Developing Partnerships in Research:
Pākehā Researchers and Māori Research

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RUNNING HEAD: Developing partnerships in research

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This paper discusses the roles that Pākehā researchers might play in Māori research. It is not a guidebook for Pākehā researchers that will guarantee them entry into Māori communities. Rather, the paper examines a series of issues that researchers should be aware of if they are to be culturally safe in their research practice and of benefit to Māori. Some of these issues will naturally apply to any researcher working with any community. However, the loudest voice at the moment is that of the bewildered Pākehā researcher who wants to engage in research with and for Māori but is uncertain what this means, let alone where to begin.

In this paper I examine how research partnerships might operate and, more specifically, how Māori research by Pākehā might be transformed from research on Māori to research for Māori. The paper provides an overview of how Māori research by non-Māori has been largely conducted in the past and a proposal for more 'partnership' research. In using the term ‘partnership’ research I acknowledge that partnership is the aim and that the process is often a series of more complicated negotiations between those who are parties to the research. Within this process issues such as representation, collaboration, empowerment and reciprocity must be addressed so that a common understanding is reached between parties who can then give their informed consent to be involved in the research process. As stated above, this is not a definitive statement on this topic; rather it is a contribution to the ongoing discussion and debate in this area.

Research on Māori
Research on, with, and/or for people involves the gathering of information which may be done for its own sake but is often done with a view to informing resource allocation and facilitating control (even if these tasks are carried out by a third party, other than the researcher). Research is therefore about power (Te Awekotuku, 1991).

There have been a stream of Pākehā social scientists who have seen Māori communities as research prospects. Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (1991: 12) describes this as '...many decades - even centuries - of thoughtless, exploitative, mercenary academic objectification.'

Māori now recognise the political implications of this research. Even when 'scientists' claim that there are no biases in their research, it is the scientists who have constructed the research questions, who have decided how the data is to be collected, who have decided which statistical tests to apply to the data, and, in a lot of cross-cultural research, it is Māori who are constructed as deficit when compared to a Pākehā population. It is Māori who are informed that they do not quite come up to scratch on what are described as universal, objective norms. This is partly a product of scientific objectivity whereby social problems are

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3 Others have written useful guidelines for Māori researchers, see for example, Durie (1996), Irwin (1994), Smith, L. (1996).
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studied in isolation from their historical, social and cultural context. As Hohepa and McNaughton (1993: 40) note, 'researchers...tend to uncritically confuse ethnocentricity with a notion of objectivity by using 'reliable' and 'valid' psychological instruments which conceptually and empirically are based on one sociocultural group and its context.'

Many Pākehā researchers have built their careers on the backs of Māori – their research has satisfied the criteria set by Pākehā institutions but offered nothing back to the Māori community in return. Linda Smith (1992) talks of Pākehā researchers as 'willing bedfellows of assimilationist, victim-blaming policies.' Much of the research on Māori is merely descriptive; telling us what we already know. We know about the low socio-economic status of Māori, the high crime and imprisonment rates, the high unemployment and low educational attainments. The explanations for these problems and the solutions that are proposed are then invariably individualistic with change being seen as needing to occur within the individual rather than within society (Kidder & Fine, 1986). Is it any wonder then that Māori communities are wary and weary of Pākehā researchers?

Over the past two to three decades some disciplines have become more aware of the issues involved when Pākehā seek to undertake Māori research. Perhaps not surprisingly, these disciplines, such as Social Anthropology, Education, Sociology, have been in the Arts and Humanities rather than the sciences. The discussions that have taken place within these disciplines are reflected in revised codes of ethics and in a commitment to train Māori researchers. However, when I go into a Māori community and hear the talk of their experiences with Pākehā researchers, I realise that there is still much scope for discussion, debate and change.

Māori and knowledge

For Māori, the purpose of knowledge is to uphold the interests and mana of the group; it serves the community. Researchers are not building up their own status; they are fighting for the betterment of their iwi and for Māori people in general. "The Māori did not think of himself, or anything to do with his own gain. He thought only of his people, and was absorbed in his whanau, just as the whanau was absorbed in the hapu, and the hapu in the iwi" (Makareti, 1938).

Because of the strong oral tradition in Māori society, knowledge was never universally available. The tapu (sacred) nature of knowledge also meant that when it was entrusted to individuals it was transmitted accurately and used appropriately. Thus ethical practice was ensured as was the survival and prosperity of the group and the maintenance of its mana (status) (L. Smith, 1992; Te Awekotuku, 1991).

