Centering Mātauranga Māori in a Social Practitioner Training Programme

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Toi tu te kupu, toi tu te mana, toi tu te whenua
The project

Eurocentric Theories and Practices

Te Ao Māori Theories and Practices
Whenever Pākehā engage with Māori taonga (treasures) and tikanga (cultural practices), Māori are understandably attuned to signs that colonization and racism are at work, yet again.

(Jones, 2017)
How it usually looks

Eurocentric Theories and Practices

Te Ao Māori Theories and Practices
The hope

Approaches and Understandings toward mana-enhancing practice
“Partnership”... while taking responsibility

- Dialogical
- Two entities, both deserving of understanding and respect
- Not a translation of mātauranga Māori into European concepts or vice versa
- Avoiding the search for equivalences between practices – risking reductive misunderstanding
A conversation – Relational

That would:

• Destabilize fixed positions of knowing and expertise,
• Invite relationships of hospitality in which one could meet the other in an ethic of care and safety,
• Welcome mātauranga Māori as an independent, sovereign partner in a conversation that would create new places for students to stand in their practice with others, including Māori as Tangata Whenua.
When we, as Tauiwi (non-Māori), come up with a plan involving mātauranga Māori, we need to ensure that we have consulted and engaged in the very care for that relationship that would enable an effective partnership to emerge.

(Jones, 2017)
What we now know

• Understand one’s own assumptions
• Engage with Māori partners who can trouble the ideas
• Support time and space for Māori voices to be heard
• Be prepared to step back, be patient, to listen and to wait

“The relationships between Māori and non-Māori... will always be tricky, contingent, uncertain and constantly under negotiation”.

(Jones, 2017. p. 190)
What we now know

• We need to model for our students a willingness to honour Māori culture and values and call for justice in ourselves.

• Be in partnership from the outset, grounded in the guidance of a Kaumatua

• Imbedded in place and community
Tiriti-based partnership

Māori - Pākehā / Tauiwi

The “Self” – “Other” border
(Fine, 1994)
References


- NZAC. (2016). *Programme accreditation standards* (Section 3 (c) Curriculum. Wellington, New Zealand: NZAC.
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