

Editorial for “Unmasking Racism and Oppression in Psychology” – Part II

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Since publishing the first part of the “Unmasking Racism and Oppression in Psychology” special issue in March 2025, we have received immense aroha and gratitude from colleagues and students eager to learn about the perspectives of Indigenous and minoritised groups in psychology and how they can support the development of an anti-racist discipline. Rather than seeking to prove the existence of racism in the field (Crossing et al., 2024), this issue centres on validating our authors’ experiences of navigating oppression, challenging Eurocentric psychology, resisting assimilation, and remaining grounded in Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies while staying accountable to their communities. Racism in psychology has been called out by many colleagues in Aotearoa (to name a few; Levy & Waitoki, 2016; Love, 2008; Pomare et al., 2021), and this issue responds to their concerns by amplifying solutions for change in the teaching, practice, and research of psychology.

“An Aotearoa Psychology, that’s what I really hope for”. In an interview, Associate Professor Damian Scarf emphasised the need to develop a psychology that is uniquely grounded in Aotearoa, rather than importing knowledge wholesale from the Global North. This does not mean we should remain siloed in our work; in fact, it’s the opposite. We are encouraged to connect with international partners to respond to global issues and emerging challenges. However, within these relationships, particularly with other Indigenous, Aboriginal, and First Nations peoples (e.g., Selkirk, 2025), we must remain conscious of the unique histories, contexts, and contributions of “Aotearoa psychology”, or we risk simply reproducing psychologies complicit in whiteness and coloniality. Mātauranga Māori, Pacific knowledges, and other minoritised voices are not to be tokenistically included but rather celebrated and given equal opportunities to thrive. These bodies of knowledge may have different philosophical foundations, and at times may clash, but they also offer opportunities for convergence and shared learning when approached with respect (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018). Moe mai rā e te rangatira, A/Prof Scarf, who left us during the preparation of this special issue as a guest editor. We will remember Damian’s cheeky spirit, his occasional social awkwardness that made him endearing, and the legacy he leaves behind in championing equity-focused (e.g., Scarf et al., 2019), te Tiriti-led, and student-centred approaches to psychology.

Change is coming? The launch of the Working to End Racial Oppression (WERO) report (Waitoki et al., 2024), which highlights how racism operates for psychology trainees, academic staff, and psychologists, has helped build much momentum for change. The report is open-access and has been shared at various psychology conferences and hui. We have also had the opportunity to present our recommendations directly to clinical psychology programme directors. The articles in this special issue not only complement the WERO report, but also draw on decades of research into racism and psychology’s role as a settler-colonial tool. Together, they offer kōrero, stories, and evidence in support of the Tribunal claim (Levy, 2018) and the formal apology to Māori by the New Zealand Psychological Society (NZPsS) and the New Zealand College of Clinical Psychologists (NZCCP).

However, as a funded project involving our guest editors, WERO will come to an end in late 2025. This means we will no longer be able to continue engaging in research that unpacks the ongoing forms of, and solutions to, racism in psychology. Initially, we feared that the discipline’s continued perpetuation of racism would go unchecked. That fear, however, did not last long, as we knew there are incredible scholars, such as those featured in this special issue and groups like He Paiaka, Pasifikology, the Asian Psychology Collective, the National Standing Committee on Te Tiriti Issues, and many others who will continue to advocate for a diverse and just psychology. We are reminded by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2021) that achieving transformation requires structures to be put in place for sustainable change. The impact of WERO (and indeed, challenge) is only beginning to take effect, and we remain committed to continuing the kaupapa of WERO and this special issue, even in a personal capacity.

While we spearheaded this special issue and carried out the background work of editing it, we could not have pulled it together without the reviewers who generously offered their time and expertise to provide



constructive feedback on the submitted manuscripts. At a time when securing reviewers has been particularly challenging, we recognise that many of our reviewers likely agreed to contribute in support of the kaupapa. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the following scholars, who each dedicated their time to reviewing at least one manuscript for us: Amanda Clifford; Andi Crawford; Annabel Ahuriri-Driscoll; Deanna Haami; Eileen Britt; Eleanor Brittain; Ellie Rukuwai; Hilda Port; Hitaua Arahanga-Doyle; Jacque Kidd; Jennifer Liu; Jessica Tupou; Joanna Chan; Kahn Tasker; Kim Southey; Luke Fitzmaurice-Brown; Nicole Mincher; Nuzha Saleem; Olivia Evans; Ottilie Stolte; Ray O'Brien; Rebekah Graham; Ririwai Fox; Ruqayya Sulaiman-Hill; Sam Manuela; Sarah Whitcombe-Dobbs; Sharnee Escott; Shaystah Dean; Simone Mohi; Tahlia Kingi; Teresa Puvimanasinghe and Usman Afzali. While naming reviewers is not a conventional practice, we have chosen to do so to honour their contribution and resist extractive academic practices. We also adopted a peer-review model where some contributors also participated as reviewers for the special issue.