Colonisation has not necessarily eroded this tradition. Many Māori believe 'that there is a uniquely Māori way of looking at the world of learning' (L. Smith, 1992). Thus Māori research that is for Māori and carried out by Māori will probably be premised on a unique ontological and epistemological base. Presently, however, the dominance of Pākehā history and culture means that Māori forms of knowledge are often seen to lack 'mainstream' legitimacy, being
positioned as 'non-scientific' and 'other' (Waipara-Panapa, 1995). This reflects the limitations of prevailing research methodologies; however changes to our research practice, especially in the direction of partnership research, can go some way to addressing this issue.

In addition, the process of presenting claims to the Waitangi Tribunal has meant that many Māori have been able to reclaim tribal knowledge. This has also been accompanied by a growing awareness among Māori of the role of research. The three principles embedded in the Treaty of Waitangi, that guaranteed Māori protection, partnership and participation, have particular importance for research. There is also the implicit need within research to parallel some of the intent of the Waitangi Tribunal, namely working to acknowledge past grievances. It may not be possible in a research context to compensate for the transgressions of other researchers. However, we should all be aware of the often negative impact of their research practice on Māori, as it affects the relationships that both Pākehā and Māori researchers are working to build with Māori communities.

Who can do Māori research?
What role should social science researchers therefore adopt with respect to Māori knowledge (if there is a role) and is there a place for Pākehā researchers? Attempting to carry out cross-cultural research within a positivist paradigm is extremely problematic as the researcher's own social, historical and cultural background is left unnamed; they are viewed as objective scientists. However, a researcher's implicit values invariably influence their choice of research problems, how research questions are framed, how research is conducted and how findings are interpreted. Often a piece of research will speak more to what the researcher is like that telling us about the participants.

Evelyn Stokes (1985: 9), in her report to the Social Sciences Committee of the National Research Advisory Council, writes that 'researchers [working in a Māori context] may be Māori or Pākehā. That racial or biological origin or skin colour is less important. What is important and essential is that the researcher can operate comfortably in both cultures, is bicultural and preferably bilingual.' Naturally it will be easier for a Māori researcher to fulfil these criteria although some Pākehā are bicultural and well versed in the Māori language. However Waipara-Panapa (1995: 56) argues that Stokes' viewpoint reinforces the facade of 'objectivity'. That is, these are the skills a researcher needs to find out the 'truth' about Māori; discounting the importance of the researchers' own value system.

There remains a lot of debate about the appropriateness of Pākehā researcher involvement in Māori research. Harry Walker (1990) argues strongly that there is no place for Pākehā researchers; that Māori research must be conducted by researchers of Māori descent. Paul Stanley (1995, personal communication) has likewise stated that the best thing Pākehā researchers can do for Māori is to 'step aside'. One basis of these arguments is that Pākehā will never understand Māori and therefore will be unable to carry out valid research design, data interpretation, and so on. However, the small (but growing) number of Māori researchers may preclude this exclusionary model for some time yet regardless of arguments about whether or not exclusion is an appropriate goal.
Graham Smith (1990) proposes four models whereby Pākehā have been able to carry out culturally appropriate research; that is research that is for Māori rather than on Māori. These models go some way to addressing the current situation where the need for culturally appropriate research often outweighs the availability of Māori researchers.

1. **'Tiaki' model** (Mentor model). Where the research process is guided and mediated by authoritative Māori people (e.g., Jim Ritchie and Bob Mahuta).

2. **'Whangai' model** (Adoption model). The researcher becomes one of the whanau who just happens to be doing research (e.g., Ann Salmond and the Stirling Whanau).

3. **Power sharing model** Where community assistance is sought by the researcher so that a research enterprise can be developed in a meaningful way.

4. **Empowering outcomes model** Where the research supplies answers and information that Māori want to know (e.g., Richard Benton's language research that informed concern about the survival of the Māori language).

These models may provide what Stewart and Williams (1992: 2) describe as 'culturally intelligible and acceptable frames of reference' within which indigenous research should be conducted. A partnership model fits most readily with the power sharing and empowering outcomes models described by Graham Smith, although it does not preclude the tiaki or whangai models.

