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<b>Commentary: Ten Years of the Waikato Journal of Education</b> CLIVE MCGEE	3
<hr/>	
<b>Introduction to Special Section: Bodies in Motion: Sport, Health, Physical Activity and Physical Education</b> CLIVE C. POPE AND TONI BRUCE	7
<b>Commentary: Relecting and Asserting: Thoughts on a lengthy Career in Physical Education</b> BOB STOTHART	11
<b>Commentary: Physical Education as HPE: 'Rational' Reflections or Rueful Ruminations?</b> RICHARD TINNING	15
<b>Commentary: Evidence-based Practice in Health and Physical Education</b> DOUNE MACDONALD	21
<b>Commentary: School Physical Education: Reflections on Key Issues Shaping the Field</b> ALAN OVENS	27
<b>They're Not Doing Bad for their Age: Ageing, Leisure and Active Living</b> BEVAN C. GRANT	33
<b>Remnants of the Past, History and the Present</b> DOUGLAS BOOTH	51
<b>Challenges to State Physical Education: Tikanga Māori, Physical Education Curricula, Historical Deconstruction, Inclusivism and Decolonisation</b> BRENDAN HOKOWHITU	71
<b>The Indigenous Factor: The Role of Kapa Haka as a Culturally Responsive Learning Intervention</b> PAROA WHITINUI	85
<b>Whose Knowledge is of Most Worth? The Importance of Listening to the Voice of the Learner</b> MARGARET J. SCRATCHLEY	99

<b>The Ecology of Cooperative Learning in a High School Physical Education Programme</b>	
BEN DYSON AND KEVIN STRACHAN	117
<b>A Crucible of Competition and Cooperation: Where do the Concepts Fit in Recreation Activity Delivery?</b>	
DONNA E. LITTLE	141
<b>Knowing”What My Body Can Do”: Physical Moments in the Social Production of Physicality</b>	
MARTHA BELL	155
<b>Implementing a Game Sense Approach in Youth Sport Coaching: Challenges, Change and Resistance</b>	
RICHARD LIGHT	169
<b>Embodied Boarders: Snowboarding, Status and Style</b>	
HOLLY THORPE	181
<b>Playing to Win or Trying Your Best: Media Reprerations of National Anxieties over the Role of Sport Participation During the 2002 Commonwealth Games</b>	
EMMA H. WENSING, TONI BRUCE AND CLIVE POPE	203
<b>‘Tis Better to be Seen</b>	
RACHEL SAUNDERS	221
<b>Embodied Ways of Knowing</b>	
KAREN BARBOUR	227
<b>My Impossible Dream</b>	
JENNIFER L. WAGGONER	239
<hr/>	
<b>Improving Student Learning? Research Evidence About Teacher Feedback for Improvement in New Zealand Schools</b>	
GAYLE EYERS AND MARY HILL	251
<b>Policy Research and ‘Damaged Teachers’: Towards an Epistemologically Respectful Paradigm</b>	
JOHN SMYTH	263
<b>The Explanation of Social Differences in Reading Attainment: An Inspection of the PIRLS New Zealand Data</b>	
ROY NASH	283
<b>Juggling Priorities: A Comparison of Young and Mature Age Students’ Use of Time During Their First Semester of Teacher Education</b>	
PENNI CUSHMAN	299
<b>Children and Disability: Special or Included</b>	
KEITH BALLARD	315

# CHALLENGES TO STATE PHYSICAL EDUCATION: TIKANGA MĀORI, PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULA, HISTORICAL DECONSTRUCTION, INCLUSIVISM AND DECOLONISATION

