU) were awarded Nga Pae funding to investigate ‘Whatukura: A bioengineered model of the human eye’ worth $230,000 over two years. The Nga Pae project began July 2009 and expected completion date is July 2011. The MPRU’s role is in the evaluation component of the Whatukura tool, focusing on the interaction of clinicians and patients regarding uptake and use of the tool that will include the experiences of Māori participants.

Health Research Council - Maori Health Research Post Doctoral Fellowship

Project Title: Kia Ngawari: Investigating Palliative Care of Maori and their whanau

Dr Tess Moeke-Maxwell received a post doctoral fellowship of $335,000 over three years from the Health Research Council. The study will advance our understanding of contemporary adult Māori and whānau experiences of dying, death and bereavement and their end of life cultural needs. Tess is based in the Maori & Psychology Research Unit and began her research on 1st December 2009 with much of her field work in the Waikato and South Auckland regions.

1 School of Maori and Pacific Development, University of Waikato
Research Award

2009 Inaugural Maori Book Awards (Nga Kupu Ora) - Winner of Maori Book of the Decade Award for the book Mau Moko: The World of Maori Tattoo (Te Awekotuku, Nikora, Rua & Karapu, 2007). The event was held at Massey University, Palmerston North and attended by Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, Linda Waimarie Nikora and Vicky Bhana on behalf of the larger research team.

Student Research Fora

There were two significant student gatherings in the MPRU this year. The first occurred in February and profiled the work of two teams of students over the summer period. Lolohea Tongi, Lynley Uerata and Teah Carlson presented their findings from a group project where they investigated the meanings of medications in the lives of Maori and their families. Catherine Lane, Hemaima Wihongi and Tatiana Hohepa spent most of their summer scouring the library for all theses ever written on or about Maori by students of psychology at the University of Waikato. The second forum, and much larger one, took place in November. All MPRU students including Post-Doctoral Fellows were asked to reflect on and share their experiences from the research field. Fourteen students told of their experiences and took the opportunity to comment on how they came to pursue their research investigation, the type of people they met, the ethical dilemmas they confronted, and those things they would never do again. One student shared their reflections on a participant withdrawing from their study and how devastating such an occurrence can be for a first time researcher. Another commented on how funding agencies can confuse initial researcher intentions, and another, on how they structure their daily lives around a fulltime PhD investigation. The forum was extremely enlightening for both staff and students and is likely to become a regular MPRU fixture.

Student Scholarships

MPRU was successful in winning externally funded scholarships and awarded internally funded stipends to support several student projects. The total combined amount awarded was approximately $41,000.

» Catherine Lane (Nga Pae Summer Internship; MPRU Scholarship)
» Kiri Edge (Nga Pae Summer Internship; MPRU Scholarship)
» Hemaima Wihongi (MPRU Scholarship)
» Te Whaiwhaia Ritchie (MPRU Scholarship)
» Karyn McRae (MPRU Scholarship)
» Kathryn Robbins (MPRU Scholarship)
» Rolinda Karapu (MPRU Scholarship)
» Shiloh Groot (MPRU Scholarship)
Summary of the Feedback Report on Maori Student Conference Attendance 2009

The following is a summary report on feedback provided by students following their attendance to the New Zealand Psychological Society’s Annual Conference, Palmerston North (27th–30th August, 2009). This feedback was compiled by Karyn McRae (Department of Psychology Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor) and copies of the report were distributed to various stakeholders including the Chair of Psychology, Maori & Psychology Research Unit, the Department of Psychology Kaupapa Maori Management Committee, Pro VC Maori Office, Te Aka Matua and Waikato Student Union.

For the seventh year in a row, Maori students from the Department of Psychology, University of Waikato organised the attendance of 8 Maori and Pasifika students to the 2009 New Zealand Psychological Society conference. The students ranged from undergraduate, graduate to post graduate studies. The focus for attending the conference was twofold:
1. to support Maori and Pasifika student’s academic and professional development while studying
2. to broaden student’s knowledge and understanding of the various disciplines within psychology, and how this might be applied to student’s academic learning and future career choices.

Students were asked to provide written feedback on their experience of the conference. In summary, students gained a real appreciation for the diverse nature of psychology’s sub disciplines and career pathways:

I did not know Kaupapa Maori Psychology existed until the conference. I found it very interesting and relevant to my own personal interests. I had the pleasure of taking part in the conference and I am a lot more certain about where I will focus my graduate studies in the future (3rd year under-graduate student).

I didn’t know a whole lot about the psychology of Criminal Justice and for my own reasons never envisioned this as career choice (Masters student).