**Partnership Research**

By partnership research I mean research that is primarily of benefit to the Māori community and for which the researcher is primarily accountable to that community. From a feminist perspective, Patti Lather (1986: 64) argues that 'the central challenge [for researchers] is to formulate approaches to empirical research which advance emancipatory theory-building through the development of interactive and action-inspiring designs.' This approach is also relevant for Māori research as it moves research beyond the descriptive and into a context whereby findings hold the promise of informing solutions. When set in a context where Māori-Pākehā differences are not about Māori deficits but about the unequal distribution of social privilege and power an action component to research becomes imperative unless researchers are merely intent on reinforcing the status quo (cf. Houston, 1992).

We must therefore begin to ask meta-questions about our research process, such as those proposed by Linda Smith (1996: 25):

- what research do we want to carry out?
- who is that research for?
- what difference will it make?
- who will carry out the research?
- how do we want the research to be done?
- how will we know it is a worthwhile piece of research?
- who will own the research? and

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4 The examples given are from G. Smith (1990).
• who will benefit?

These questions can be addressed through the formation of research partnerships between researchers and Māori communities. This involves a process of negotiation, testing and trust-building that can at times leave researchers feeling like they are stuck between the proverbial rock and hard place, unable to meet the demands of either their profession or the participant community. For example, outsiders (e.g. news media, government agencies) may regard a researcher as the spokesperson for a participant group, inviting them to speak on the group’s behalf. If the researcher refuses to be drawn into this role, which many would argue is the only honest response, they may seem ill-informed about their participant population and their research credentials may questioned (Coyle, 1996). This is one of many issues that do not have easy solutions or one-stop remedies. Rather, the issues are pivotal points in the partnership negotiation process; points which need to be addressed if a community is to be truly informed about the research they are being asked to embark upon.

Several such issues are explored in the remainder of this paper. The first issue is representation, followed by an examination of empowerment, co-operation and collaboration, values and reflexivity. These areas are by no means mutually exclusive and the whole they form is undoubtedly larger than the pieces taken separately. In addition, representation is touched upon in each section as it is ultimately what research does; that is, it seeks to represent research participants in some way. The literatures drawn upon include feminist writings on research as well as international and national commentaries on researching across cultures and other boundaries. Although the paper is aimed at Pākehā wanting to undertake Māori research, much of what is discussed is also relevant whenever researchers cross boundaries. Indeed, it could be argued that such boundaries are crossed whenever we conduct research with anyone aside from ourself.
Representation
Although we may work toward epistemological and political accountability in our research practice, there will always be some differences between ourselves as researchers and our research participants that means that ultimately we will be representing them to others (cf. Ganguly, 1992). We may be writing about their lives, their experiences, their attitudes or their scores on a scale, but in each case we are saying something about them. The differences that exist between researchers and research participants are possibly greatest within cross-cultural settings where opportunities for miscommunication and misunderstandings abound, especially when the cultural group to which the researchers belong (e.g. Pākehā) has more status and power within society than the cultural group to which the participants belong (e.g. Māori).

Representation is different from objectification or presentation in that the latter are predicated on positivistic claims of truth, of presenting the 'real' (cf. Ganguly, 1992). Pākehā researchers do not merely hold up a mirror to reflect the reality of Māori. Instead, their point of view of Māori is filtered through their own (Pākehā) values, circumstances, research training, privilege, etc. In the past, however, these aspects have often been ignored; leading Māori to be compared with Pākehā norms and cultural standards. In addition, the role of culture, history, societal context, and so on were viewed as having little impact upon research practice (see above). In other words, the researchers’ point of view was not taken into account when their gaze was directed at Māori. Michelle Fine (1992: 211) describes this style of research practice as ventriloquy whereby the reports of the research describe

'...behaviours, attitudes, and preferences as if these descriptions were static and immutable, 'out there', and unconnected to political contexts...Such texts typically neglect to discuss why one research question or interpretation prevailed over others or why the researcher selected this set of questions over others. Such texts render oblique the ways in which we, as researchers, construct our analyses and narratives. Indeed, these texts are written as if researchers were simply vehicles for transmission, with no voices of their own.'

Such accounts may tell us more about the authors, those with the power of presentation, than they tell us about those who are being (mis)presented. In other words, the construction of an 'other' to compare 'us' with is essential to a group's notion of who 'we' are (Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1996).