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**ABSTRACT** *New Zealand State Physical Education is soon to enter into a new phase, as the early stages of writing a new curriculum begin. This article is timely, therefore, because it provides four challenges that need to be addressed if the incoming curriculum writers are to right the wrongs of the previous scribes and if physical educators are to develop Māori-inclusive pedagogies. The challenges include; deconstructing the historical discourse; the sharing of decision-making power with Māori in the development of curricula; the integration of Māori-defined tikanga into curricula; and the decolonisation of physical educators.*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a serious disparity between what Māori parents desire for their children from State education and what is currently being provided. In 2000, Tariana Turia, the then Associate Minister for Education, asked why Māori should continue to support an education system that has constantly failed them. Such cynicism appears warranted; most Māori researchers regard the current, supposedly inclusive educational initiatives in curricula areas such as health and physical education (i.e., Te Reo Kori and the New Zealand Health and Physical Education Curriculum, 2001 [NZHPEC]), as disempowering for Māori. Ms Turia's challenge was not groundbreaking. However, initiated nearly 30 years ago, the *kōhanga reo* (Māori total-immersion language nests) and *kura kaupapa* (Māori total-immersion primary and secondary-schools) movements were born out of the realisation by Māori parents that mainstream education was failing their children. For the majority of Māori students, however, State education continues to determine their schooling experience, as many Māori parents either persist in allowing their children to remain in State classrooms or are forced to, given there is simply not enough *kōhanga reo* and *kura kaupapa* to accommodate the demand. Hence, while the majority of Māori children continue to be State educated, inclusive curricula must be developed and mainstream educators must transform their pedagogies if State education's failure to educate Māori is to be addressed.

New Zealand State physical education prides itself on including *tikanga Māori* (Māori culture) within its curricula. The following *kōrero* (discussion) disputes such a discourse, and describes four challenges facing physical educationists that need to be faced if Māori-inclusive curricula are to be achieved. The challenges include; deconstructing the historical discourse; the sharing of decision-making power with Māori in the development of curricula; the

integration of Māori defined tikanga Māori into curricula; and the decolonisation of physical educators. Although this article focuses on New Zealand physical education, its principles could be applied to any subject area where inclusivism is an issue.

### CHALLENGING THE DOMINANT HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

The racist discourse becomes silent but is nevertheless embodied (or institutionalised) in the continuation of exclusionary practices... one assesses not the consequences of actions but the history of discourse in order to demonstrate that prior to the silence, a racist discourse was present (Miles, 1989, p. 85).

First and foremost, physical educationists must disregard the myth that their profession has an inclusive history with Māori. Physical educators need to reclaim their history, whether good or bad, as Anne Salmond suggests:

One of the things I think that I've learnt from spending such a lot of time in Maori contexts is accepting my ancestors, warts and all. You can get a kind of apologetic attitude to things that happened in the past, and get kind of guilt-ridden – you know, beat me up because I'm Pakeha. But that's not the way I feel at all. I think you recognise your ancestors, and try and understand who they were in their period. But that cuts the same for Maori as well. (cited in Braunias, 2003, p. 11)

The discourse of inclusion that began with and continues to surround Professor Philip Smithells, the inaugural Dean of the University of Otago – School of Physical Education (UofOSPE) – Dunedin, has created the falsehood that physical educationists have enjoyed an empathetic relationship with Māori. While this discourse developed, the reality did not. Prior to the introduction of Te Reo Kori (see discussion below), there had been no formal State physical education initiative inclusive of tikanga Māori for over 40 years. Yet, for many physical educationists, Te Reo Kori was in keeping with an imaginary tradition of a strong Māori component within the State defined curricula. For instance, Ralph Walker (1995) suggests Te Reo Kori gave Physical Education “a unique opportunity to lead New Zealand Education towards the year 2000... [it is through the] promotion of cultural identity that physical education has shown the most significant direction” (pp. 19-20). Similarly, Bob Stothart (1992) locates Te Reo Kori within the context of a 50-year-old relationship with Māori movement: “The great and gentle Philip Smithells intuitively recognised the importance of Māori movement during the 1940s... New Zealand physical education publications have consistently carried a Maori dimension resulting directly from Smithells early interest” (p. 4). Likewise, Mike Boyes (1998) of the UofOSPE paints a picture of a durable relationship between physical education and tikanga Māori:

For nearly 60 years Physical Education teachers have taken a strong interest in Māori physical activities. Philip Smithells in the 1940s actively promoted the collection and valuing of these activities and for decades New Zealand school children have enjoyed and been challenged by learning through this movement context. (p. 1)

In contrast, Bruce Ross (1998) laments on the condition of physical education in New Zealand:

Te Reo Kori is not new, the ideas in the 1998 Draft Curriculum on Health and Physical Education are not new – Philip Smithells advocated similar notions since the mid 40s. So let us not be smug about the progress as we reflect on 50 years of University Physical Education in New Zealand and a ‘new’ curriculum. (p. 3)

Ross correctly reminds us that Te Reo Kori and the ‘new’ curriculum are simply re-inventions of what Smithells introduced half a century ago; but what exactly did Smithells introduce?

