

2021 NSCBI Paakehaa/Tauiwi Caucus Conference Session and Future Directions

with Rebekah Graham, Kirsty Dempster-Rivett, and Samantha Patel



Figure 1: Clockwise from top left: Rebekah Graham, Samantha Patel, Kirsty Dempster-Rivett

Rebekah Graham (Paakehaa) is the National Executive Director for Parents of Vision Impaired NZ, a blind consumer group with Blind Low Vision NZ. In this role, Rebekah advocates strongly and consistently for inclusion, accessibility, and support for all, with a focus on the parents and whānau of a vision impaired child. A registered community psychologist, Rebekah is the current Chair of IComPA and has research interests in the area of food insecurity, disability, health, and community resilience. Contact: icompatchair@gmail.com

Samantha Patel (she/her) was trained in the UK as a Chartered Forensic Psychologist and came to New Zealand around 15 years ago. She has since become a Chartered Member of the Institute of Organisational Psychology (IOP). Samantha is currently self-employed, practising as a registered Psychologist. Her main focus is working with organisations to develop more diverse, equitable and inclusive cultures. Galvanised by the Black Lives Matter Movement she is actively increasing her work in the area of antiracism and antidiscrimination in the workplace.

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Kirsty Dempster-Rivett (Paakehaa) is the Professional Lead for Psychology at Waikato DHB and the current chair of the Institute of Clinical Psychology. Kirsty is a Clinical Psychologist who has a passion for the provision of equitable services for all peoples in Aotearoa. Kirsty's current focus is fostering the wellbeing and support of psychologists at all stages of development to in turn enhance the wellbeing of the people we walk alongside.

Kia ora taatou, this year was the 30th Anniversary of the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues (NSCBI). The NSCBI Paakehaa/Tauiwi caucus met at the Annual NZPsS Conference, as we do every year. This year, however, we met virtually via Zoom due to a nationwide move into Covid Level 4 as a response to uncontrolled transmission of the Delta variant. We had

31 people attend our 50 minute session for a highly worthwhile time of discussion and connection. Our only regret is that we didn't have longer to talk with each other! In the shift to an online Conference we utilised Zoom breakout rooms to facilitate conversation and discussion. This worked so well we are considering doing this more regularly. While Covid-related lockdowns are

not ideal, the online tools that we are becoming more familiar with will be useful in assisting us to connect with each other across the motu. We are aiming to hold more online events for psychologists around anti-racism and anti-racist practice over the upcoming months and through 2022 - watch this space!

Rebekah presented the NSCBI's core 5 values from the revised strategic plan. In doing so, she considered the ways in which we as Paakehaa and Tauwiwi can uphold and connect with each value:

- Taonga tuku iho: To protect and live by the values and skills passed down by our tūpuna
- Moemoeā: Having dreams and a vision of the future
- Rongo: Listening to our senses
- Whakapapa: Knowing who I come from
- Kotahitanga: Joining for a common purpose

Discussions on these values and the relevance to each of us were held in the breakout rooms - all agreed longer was needed!

Samantha took us through a short series of anti-racism education ending with the journey from the "Fear Zone" through the "Learning Zone" and into the "Growth Zone" (Figure 2). Discussion in breakout rooms identified this as a useful tool for self-assessment and reflection, so we have included it here for future reference and to support ongoing conversations with each other.

Lastly, Kirsty led a series of reflections on how we as Paakehaa and Tauwiwi can support and challenge each other to make our collective psychological practice actively anti-racist and supportive of change.

In the breakout rooms there was much discussion. A key takeaway



Figure 2: Becoming Anti-Racist. Source: www.surveymethods.com

was the discomfort of staying silent. Paakehaa in particular can find it hard or uncomfortable to say something or to challenge a colleague or an idea that is discriminatory/hurtful/racist in origin. However, staying silent is also uncomfortable – and leads to further harm and hurt for colleagues and clients alike.

Other key takeaways from our combined session were:

- Not being afraid to try and learn – failing forward is part of the journey too
- Being a bridge for others as they journey from discriminatory practice to being actively anti-racist
- Being a cattle prod – pushing the conversation and prodding others into action
- Asking questions like “Where does that idea come from?” can be a useful tool to prompt reflection and change

Those attending agreed that the discussion and connection was

useful. Our next steps are to work together to organise some more regular online discussion events. The ongoing lockdowns are hindering this somewhat - juggling work while everyone is all at home together 24/7 is a challenge! However, these complications aside, we see value in continuing to facilitate discussions and connection, particularly with regards to finding ways to support each other to do better, to be actively anti-racist, and improve our combined psychological practice. After the session, and as a facilitator group, we (Rebekah, Samantha, Kirsty) reflected on the use and understanding of the terms Paakehaa and Tauwiwi. What do they really mean? How do we use them? Do we utilise the terms in a helpful and inclusive way? How might we do better? This is a valuable discussion for us to continue having, and we will continue discussions with the wider NSCBI committee and include it in our ongoing conversations.

Our key aims and actions moving forward are listed below – as always, we are keen to keep in touch and to partner with those also interested in committing to an actively anti-racist practice. After all, anti-racist practise is less of an option and more of an obligation given our Code of Ethics and CPD requirements.

NSCBI Paakehaa/Tauwi Actions for 2021-2022

- Strategically highlight Paakehaa/Tauwi contributions to hostile working environments that alienate Māori
- Develop relationships with Anti-Racism groups and draw on their material for use in psychology.
- Intentionally promote Māori psychologies (e.g. books, webinars, articles) in social media and in wider NZPsS publications.

Key area 1: Online conversations and webinars

- Regular webinars/zooms with invited guests. This will be promoted via the NZPsS event site, the Connections newsletter, individual Institutes, and the NSCBI Paakehaa/Tauwi email list
- Well moderated online spaces for non-Māori practitioners to discuss Te Tiriti o Waitangi and biculturalism in their psychological practice.

Key area 2: NZPsS Annual Conference 2021 & 2022

- Paakehaa/Tauwi Caucus intentionally developed as a space for connection and conversation.

Key area 3: Writing and publications

- Proactively write a response to Wai2572 Claim by Michelle Levy (due to be heard late 2021).
- Develop training material and professional development for Paakehaa/Tauwi psychology practitioners relevant to bicultural and anti-racism practice in today's world.

It has been encouraging seeing the shift over the last 30 years. While there is much to be done, in reflecting on our respective journey's, we have observed increasing levels of understanding, as well as a willingness and openness from Paakehaa/Tauwi to actively engage with unpacking racism and in learning how to be better Treaty partners. This shift is encouraging and we look forward to progressing together in our respective psychological practices to further develop this progress. If you wish to register your interest in further NSCBI-related events, or in contributing to the organisation and promotion, you can email Rebekah on icompachair@gmail.com or you can contact any of the authors of

this piece via their contact details in their bio above. Alternatively, you can keep an eye on the NZPsS Events page on their website: <https://www.psychology.org.nz/events/nzps-events>



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Ted Glynn

Living the Treaty: Personal Reflections

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