The response of some researchers to the above critique has been to conduct research only within/on their own ‘group’. This naturally raises issues of who is ‘like’ us when each of us has multiple dimensions to our identity that may or may not be to the fore depending upon context, time and space. When we chose to research our own group, we essentially privilege certain dimensions of our identity. For example, for a Pākehā middle-aged woman to conduct research on her own group’s experiences of menopause she may be choosing to downplay differences between herself and her participants that are based on marital status, social class, rural/urban upbringing, etc. Such a sectioning of a potential research
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population raises the issue of who decides who is ‘in’ and who is ‘out’, who is the 'same' and who is 'different'.

In addition, leaving out participants ‘different’ from the researcher, for example Māori middle-aged women, merely adds to the status quo whereby the views of white, middle-class, western women are over-represented in what is considered to be legitimate knowledge about women (Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1996). However, the inclusion of ‘other’ groups of women may perpetuate their silencing as the researcher seeks to speak on their behalf. On the other hand, the inclusion of these representations at least allows those who are being represented to quarrel about how they have been portrayed, rather than being silenced by their invisibility in the research (cf. Livia, 1996). As stated above, there are no easy answers. Nor do the answers become easier when a researcher is perceived to be researching within their own group. Linda Smith (1996), for example, writes of the layers of similarity and difference that occurred for her as a Māori woman carrying out research with Māori women:

'I was a three levels at least an 'insider' as a Māori, as a woman and as a mother and at another set of levels an 'outsider', as a postgraduate student, as someone from a different tribe, as an older mother and as someone who actually had a partner.'

In partnership research the aim should be representation rather than objectification. The researcher is, in a sense, a representative of the community they are studying. By moving away from objectification we are acknowledging that the researcher is not merely standing outside the community looking in. They are instead part of the research experience and by making their values, circumstances, and so on explicit, they are making their representation of the research community more complex. In addition, any claims to truth made by the representation become more complicated and the research participants become more three-dimensional. In order for a representation to be valid it must be negotiated by the researcher and participants and therefore involves elements of collaboration, empowerment and reflexivity.

In discussing her decision not to interview Māori women for her study of lesbian/bisexual politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand, one of Kate Paulin's (1996: 4) turning points was her realisation that the inclusion of Māori women would be bereft of a collaborative component. '...I would be fitting Māori women in after the research questions and methods had been determined. ...I wanted Māori women to provide racial diversity about bisexuality but expected to be able to insert them into a Pākehā frame of understanding.' If Paulin had included Māori lesbian and bisexual women it is almost certain that they would not have 'owned' the research in the sense of being able to recognise themselves in it. The result would have been the objectification rather than the representation of these women. This need for prior collaboration and negotiation is reflected in the guidelines currently being developed by the Health Research Council for Pākehā wanting to do Māori health research.

Even if Māori are included from the start in a collaborative, partnership model of research we need to ask whether Pākehā researchers are capable of moving from objectification to representation and, if so, how this might be done.
This is pivotal to the debate described above about the place (or lack of one) for Pākehā researchers in Māori research. Researchers must not fall into the trap of reproducing coloniser or ethnocentric portrayals of participants or present a positivist notion of what is 'real' (cf. Ganguly, 1992). However, it must also be asked whether being an ‘insider’ to the group being studied, such as in the case of Māori researchers, naturally prevents these from occurring.

The concept of 'cultural safety', as pioneered in Aotearoa/New Zealand by Irihapeti Ramsden (1988), addresses analogous issues within the context of nursing education. 'Within the health care field, cultural safety has emerged as a controversial attempt to reorient the training of health professionals towards a more critical understanding of colonial structures and their impacts on contemporary Māori' (Dyck & Kearns, 1995: 141). Seen in this light, the concept of cultural safety has implications also for researchers who want to incorporate the Treaty of Waitangi into their research practice and philosophies. As such, conducting culturally safe research necessitates the researcher unpacking their own values, history, culture and so on. This approach may also enhance the emancipatory possibilities of such research.

A second approach to gaining representativeness, suggested by feminist, qualitative researchers, is to seek what Patti Lather (1990) describes as face validity by involving participants in the analysis and interpretation of research findings. I would not argue that this process is ethical within a partnership model but I have difficulty with the 'search for truth' that the approach may imply if it is used to validate research. Even if it is not about ‘truth’ per se, this process of participant checking has too often been used as a ‘bumper sticker’ to trumpet the ‘authenticity’ of the research’ (Coyle, 1996: 74). As Russell Bishop (1996: 152) has noted, ‘much qualitative research has also maintained a colonising discourse of the ‘other’ by seeking to hide the researcher/writer under a veil of neutrality or of objectivity, a situation where the interests, concerns, and power of the researcher to determine the outcome of the research remains hidden in the text’.