### **Philip Smithells**

Phillip Smithells is generally heralded as the person who led the crusade to introduce tikanga Māori into State physical education. In reality, Smithells merely reproduced Māori physical activities via recognisable western definitions. According to Burrows (2000), two dominant discourses surrounded physical education in the 1940s. The first was a child-centred, problem-solving approach, emphasising “freer, less dictatorial modes of teaching and the promotion of human creativity” (p. 187). This discourse is clearly evident in Smithells’ assessment of Māori physical practices: “The simpler type of Maori rhythmical activity should become a basic part of physical education... it will give a new type of exhilaration, pleasure, and refreshment that every one may experience... these games are fun to learn (Philip Smithells’ Papers, year unknown, p. 205). The second discourse emphasised the progressive scientisation of physical education and the “categoris[ation], measure[ment] and control [of] body movement (Burrows, 2000, p. 188). In an article written by Smithells entitled ‘Maori Rhythm’, again the confining of tikanga Māori through western definitions is apparent: “The bending of the knees in the Maori form gives a better pelvic position than the usual formal position with straight legs... A detailed anatomical analysis of all the positions used in Maori activities shows that the positions used are corrective and developmental ones” (1941, Inset). The point of this discussion is not to bemoan Smithells’ recognition of Māori practices, nor to suggest that he should have understood tikanga Māori. Indeed, Smithells stepped outside the parameters that confined his academic contemporaries by at least recognising some value in Māori exercises; yet, he appreciated only the rudimentary functions, while ignoring their cultural underpinnings. Māori researcher Peter ‘Te Rangihiroa’ Buck alerts us to the fact that no cultural practice can survive in a decontextualised vacuum:

The old Māori games have practically disappeared and have been replaced by games learnt from Pakeha children... Tops have survived because they are used by European children but the old chants which accompanied them have been forgotten. Adults no longer take interest in them because the social usages with which they were connected have died out. Kites, if they exist at all, take the Pakeha form of construction, and the priests who used them for divination are extinct as a class. (1949, p. 250)

What Smithells imparted into mainstream curricula and what was to be the trend in physical education and education in general, was not tikanga Māori – it was merely a few Māori words and actions, while Māori themselves saw no point in

pursuing activities that lacked the other essential elements which, if combined, formed a holistic philosophy. The least important aspect of Māori physical activities was the physical. Incantations and stories that surrounded these activities allowed for the regeneration of whakapapa (genealogy) and tikanga.<sup>1</sup>

In actuality, Annette Golding was the first mainstream physical educator to argue that Māori physical practices had more to offer than just rhythm or movement experience. Her arguments were based on reasons unapparent in general education until the implementation of Taha Māori in 1984:

Maori activities represent a story of a people in the past and in the present, and some knowledge of one enriches the other. The haka or stick game, which is linked with a legend or historical event of the past, can take on new meaning for the Pakeha or Maori pupil... Maori activities can extend the child's inter-racial interest, knowledge and respect. In this deeper treatment of the topic then, the physical educator has an opportunity to justify one of the claims of his profession, that through the physical we can educate. (1959, p. 3)

Golding recognised that Māori physical activities presented a chance to learn more than merely skills, and for Pākehā to improve their understanding of Māori culture. Unfortunately, Golding employed Elsdon Best's categorisation system and, consequently, represented tikanga Māori as relics of an ancient race.<sup>2</sup> I highlight Golding's description here for it provides an early example of the good intent that physical educators have had towards inclusion of tikanga Māori, but it also demonstrates that good intent does not temper misrepresentations of culture.

### **Taha Māori and Te Reo Kori**

Taha Māori was initiated in 1975 with the aim of integrating Māori culture into "the philosophy, the organisation and the content of the school" (New Zealand Department of Education, 1984, p. 1), and was to be composite of "traditional institutions, customs and art forms" (Simon, 1990, p. 187). In reality, Taha Māori was tokenistic; as evidenced in the Department of Education's list of Māori culture suitable for the school environment: "A formal powhiri to visitors to the school, a Maori contribution to school assemblies, school representations at death observances, the careful and accurate pronunciation of Maori names by students and staff, the use of Maori greetings when appropriate, and the use of Maori designs and art forms in the school environment" (1984, p. 33). It could be argued that Taha Māori promoted the advancement of Māori because Pākehā became more cognisant of things Māori, yet, many researchers maintain that the content of Taha Māori was so simplistic and lacking context, that it only served to damage the image of Māori culture as a vital entity (Bishop, 1996; Harker, 1990; Harker & McConnochie, 1985; Smith, 1990, 1991; Mead, 1996; Smith, 1999).