Students also gained an understanding on how their studies applied to real world settings and reaffirmed their decision to pursue psychology.

The Community Psychology stream and Kaupapa Maori Stream were both very interesting, as they challenged the broader discipline to widen its scope and to consider more diverse approaches to practicing Psychology. I would personally like to make big changes in the lives of those who are oppressed and I see this as the focus of more active streams within the discipline (3rd year undergraduate student).

Some students could see the importance and benefit of pursuing graduate and post graduate degrees within psychology.

This is what I aspire to be (clinical psychologist), so attending the clinical psychology presentations is extremely relevant to my career goals (3rd year undergraduate student).

Biculturalism is directly linked to my MA thesis and in a general long term sense biculturalism and decolonisation will feature throughout my career (Honours student).

The conference also highlighted the limitations of psychology.

A common theme throughout many of the presentations that confirmed my suspicions were that psychology often fails to acknowledge culture in its practice, it places strong emphasis on the individual and is dominated by imported American theories and models that often fail to acknowledge diversity (3rd year undergraduate student).

Professor Kerry Chamberlain emphasised that as a profession we need to be aware of our shortcomings. Psychology has always been good at ignoring critiques and our research methods tend to be a reflection of the changing fashions. I guess the question he left me with is – Where to from here? I guess the answer is up to me (Doctoral student).
In essence, the conference gave students an insight into psychology’s strengths and limitations as well as the varied career options. It was an important vehicle for student learning and development as future contributors to an Aotearoa/New Zealand Psychology. We would like to thank Te Aka Matua (FASS Maori Support) through the Pro VC Maori Office (Waikato University) and the Waikato Student Union (WSU) for their funding support, without which attendance would not have been possible.

Na Karyn McRae
Department of Psychology Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor

MPRU students at NZ Psychological Society Conference

L-R: Catherine Lane, Shiloh Groot, Te Whaiwhaia Ritchie, Hannah Banks (Community Psychology Diploma student and Neighbourhood Development Advisor, Hamilton City Council), Karyn McRae (Department of Psychology Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor), Hemaima Wihongi and Tess Charmers.
HIGHLIGHTING A SPECIAL PROJECT

The Tangi Research Programme: First Media Release

We are grateful to the Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund for this extraordinary expression of their faith in us. We wish to acknowledge the Nga Pae o te Maramatanga New Zealand’s Maori Centre of Research Excellence for their generous support of our project as well. For us all, this is a timely and significant field of study.

Death, observed through the process of tangihanga, or tangi, is the ultimate form of Maori cultural expression. Maori talk about death all the time; yet it is also the topic least studied by Maori, or understood by outsiders. This is despite the televised funeral rites of Maori leaders, and intrusive media engagement with more humble family crises. As researchers, we are committed to studying tangihanga, aware of the belief that such work in itself carries the inherent risk of “karanga aitua” calling misfortune by drawing attention to it. It is a risk worth taking. We believe that this delicate and volatile subject deserves attention, and study, as our work will extend and enrich the knowledge base, and inform the wider NZ community.

Known primarily for her work in the culture, arts and heritage sectors, Professor Awekotuku has sustained an avid interest in her changing communities, and published extensively on various social issues. She enjoys a close rapport with traditional ritualists, as well as innovative nonconformists in the Maori world.

Associate Professor Nikora has worked in developing the field of kaupapa Maori and indigenous Psychology for over two decades. She is the founding director of the MPRU, and has written and presented widely on Maori community concerns. Both the Principal Investigators are active in their diverse home marae.

Understanding the substantial risk, and possible controversy, the involvement of Professor Pou Temara and Senior Lecturer Te Kahautu Maxwell as Associate Investigators is imperative and significant. Professor Temara offers cautionary advice and well-informed reflection. As Chair of the Karanga Aotearoa Human Remains Repatriation programme at Te Papa, he also brings an immensity of lived experience. Te Kahautu Maxwell, composer, orator and academic, contributes singularly creative skills and knowledge in this sensitive area, which are directly related to his role as a tohunga in Te Hahi Ringatu. Both these men are uniquely qualified ritual experts.

Every member of the team brings a lifetime of countless tangihanga. The project will produce a report useful for whanau and marae, to support policy development at the hapū level, with implications for local authorities concerning urupa management, and district health boards concerning customary practice. We will also engage with the mortuary industry, and contribute to the training manual for funeral directors. A further outcome will be constructive analysis and advice to key stakeholders like police, medical staff, and funeral directors on flash point issues in the tangi experience, such as claiming and repatriating the deceased, exhumation and recovery, mākutu or modern sorcery, and organ donation. We are also concerned with the vast population of Maori living, and dying, overseas, and their whanau need for clear information, security, and guidance.