What happens, for example, if the researcher's interpretation of the findings is at odds with the participants' interpretations or the participants are unable to agree among themselves? Whose account is privileged within a final report? Some of the contradictions between Pākehā researchers and Māori community can be pre-empted by the researcher becoming involved with the community as suggested by Graham Smith (1990, see above) but inevitably nuances and meanings will elude even the most immersed researcher merely because of the cross-cultural context they are working in.

Louise Kidder and Michelle Fine (1986) suggest participants be asked to comment on data and research reports with the comments then being incorporated as data. 'In this way...[representation] can involve a dialectical conversation rather than the imposition of some abstracted conception of truth onto the lives of others' (Kidder & Fine, 1986: 60, original emphasis). Thus documenting and analysing why disagreements as well as agreements occur may be extremely fruitful as it subjects representations to their own explicit critique. This may be especially useful if it challenges the accounts and interpretations of readers, both Māori and Pākehā.
However, Adrian Coyle (1996) suggests that this strategy, while illuminating for an academic audience, may be less useful when organisations that fund research are expecting a more succinct, traditionally structured report. 'It is, however, possible to acknowledge and explore areas of disagreement within a traditional report framework without creating a postmodernist, polyvocal but inaccessible text. The problem, of course, is that this exploration is conducted from the researcher’s perspective, again privileging her/his voice over those of the research participants' (Coyle, 1996: 75-76).

The debate surrounding this issue should impact on the informed consent process that is carried out prior to the start of research. Participants need to know what will happen to the research results, whether they will be able to have a say in how they are interpreted, how interpretive disagreements between researcher and participants will be handled, etc. If these are not discussed then participants, and researchers themselves, may end up feeling betrayed.

The important tools for representation are therefore co-operation and collaboration between researchers and participants, and reflexivity about personal values and beliefs that the researcher brings to the research setting. Overriding these is the researcher’s agenda for social change that can be described as a desire to empower research participants in some way. Each of these aspects is touched upon in the following sections.

Empowerment

Empowerment is enhancement of the possibility that people can more actively control their own lives (cf. Rappaport, 1986). This can happen at a variety of levels, for example, individual, community, society. For Māori, empowerment is about tino rangatiratanga, the right to self-determination. As with Australian Aboriginal peoples, this involves the 'possession of...intellectual property, contemporary and historical. It is about prising open the fist of white academics who for years have been universally recognised as the experts on everything from culture to causes' (Stewart & Williams, 1992: 8).

From her examination of national and international agreements, including the Mataatua Declaration, Aroha Mead (1996: 7) has identified a minimum set of guidelines relevant to the protection of the cultural and intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples. These include:

- 'Developing a Code of Ethics for Collecting and Using indigenous information'
- 'Ensuring that the maximum standards of Free and Informed Consent are obtained from indigenous informants' and
- 'Sharing any financial benefits.'

Thus Linda Smith’s (1996) question of ‘who will own the research’ is an integral part of empowerment, as is the legitimation of Māori knowledge.

Empowerment is also about addressing social inequities and injustices. Perhaps 'the most sensitive issue at stake [in partnership research]... is the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the researched, a relationship paralleling in its unequal power that of social worker and client, or teacher and pupil' (McRobbie, 1982: 51). One way of addressing this power inequity is
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through the depowerment of the researcher whereby the participants' input is valued and the gap between the researcher and the researched in the research hierarchy is significantly reduced (Huygens, 1993). Depowerment is also a useful concept in that it acknowledges that the research participants bring something to the research setting that is not always recognised within an academic setting, for example, knowledge and status within the Māori world.

At one level, empowerment occurs when people are given a voice; have their opinions and views validated by the research process. This process may also result in empowerment through 'consciousness-raising' whereby participants change their explanations for their circumstances from ones centred on personal deficit to ones emphasising the denial of rights (Kidder & Fine, 1986). This empowerment is most likely to happen if the research process is carried out under kaupapa Māori (Māori procedures) and the researchers are culturally safe. It may also mean that the management of the project resides within the research community. These are the circumstances under which Māori will most likely feel that their involvement in the research is worthwhile and that it is safe for them to participate.