The movement/physical education based initiative of Taha Māori was Te Reo Kori; comprising movement "appropriate for all students and teachers in New Zealand schools to share... [including] Maori performing arts and games" (Walker, 1995, p. 21). Te Reo Kori was written into the 1987 syllabus, piloted in 1988 and implemented in 1992. The Guide to Success (1987), which accompanied the new syllabus, outlined how "Physical Education can help ensure that the school climate and environment reflect the rich cultural diversity of New Zealand Society. In this process, the culture of Maori, the Tangata Whenua has a central role" (p. 10). Like

Taha Māori in general, Te Reo Kori was touted as bicultural and inclusive of tikanga Māori. Andy Fraser, a former leader of Te Reo Kori tertiary workshops, suggested “New Zealand has long been regarded internationally as a society which has embraced biculturalism and is well along the path to multiculturalism” and, accordingly, Te Reo Kori would fulfil the “cultural identity needs and self-worth of Maori students... [providing] Maori students to access traditional practices, values and knowledge” (Fraser, 1999, pp. 1-2).

Although little research has examined the outcomes of Te Reo Kori for Māori, what has been found is consistent with the research on Taha Māori. Palmer (2000) ascertained from her research with Māori female secondary-school students that Te Reo Kori was more advantageous for Pākehā students than for Māori already versed in tikanga: “Girls who identified with Maori culture strongly... had more reserved reactions to the Te Reo Kori lessons”; typical reactions included: “I think it was a waste of time. I didn’t really learn anything from it,” and “I think these [Te Reo Kori] lessons are worthwhile for the Pākehās... and Māori who don’t know it. A bit boring for those who already know it” (2000, pp. 210-211, p. 294). Correspondingly, Finch (1996) found that Te Reo Kori was most beneficial to the “student who has no link with Tikanga Māori” (p. 21). Similar to the critics of Taha Māori, I therefore question the value of Te Reo Kori to both Māori and Pākehā for it is undemanding to those already versed in tikanga and misrepresents Māori culture as overly simplistic for others; by definition it is based on a level of instruction that allows teachers and students to easily manage a culture that, for most, is largely alien.

### Discourse and Reality

Returning to the central point of this section (i.e., that the discourse of inclusion does not meld with the reality), personally, not once was I taught Māori physical education content in the 20 years I was a student in the New Zealand education system, including seven years as a UofOSPE student. Legge (1996) makes comments to the same effect: “I don’t recall any significant aspects of Maori culture in my primary or secondary schooling” (pp. 10-11). Similarly, kaumātua (respected elders) and pakeke (adults) in my doctoral thesis do not remember physical education as inclusive towards things Māori. One pakeke found at her Hawkes Bay boarding school that

there was no appreciation for Māori beliefs. We would tell the teachers that we had our period, but they would say, ‘well I don’t care; technology has made tampax so you can go swimming.’ There was no recognition of the significance of menstruation to the Māori culture. And so if you refused to swim you were sent to the Principal’s office.  
(Hokowhitu, 2002, p. 210)

Another pakeke believed Māori philosophies were given little or no credence in State physical education curricula. At primary school she was introduced to just one aspect of tikanga Māori – a stick-song game: “The teacher did not tell us it was a Māori game, however. I can remember running home with my sister highly excited because I got the prize for having ‘rhythm.’ In my intermediate and college years all we learnt was poi. And that was the extent of the curriculum” (Hokowhitu, 2002, p. 175). Some 30 years earlier, a kaumātua recalls his experiences of tikanga Māori within UofOSPE as limited and highly dependent on



student involvement and the presence of a Māori lecturer: “We had some Māori content in our courses. There were stick games and poi - I taught the odd action song, waiata and haka... There was a time after Muru Walters stopped teaching the Māori tanga course that there was little to no Māori content taught at all” (Hokowhitu, 2002, pp. 225-6).

