

Title:

If we dream together: Toward a Māori-centred psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand

Abstract

“Mehemea ka moemoeā ahau, ko ahau anake. Mehemea ka moemoeā tātou, ka taea e tātou.” *If I dream alone, I benefit alone; if we dream together, we achieve collectively.* This tongikura of Princess Te Puea Hērangi informed her leadership during the 1918 influenza epidemic, shaping collective responses to Māori health inequities and the impacts of colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand. It signals an approach grounded in Māori approaches to collective wellbeing. This keynote examines psychology in Aotearoa as a field shaped within global imperialism and its settler-colonial expression. It traces Māori engagement and activism that has challenged the discipline’s monocultural foundations and opened pathways toward Māori-centred psychology. Affirming a Māori-centred psychology brings into view the conditions that have constrained it, including settler-colonial knowledge hierarchies and epistemic racism. Drawing on the collective work of the National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues, He Paiaka Tōtara and the WERO research team, this address celebrates collective imagining and action within the discipline. The psychology that Sir Thomas Hunter imagined over a century ago has evolved, as it should. The collective dreaming articulated by Princess Te Puea offers a way to reorient that vision toward shared responsibility, relational practice, and collective wellbeing.