However, feeling empowered through a research process can be deceptive for both participants and researchers. We can be honest with our research community, collaborate with them and involve them in the process, leave them feeling like their voices have been heard, they are left 'owning' the research; yet if no social change results, if inequities remain unaddressed, then participants have merely experienced 'procedural' empowerment which may be a far more fleeting thing than what I would describe as 'outcome' empowerment.

At the next level empowerment must be taken a step beyond these concerns into the realm of effectiveness, social change and political application (cf. Te Awekotuku, 1991). At an outcome level empowerment can occur when participants and researchers are able to identify inequities that are absent from the political agenda and excluded from public discourse (Kidder & Fine, 1986). Researchers can also be empowering by allowing their research relationships with participants to redirect their research and reshape their theories (cf. Houston, 1992).

A partnership model does not let researchers off the hook in terms of their social responsibility to work for change. However I do not deny that there are difficulties with this approach - namely if a researcher is seen as politically active then their 'objectivity' and hence their research may come under question. Perhaps we need to also consider the community as a source for social action so that in addition to 'owning' research they know how to use it to achieve social and political action. This is also empowerment.

In relation to this, the issue of reciprocity also falls under empowerment. Researchers 'should recognise their debt to research participants and their obligation to reciprocate in appropriate ways. In order to maximise such potential benefits, the needs of research participants and the host community...should be considered in setting research priorities, and participants should be involved in a collaborative relationship during all phases of the research' (The Principles of Professional Responsibility and Ethical Conduct of the New Zealand Association
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of Social Anthropologists, in Te Awekotuku, 1991: 28). The 'appropriate ways' are not described and it may be important to also make a distinction between procedures and outcomes within reciprocity.

Fullilove and Fullilove III (1993: 129) define reciprocity as 'giving back': 'If there is no replacement - no give back - the actual resources of the community are diminished by the process of the research.' They describe three ways in which this can be achieved:

1. through the sharing of knowledge about research so that the community becomes less reliant on outside researchers. For example, participants might learn how to conduct survey research within their own community so that they can use the results to lobby for resources. In this way, one aim of researchers may be to make themselves redundant in some way (or completely).
2. through sharing the results of the research with, and facilitating the use of these results by, the community. One way of achieving this is through the use of different forms of dissemination in addition to, or instead of, academic journals and conferences.
3. through involving community members as co-authors so that their contribution is acknowledged.

Ultimately, however, it is important to bear in mind Mason Durie’s (1996) exhortation that what is empowering for a community must be decided by that community. The next section examines the concept of a collaborative relationship and continues to discuss whether collaboration is enough reciprocity.

Co-operation and Collaboration

One of the key issues in research that is for Māori is gaining the trust of a Māori community. A potential researcher may to treated as 'guilty until proven innocent' (cf. Fullilove & Fullilove III, 1993). This is not surprising given the history of research on Māori that exists within Aotearoa. A researcher can gain access to a community through a guide, someone who is based in that community, but a guide cannot make the community trust that researcher. (There are also ethical and moral issues when blame for the betrayal of trust by a researcher falls back onto the guide.) So the introduction is the first part of a two-stage process where the second part is the researcher gaining the trust of the community through their own conduct. Trust may be gained through, for example, helping out with other tasks, being up front about who you are and what you are doing, passing a test, etc. (Fullilove & Fullilove III, 1993). It is also important to note that the gaining of trust may signal the beginning of long-term relationship that exceeds the limits of just one research project; especially if the researcher is seen to be doing some good.

If the research is conducted according to Māori kaupapa (procedures), then there are 'rituals of first encounter' that overcome the distance between the researchers and participants. 'According to Māori epistemology, when two groups come together they are separated on a range of levels, from the spiritual to the spatial distance kept between two groups, before they meet. This multi-level separation needs to be ritually removed before the two groups, any two groups, can come together' (Irwin, 1994: 39). These rituals also place the power to define
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the situation, including the conduct of the researchers, firmly within the hands of
the community.

We also have an excellent model for the ethical conduct of researchers in
Māori communities in the work of Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (1991: 17). She warns
us that '...the relationship between ethics and research is of vital importance, as
the demand for responsibility and accountability has become inevitable. Denial
of this results in distrust in the community studied, impaired or obstructed future
opportunities, irreparably damaged relationships, and the questionable validity of
research findings.' The lines of accountability within this model are very clear
and the consequences can be witnessed in the distrust many Māori have of
research and researchers, even researchers who are themselves Māori.