The above discussion is provided to challenge the assumptions that many physical educators take for granted, namely, that physical education has a history of inclusiveness towards things Māori. I do not make this statement to merely prove a point, however; it is critical that physical educationists cease justifying the inclusion of tikanga Māori based on a history of exclusionary practices. In describing a history of inclusion, by implication this suggests existing structures are culturally appropriate and, thus, only have to be tweaked to improve. Such gestures merely serve to justify the continuance of similar tokenistic practices.

## **DECISION-MAKING POWER**

Many Pākehā view the Treaty as an archaic document that Māori are using to hold them to ransom. But, as Ted Glynn (1998) argues, “Māori have long regarded it as a charter for power-sharing in the decision making process” (p. 3). Glynn (1998) highlights Article 2 (a) as recognising the right of Māori to define, protect, promote and control all of their treasures and resources, including pedagogy and epistemology. The Article, therefore, addresses issues of curriculum development, teaching methods and educational research. In other words, if Māori students are to be serviced by State education then their elders have the right to make joint decisions about their schooling. For physical education, one of the most important goals should be to promote Māori at all levels of policy and curricula development; an inclusive curricula will only emerge when there is a partnership in decision-making, as the discussion which follows demonstrates through deconstructing the writing process of the current NZHPEC.

### **The New Zealand Health and Physical Education Curriculum (2001)**

Ian Culpan and Gillian Tasker, the principal writers of the NZHPEC, reveal how those placed in positions of power are able to misrepresent ‘Other’ cultures by making them align with existing western models, and then ‘re-present’ them as empowering. Tasker makes frequent references to post-modernism, but the jargon seems to be just that, jargon and, moreover, misrepresented. Both writers describe students as subliminally oppressed beneath hegemonic curricula, which are clearly Gramscian (i.e., modernist) notions. The new curriculum, from their perspective, would conscientise students who “have difficulties recognising how hegemonic political and economic interests shape and mould the values of our world” (Culpan, 1998, p. 6). Tasker (1996) describes the curriculum as ‘emancipatory’ in that it helps students and teachers

understand the social processes and relationships that dominate our practices... enabl[ing] learners to participate in a broad range of learning experiences that can empower them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to enhance personal identity and health status... [involving] a Freirian concept of empowerment. (p. 193)

As an academic, I question the misuse of theoretical jargon but, more importantly as a Māori, I question the validity of hegemonic and emancipatory theories. Emancipatory theories assume that the oppressed lack cognisance of their subjugation (i.e., because oppression works at the subconscious level). The essential aim of an emancipatory epistemology is to enlighten or empower the exploited. Such theory is elitist; it assumes that only those in power can fully understand the nature of power and how it oppresses. Many Māori fully realise their oppression and have the mental tools to empower themselves, but have been limited access to the kinds of power that allows them to make decisions about their own and their children's futures.

Tasker and Culpan, while espousing empowering rhetoric, actually disempowered Māori by falsely representing tikanga Māori. In 1995, 15 writers (two of whom were Māori) were selected to aid the principal writers in forming the NZHPEC. The Māori 'informants' presented Māori perspectives of health and physical education to the principal writers. As the process advanced beyond the early research stages to the actual writing of a curriculum, however, Māori involvement ceased. Not surprisingly, the tikanga Māori became diluted from that point on. Prior to the first draft of the NZHPEC, Tasker (1996) acknowledged Mason Durie's description of hauora (ambiguously defined as 'total-wellbeing'; literally meaning life-breath) in his Tapa Wha (four sided) model as containing "four interwoven cornerstones" (p. 188) (i.e., taha wairua [the spiritual aspect], taha hinengaro [the mental aspect], taha tinana [the physical aspect] and taha whānau [the social relationship aspect]). Tasker also recognised that Durie's conceptualisation included whenua as a vital component. Yet, the definition of hauora contained in the NZHPEC draft presented the following year made no mention of whenua. The preference of the Tapa Wha model over, for instance, the Ngā Pou Mana (four supports) model described by Durie (1998) as containing "an indisputable land base (turangawaewae)" (p. 74) calls into question the curriculum writers' motives.