Being Maori, we suffer disproportionately higher mortality rates, and we must negotiate death and its realities at a younger age, and more often. This research is a pathway to understanding that experience.

Na Professor Ngahuia Te Awekotuku
Centre for Maori & Pacific Development Research
The University of Waikato
Tangi Research Programme Team and Supporters outside Te Pua Wananga ki te Ao (School of Maori & Pacific Development), 10 July 2009


L – R Seated: Mohi Rua, Enoka Murphy, Te Kahautu Maxwell, Prof Pou Temara, AProf Linda Waimarie Nikora, Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, Vicky Bhana, Heeni Poutu, Makere Nikora
CONTRACTS & GRANTS

New Projects

**Title:** Aitua: Death in a changing Maori world (2009-2011)  
**Principal Investigators:** Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Assoc Prof Linda Waimarie Nikora  
**Associate Investigators:** Prof Pou Temara, Te Kahautu Maxwell, Enoka Murphy  
**Grant agency:** Nga Pae o te Maramatanga ($250,000)

**Title:** Apakura: The Maori Way of Death (2009-2012)  
**Principal Investigators:** Prof Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Assoc Prof Linda Waimarie Nikora  
**Associate Investigators:** Prof Pou Temara, Te Kahautu Maxwell, Mohi Rua and Rolinda Karapu  
**Grant agency:** The Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Grant ($950,000)

**Title:** Kia Ngawari: Investigating Palliative Care of Maori and their whanau (2009-2011)  
**Principal Investigators:** Dr Tess Moeke-Maxwell with AProf Linda Waimarie Nikora  
**Grant agency:** Health Research Council ($330,000)

**Title:** Whatukura: A bioengineered model of the human eye (2009-2011)  
**Principal Investigator:** Dr Jason Turuwhenua  
**Associate Investigator:** Bridgette Masters-Awatere  
**Grant agency:** Nga Pae o te Maramatanga ($230,000)

**Title:** Māori Student’s Experiences of Māori Student Support Services at the University of Waikato in 2008  
**Principal Investigators:** Mohi Rua, Saburo Omura, Lynley Uerata  
**Funder:** ProVC Maori Office, University of Waikato ($3,000)

Projects in progress

**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), Assoc Prof 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 ($1m)

**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), Assoc Prof 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:** Health & Homelessness: Social reintegration in Aotearoa

**Investigators:** Assoc Prof Darrin Hodgetts, Assoc Prof Linda Waimarie Nikora, Prof Kerry Chamberlain, Dr Eci Nabalarua & Prof Alan Radley.

**Grant Agency:** Marsden Fund, Royal Society of New Zealand

**Student Supervision**

**Tangi Research Programme:** Keriata Patterson (PhD), Karyn McRae (MSocSc), Kiri Edge (Directed Study), Hemaima Wihongi (Directed Study), Te Whaiwhaia Ritchie (Directed Study), Catherine Lane (Directed Study), Rolinda Karapu (Directed Study).

**Homelessness Project:** Shiloh Groot (PhD), Diana Johnson (MSocSc), Des Ellis (MSocSc), Anna Scanlan (MSocSc), Sally Meuller (MSocSc)

**Medications** Project: Teah Carlson (MSocSc), Lolohea Tongi (MSocSc)

**Sustainability in a rural Maori community:** Mohi Rua (PhD)

**Others:** Bridgette Masters (PhD), Waikaremoana Waitoki (PhD), Dave Snell (PhD), Wen Li (PhD), Amanda Young-Hauser (PhD)
RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Peer Reviewed Articles


Book


Book Chapter


Conference Presentations


**Keynote/Invited Address**


**Student Presentations**


**Reports**


**Completed Masters Students**


TOWARDS 2010

» Better supporting Maori and Pacific students through mentoring and involvement in MPRU activities

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

» Expanding our collaborations across the University and other research institutions

» Maintaining working relationships through joint projects and activities with the Centre for Maori and Pacific Development Research, and the University of Waikato Maori Research Institute

» Presenting and disseminating research findings at national and international conferences

» Increasing the MPRU publishing capacity and profile

» Establishing the MPRU as a supportive and productive environment for Post-Doctoral Fellows
BOLD IDEAS.
SMART PEOPLE.
UNLIMITED AMBITION.

WHAKAARO PŪKENGA.
HINENGARO KOI.
PITO MATA MUTUNGA KORE.

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