In a collaborative research setting knowledge is seen as flowing in both
directions, participants and researchers both have something meaningful to
contribute. This model works to overcome the power imbalance inherent in
'objective, scientific' research. This is an extremely vulnerable position for a
researcher as it acknowledges that they might change during the research process
as they are just as involved in the research as the participants. In addition the
participants are fully informed as to the purpose of the study, its aims, how the
data will be analysed and used, and the researcher's own values and uncertainties.
The research topic might also arise out of collaboration between the researcher
and the community. This two-way flow of information between participants and
researchers also goes some way to addressing the issue of the community giving
their informed consent to be involved in the research process.

Values and Reflexivity

'What most Māori find particularly upsetting is the unwillingness of many
Pākehā to recognise the existence of cultural differences, their cool assumption
that the Pākehā way of doing something is the only, the human way' (Metge,
1986: 140).

It is not possible to be informed fully about a culture other than our own, yet
it is possible to reflect on how our world-view is not 'reality' but is a socially
constructed entity in which certain groups and discourses are privileged and
others are denied. This will assist our understanding of what we are trying to
achieve when we represent a participant community in our research. We may
never experience their reality (and this can be said no matter how alike we are)
and in a sense we should not be seeking to impose a version of 'truth' onto their
lives (Kidder & Fine, 1986). Rather a partnership model allows a two-way
conversation that does not deny either reality but may choose to privilege a
different account than the usual or 'commonsense' one.

Reflexivity therefore includes:
• reflecting on how our values, assumptions, etc. impinge on our research. For
  example, Spivak (1989) suggests that we have to 'unlearn our privilege' as
  intellectuals and 'deconstruct our own authority.' However, at the same time,
  we should not deny that we have skills that can be used for social change and
  community empowerment via research.
• being open to the inadequacies of our pet theories and to counterinterpretations. Patti Lather (1990) labels this systematised reflexivity and describes this process as necessary to establish the construct validity of research findings.

• being fully involved with research participants, constantly exploring and learning, in a continual change and growth process. Addressing the role of feminist researchers wanting to speak intelligently about women, Maria Lugones (in Lugones & Spelman, 1983) argues that feminist researchers must earn the right to speak about women who are different from them by engaging in direct rather than vicarious relationships with these women. There is a parallel to this in Māori-Pākehā research partnerships. This moves researchers away from a role of an objective, distant scientist to a more interactive, responsive and ethical research partner.

**Conclusion**

Māori research will continue to be a political affair. In the short-term research for Māori is largely concerned with survival topics such as the impact of alcohol advertising and the barriers to accessing health care. Often a major concern of such projects is the challenging of institutional relations that have disempowered Māori. The legitimacy of the research and the knowledge gained will therefore not go unchallenged by those who have a stake in maintaining the status quo.

Researchers need to expose the social and structural nature of injustices (Kidder & Fine, 1986). This may mean that the representations researchers make are ones which reflect and challenge Pākehā power structures and gate keeping mechanisms. Often researchers, be they Pākehā or Māori, have access for forums that are not available to their research participants and therefore have the opportunity to pass on what their participants have shown and shared with them (Griffin, C., 1996). It is also conceivable that a community will want, and perhaps demand, the type of knowledge credentialling that occurs within academia (Edwards, 1996). In each case 'the power to 'speak for' Others is just that: a power' (Griffin, C., 1996: 100). We should also not overlook the possibility that a more powerful critique is available to groups and individuals through silence (Bhavnani, 1990).

A partnership approach to research, while no guarantee that a researcher will be of use to or wanted by a Māori community, makes the power dynamic and many others issues in the research process explicit. No longer is research constrained by the mere search for facts that denies who researchers are and where they have come from. Instead researchers can be of more use to Māori communities by seeking research models that have explicit social change agendas and work for the betterment of lives. This is not something that is common in research on minority/ethnic groups as these groups have often been constructed as deficit by virtue of 'scientific' research findings and claims of objectivity. By acknowledging that 'reality' is diverse research can begin to recognise Māori knowledge and thereby create the possibility for change that is sourced in and endorsed by a community.
In some ways I have avoided the debate about whether there is a place for Pākehā researchers within Māori communities. On the other hand, much of what I have discussed may also speak to Māori researchers. One bottom line criteria is that it is up to a community to decide and that they must be given the information with which to make an informed choice. This can only happen when 'objective science' is unveiled and the power dynamics (often implicit) in the creation and legitimation of knowledge are revealed. Researchers can assist this process by working to decolonise themselves and becoming culturally safe.

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