Although Durie's Tapa Wha model inherently recognises taha whenua it does not explicitly state whenua as a cornerstone. Rather the inclusion of whenua is implicit, just as land implicitly holds up the four sides of a house. Unfortunately, the majority of physical education teachers will not comprehend the distinction and, accordingly, the notion of whenua will be largely overlooked. George Salter (1999) challenges the omission: "Removal of whenua as a key dimension of holistic health and total well-being in conceptualising hauora in the new HPE curriculum... raises questions about the authenticity of representation" (p. 8). Why the omission? Although speculative, it is probable that the connection between health and land did not align with the writer's western model of holistic health and, consequently, it was simply omitted. This suggests that the Māori words ascribed to Culpan and Tasker's model were only present to portray an image of inclusion. Also, how could Ministry of Education employees, representing the New Zealand Government, acknowledge the importance of land to Māori, given historical and contemporary land grievances? Such an admission would suggest that the return of their land is crucial for Māori total well-being. The reality for Māori was a diluted model that literally removed the ground upon which it stood; confirming Young's (1971) description of power through definitional control: "If we take the notion of control to involve the 'imposition of meaning', when members construct definitions of situations in which the constraints are in part the definition of others then [there will be] discrepancies between ideals and actualities" (p. 4).

Moreover, Māori were of the opinion that hauora was not the most appropriate concept upon which to base a health and physical education curriculum. In 1998, after consulting with Māori, Vicki-Marie McGaughran, the National Administrator for Physical Education New Zealand (PENZ) argued for the replacement of hauora with an alternative central tenet; mauri:

It is the opinion of our Roopu Maori... that the concept of Mauri is more appropriate to convey the notion of total well-being. Hauora embraces health, and Te Reo Kori embraces physical education... We urge you to reconsider the construction of the diagram and to embrace the concept of Mauri... the parent word for Hauora and Te Reo Kori.

The advice was not heeded.

The essential lesson we can learn from the process described above is the redefinition of inclusivism. As it is commonly applied in this context, inclusivism means 'consultation with Māori', whereas if valid Māori cultural concepts are sought, inclusivism requires Māori to be integral to the process, especially, where decisions are made. Māori need to be included as principal writers and not just as informants; seizing a few words from Māori informants and/or decontextualising a Māori model so it conforms to western constructs does not constitute inclusivism! Ironically, while Tasker (1996) describes the curriculum document as being underpinned by the Freirian concept of empowerment, I would argue that the document has more relevance to the Freirian concepts of 'false generosity' and 'cultural invasion': "In this phenomenon, the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group... they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression" (Freire, 1996, p. 133).

#### **INTEGRATING TIKANGA MĀORI IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULA**

The third pathway towards creating physical education pedagogies that are inclusive of things Māori, is the integration of Māori defined tikanga into curricula. A precursor of this process is for physical educators to challenge their previously held perceptions of what physical education means from a Māori perspective. New Zealanders, in general, imagine Māori to be inherently 'physical.' This misnomer stems from a genealogical stereotype that has its origins in modernism's Cartesian Dualism (i.e., the mind/body split) where, in the New Zealand context, the passionate and barbaric Māori provided/s an allegorical contrast to the rational and civilised Pākehā European.<sup>3</sup> The representation of Māori as a physical people was reinforced by Philip Smithells' coinage of the phrase 'Māori Rhythm;' a notion that still remains in the ideas of physical education commentators such as Walker (1995) who proposed Te Reo Kori to be the "mastery of basic Māori movement, not about performance of treasured taonga" (1995, p. 22), and Salter (1999) who advocates "the basic movement patterns and skills" as the "foundation of our work, rather than the attempted rigid duplication of traditional cultural performance" (p. 20). Walker and Salter's propositions are no advancement on Smithells' belief in the inherent value of 'Māori rhythm.'

Here I reiterate an earlier point that Māori physical education will hold less (or no) value to a student if it is taught in a cultural vacuum. If physical practices

are not shown to be philosophically underpinned, then a student has every right to question their validity and relevance. One pakeke I interviewed illustrates this point, describing the teaching of Te Reo Kori to tertiary students as complicit in confirming prejudice towards tikanga Māori: "Real damage can be done to students' perceptions when you teach Māori culture through naughts and crosses, and use rolled up magazines as sticks" (Hokowhitu, 2002, p. 181). Overly simplistic versions of tikanga Māori merely confirm for those students, already sceptical of the inclusion of Māori culture, of the irrelevance of tikanga Māori to 'modern' society. When Maureen Legge coordinated a Te Reo Kori programme for teacher education students she faced "a certain amount of student resistance," which she partly attributed to the content of the course being "too immature"; students found it difficult "to see the credibility of Te Reo Kori" (1996, p. 12). A kaumātua I interviewed asserted, "students must come out with a meaningful understanding of physical activity from a Māori perspective. Otherwise we are just dropping containers on a ship - some will be chucked overboard and some will remain, but with no real point" (Hokowhitu, 2002, p. 226). Tikanga Māori, therefore, must be presented as meaningful, complex and challenging to students if it is to be valued. One pakeke argued that Māori content must be grounded in meaning for it to be accepted:

Kids will not take anything on board if there is no substance. If it is just a change of words from English to Māori, the exercise is pointless. For example, a Māori teacher taught a group of boys the haka, 'Ka Mate', giving the meaning behind each word. It was the first time the boys had been told what the haka was about, even though they had heard it all their lives. By the end of the lesson the boys were performing it with a lot more passion and conviction. (Hokowhitu, 2002, p. 179)

## DECOLONISING PHYSICAL EDUCATORS

The fourth avenue towards Māori inclusive physical education practices is to decolonise teachers. That is, to engender in teachers a belief that Māori culture has something to offer 'modern' society; for, if teachers and potential teachers are not decolonised, then the previous three pathways become blocked. Teacher resistance to teaching tikanga Māori surfaces in various defence positions. Boyes (1998) suggests that resistance to Te Reo Kori stemmed from a "lack [of] necessary skills, cultural background and mana to teach these aspects" (p. 1). Similarly, Walker (1995) argued that teachers opposed Te Reo Kori because they were concerned "about teaching something Maori incorrectly" and opening themselves to criticism (p. 21). Palmer (2000) also found that "the teachers' level of competence in te reo Māori (Māori language) and level of understanding of Māori culture continued to be viewed as a barrier too difficult to overcome... They described the feeling of being 'self-conscious' and 'uncomfortable'" (p. 214). Likewise, Salter (1999) believes teacher rejection of Te Reo Kori came from "uncertainty and unease" and "fear of contravening cultural propriety" (p. 20). Aren't these all merely excuses, however, for a deeper resistance and aversion for tikanga Māori?

Many physical educators have been deceived into believing that tikanga Māori has nothing to offer them because it is savage and primitive; essentially, they have a false consciousness that needs to be deconstructed, not only so they can enjoy a more culturally enriching life but, more importantly, so their students can. At the core of the resistance to things Māori are the egalitarian beliefs

inherent to the psyche of mainstream New Zealanders; beliefs that Māori have been so keenly reminded of recently through the success of Don Brash's 'one nation' rhetoric. One of the political tools Brash uses is to play on the dominant doctrine that tikanga Māori should not be preferentially treated within mainstream contexts; a belief synonymous with the concept that Pākehā cultural practices are 'normal' and thus ubiquitously non-discriminatory. One pakeke I interviewed illustrates the resistance many physical educators have to tikanga Māori through an experience she had with the head of a secondary-school physical education department:

Like most physical educators she was conservative and had a 'level playing field' philosophy. That is, she thought everyone should be treated equally because people were given the same opportunities in life. If people came from tough backgrounds, then she believed they had to 'train harder to win the race.' Consequently, she resented Te Reo Kori. She could not understand why Māori culture was part of the general curriculum. But I believe all that talk was a smokescreen – it was her own lack of knowledge that threatened her. She was used to being the one in control, the one with the knowledge... It was disconcerting that one person could have such a negative effect on the student's beliefs about Māori physical activity (Hokowhitu, 2002, pp. 179-80).

Such attitudes stem from a belief in the superiority of dominant forms of knowledge over alternative epistemologies, and a resoluteness by those within the dominant group to clasp on to the power that the privileged position their knowledge affords them. Essentially, such non-inclusive beliefs derive from paranoia that if one acknowledges even the possibility of viewing the world in an alternative way, then one also relinquishes their power-base. A kaumātua I interviewed reinforces these points: "There are a lot of people out there that think the movement we are part of is about hating Pākehā people because it is presented through the media in a bad light. They see us as land grabbers or as militants - 'Māori want this, Māori want that.'" Bhabha (1968) believes such paranoia derives from the coloniser's inwardly outward gaze upon the 'Other', contending that "there is a narcissistic demand for colonial objects and when the narcissistic demand is refused, paranoia occurs: the coloniser perceives that the colonized hates him" (cited Sarup, 1996, p. 161). Many Pākehā perceive Māori refusal to accept subservience as threatening their accumulation of cultural capital, and veil their paranoia behind slogans such as 'one New Zealand for all New Zealanders.'