Building on the Part I of the issues (<https://nzjp.scholasticahq.com/issue/11904>), we have collated nine articles for Part II. The first article features a reflexive piece by two wāhine Māori clinical psychologists—Dr Jessica Gerbic and Dr Emerald Muriwai—who provide a critical analysis of the discipline and offer recommendations for how it might better meet the aspirations of wāhine Māori. In the second article, we are privileged to have Dr Diana Kopua and Mark Kopua (keynote speakers at the NZCCP Conference 2023), alongside prominent leaders in psychology—Dr Michelle Levy and Lisa Cherrington—discussing the transformative potential of Kaupapa Māori praxis in addressing systemic racism. They share the experiences of mataora (change agents) who attended the Rangi Parauri training, which centres on critical consciousness and the embedding of Indigenous knowledge systems. Next, Prof Bridgette Masters-Awatere, together with Dr Rebekah Graham and Chrissie Cowan, shares insights from research with tāngata kōpō Māori and has generously developed a guideline for psychology researchers and practitioners working with individuals with disabilities. The fourth article features a submission by a group of Māori psychologists, led by Dr Carrie Clifford and Dr Tania Cargo, on the Oranga Tamariki (Repeal of Section 7AA) Amendment Bill. Their submission outlines the detrimental impacts of repealing Section 7AA of the Act and highlights the role psychologists can play in providing expert evidence to influence political decisions.

Led by Dr McLachlan and a team of senior Māori psychologists, they outlined the process of developing the Au Intergenerational Trauma Scale (Au-ITs) using the Delphi method. This novel scale draws on a Kaupapa Māori, trauma-informed lens and considers crucial social and structural issues affecting Māori whānau that were overlooked in other measures of intergenerational trauma and adverse childhood experiences. The sixth article presents an in-depth autoethnography by ia Morrison-Young, engaging with Professor Elizabeth Kerekere's Te Whare Takatāpui framework of wellbeing for the Māori rainbow (LGBTQIA+) community. The seventh article, written by Dr Usman Afzali and his team, introduces the Muslim Diversity Study launched as part of the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study (NZAVS). The authors share the study's research protocol, outlining its design process and offering guidelines for researchers working with Muslim communities. Next, Dr Nuzha Saleem shared insights from her doctoral research on factors essential for young people from refugee backgrounds to express a sense of belonging while (re)settling in Aotearoa. The article interrogates the prevailing norm of whiteness that pressures refugee youth to acculturate and offers recommendations for intercultural learning and policy change to support their educational needs. The final article presents the doctoral research of Susana Jones, examining the challenges faced by Pacific clinical psychology students navigating training programmes in Aotearoa universities. Grounded in Fijian iTaukei and critical race methodologies, the article weaves together narratives of Pacific students whose presence is minoritised within predominant Eurocentric psychology.

We want to express our heartfelt thanks to the authors whose vision aligns with ours and who contributed to this issue. Ngā mihi ki a koe for sharing your expertise to help fill our kete (basket of knowledge), which we believe will be immensely valuable to the psychology community. Extended thanks to Prof Bridgette Masters-Awatere, Prof Siautu Alefaio-Tugia, Prof Pat Dudgeon, and Dr Shaystah Dean, who were involved in the initial conceptualisation of the special issue. Sincere thanks to Prof Marc Wilson and Vernica Pitt (Executive Director, New Zealand Psychological Society) for their guidance in administering this issue. If there are any pātai, questions, or suggestions on the special issue, please feel free to contact Prof Waitoki (moana.waitoki@waikato.ac.nz) and Dr Kyle Tan (k.tan@waikato.ac.nz).



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New Zealand Journal of Psychology

Volume 54, Number 3 (August), 2025

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