Yet, regardless of deeper attitudinal resistance, professional physical educators should, when struggling with a component of the curriculum, have the ability to critically analyse and then ratify their pedagogy and, if necessary, upskill. In the case of existing teachers, Walker (1995) rightly stresses the importance of the Māori concept of learning, tuakana/teina, for the promotion of tikanga Māori in schools. That is, where the elder accepts s/he can concurrently be taught by the youth. To be successful, such a teaching style requires the teacher to forgo traditional authoritarian leadership roles. Masters (1995) demonstrates how Te Reo Kori programmes can employ this model effectively:

The biggest lesson has been, you don't need to be an expert to provide the opportunity... these girls certainly taught me a thing or two. "No Miss try it like this"... [they] soon became the teachers... As a teacher I bowed to their superior knowledge and skill levels... students who have been in your Phys Ed class all year putting in about 50 percent effort,

suddenly participate, they perform and they are very good! (They may have skills you didn't know were there). These are great discoveries and should be given due recognition... We as teachers are facilitators. (p. 18)

The decolonisation of Pākehā through learning tikanga Māori is a crucial step towards enriching Māori lives, as one pakeke points out: "If they want to step out of their safety zones... I think that is awesome. To me it means one less ignorant person we have to deal with" (Hokowhitu, 2002, p. 216).

## CONCLUSION

Plainly, the failure of State education to appropriately educate Māori reflects a general ineptitude of tertiary institutes to adequately educate teachers who are able to provide contextually driven curricula. Thus, it is at the tertiary level that one pakeke believes perceptions have to change: "If it does not start here it is not going to start anywhere. Once people become teachers it is too late. Even though the head of [a secondary-school] department attended a lot of Te Reo Kori workshops, she still resisted the idea of bicultural education" (Hokowhitu, 2002, p. 180). New Zealand teachers are invariably asked to represent their profession within Māori contexts (often where a significant proportion of students are Māori), yet many tertiary institutions remain content producing graduates who have little to no knowledge of tikanga Māori. In 2001, for the first time in UofOSPE history, a paper (Akoranga Whakakori) was offered which focussed entirely on Māori physical education and sport. As a PhD student I developed and taught this course, with the intent of breaking down the misperceptions that students held pertaining to Māori, Māori physicality and Māori physical education. It was wonderful to see the change in many of the students; sceptical at first they realised that through various forms of institutionalised racism, they had held misperceptions about tikanga Māori, which had served to limit the way they conceptualised and interacted with things Māori.

At the recent PENZ conference held in Wellington, September 2004, it became apparent to me how vital the omission of whenua from the NZHPEC cornerstones was for both Māori and Pākehā physical education teachers and students. The concept of whenua not only identifies Māori as tangata whenua (people of the land), it also recognises the input that Pākehā have had to each geographical context. Essentially, the inclusion of whenua within the NZHPEC would have enabled physical education teachers to provide a contextually driven pedagogy, so that the 'place' (including its demography and cultural history) where one's school is situated gives the grounding for the curriculum delivered; a pedagogy that New Zealand's changing social milieu not only invites but demands. A physical education teacher from Gore, for example, must be given the pedagogical tools to enter into the context of South Auckland; tools, which may include the tuakana/teina concept described above, where the 'traditional' approach is abandoned for a pedagogy that recognises and values the knowledge that the surrounding whenua and its community is able to provide. For me, this example highlights the four central challenges that I have outlined in this article. Physical educators need to face this challenge if they are going to accept and cherish curricula inclusive of tikanga Māori.

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## NOTES

- 1 For further discussion on Māori philosophies of physical education and Smithells see Hokowhitu, B. (2002) and Hokowhitu, B. (2003).
- 2 For further discussion on Elsdon Best's categorisation of Māori 'Games and Pastimes' see Hokowhitu, B. (2002), Chapter 2.
- 3 For further discussion on the stereotype of Māori physicality see Hokowhitu, B. (2002), (2003), (2003: a), (2003: b) and (2004).



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