

33. A CASE STUDY: THE DILEMMAS OF BICULTURALISM
IN EDUCATION POLICY AND VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION
PRACTICE IN AOTEAROA-NEW ZEALAND.

TE KOHUHUTANGA KI TE RANGAHAU – INTRODUCTION
TO THE RESEARCH

The motivation for the research arose from my role as a Pākehā (European New Zealand) teacher educator with responsibility for preparing secondary school art teachers to implement national curriculum policy in visual arts education. Embodied in New Zealand statutes, including educational policy, are the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi (1840). For example, in its overarching policy statement for schools, *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993, p. 1), the Ministry declares that “it acknowledges the value of the Treaty of Waitangi and of New Zealand’s bicultural identity ...” The curriculum statement pertinent to my teacher education programme, *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 9), states that “... toi Māori, the arts of the Māori, are integral to our sense of a distinctive, evolving national identity”. Further, in respect of the visual arts discipline in the arts curriculum, “all students should have opportunities to learn about traditional and contemporary Māori art forms” (ibid, p. 71). A resource for teachers (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 2), published subsequent to my research, uses a new nomenclature – ‘Maori visual culture’. Here the Ministry declares that “Māori visual culture is a living and significant dimension of New Zealand society and should be taught in all our schools with knowledge and respect”.

In Aotearoa-New Zealand teachers as agents of the Crown share responsibility with the indigenous Māori for bicultural development within educational settings. Thus, bicultural educational policy requires that I prepare my pre-service teachers in respect of teaching Māori art/visual culture. In the 1980s when I entered teacher education I saw the task of teaching Māori art as relatively straightforward. In the intervening years I have become increasingly conscious of a number of dilemmas which complicate the issue of bicultural policy in education. These issues, confirmed by a survey conducted in 1996 in my geographical location, Auckland-Tamaki Makaurau (Smith, 1996), and by a recently completed research project (Smith, 2005), are of concern to visual arts teacher educators throughout the country. First is the dilemma of a largely non-Māori secondary school teaching force required to fulfil bicultural obligations. Second, there are comparatively few Māori holding the (Western) qualifications requisite for entry to tertiary institutions and colleges of education and subsequent employment in secondary schools. A third dilemma is the very small number of heads of art departments who are Māori, thereby limiting the possibilities of equitable leadership. The fourth dilemma, the most problematic in

view of the demographic composition of teachers and students, is the limited and often superficial knowledge and experience that the majority of my predominantly non-Māori students have of Māoritanga (traditions, practices and beliefs), tikanga Māori (respect for cultural values), and of traditional and contemporary Māori art forms when they enter the visual arts teacher education programme.

These dilemmas motivated me to investigate the realities of schooling under bicultural policies. Underpinning my research were two key questions: What is the history and political and social agenda which lies behind New Zealand's bicultural education policy? What are the perceptions, behaviours and performances of the participants in relation to the bicultural curriculum imperative?

NGA HUA A NGA TUHITUHINGA – WHAT I FOUND IN THE LITERATURE

Attitudes towards Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi

I took as my starting point Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840 by over 500 Māori chiefs and by William Hobson representing the British Crown. My intention was not to research the treaty itself although the topic required an intensive search of the literature related to it, and subsequent events. Although the treaty established the signatories as equal partners holding equal rights and privileges the interpretation of this declaration of equality and its legal status have been argued ever since (Orange, 1987). There is evidence that while the treaty was obedient to the prevailing colonial policy of protection of the rights of the indigenous, scholars such as Orange (1987), Kawharu (1989), Renwick (1991) and Brownlie (1992) claimed it was an expedient, if reluctant, solution adopted by the Crown to control unruly factions, Pākehā and Māori. Pākehā historian, Orange (1987), wrote of differences in interpretation by Māori and the British colonists, not just in wordings in English and Māori, but in understandings of the concept of tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty). She noted successive provincial governments' subversion of the original intentions of the treaty which culminated in a judicial ruling in 1877 that the treaty was a 'nullity'. This declaration held sway until the 1970s rendering the treaty, and the protections Māori expected from it, completely without force.

It was clear from the literature that despite the treaty partnership Pākehā power and authority has prevailed. Although there was some evidence of often paternalistic, humanist attitudes, assimilation has been overtly and covertly the prevailing policy. Orange (1987, p. 2) maintained that "Europeans, in particular, have shifted their position on the treaty to suit their purposes". Māori scholar and activist, Walker (1973, p. 111), is adamant that "the assimilationist policies which contradicted the intention of the treaty inflicted on subsequent generations of Māori children an identity conflict that persists to the present day". Further, he claimed that the destruction of their culture has developed both a defeatist and an aggressive response from Māori who seek an identity outside the Pākehā conventions.

Evident also in the literature was substantial disaffection with such assimilationist policy amongst Māori and some Pākehā (Jones *et al.*, 1990; Pearson, 1991;

Openshaw and McKenzie, 1997). It was within such disaffection, and in a climate of liberal humanism fostered by the economic prosperity of the 1970s, that the seeds of 'biculturalism' were planted. An educated Māori middle class with a foothold in the professions could employ European/Pākehā stratagems. A Labour government, itself an outcome of working class rejection of the hierarchical power of the British ruling classes and prompted by its own sense of 'Pākehā guilt' was responsive to growing Māori protest and affirmation of rights (Rata, 2000). In 1974 the Labour government enacted statutes establishing bicultural policy.

The literature expounding attitudes towards Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi, beliefs about European/Pākehā dominance, questions of equality, and the impact of the treaty on education informed the research methodology.

Interpretations of 'biculturalism'

Evident in the literature pertaining to biculturalism was substantial controversy over the often-conflicting interpretations of 'bicultural identity' and 'biculturalism' referred to in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993) and *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000). A review of other curriculum documents, for example the *Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 56), found that biculturalism was defined as "describing the interactions, relationships, and sharing of understandings, practices, and beliefs between two cultures: in New Zealand, these cultures are Māori and Pākehā". Simplistic definitions which focused on notions of two distinct cultures in one country, or having or combining two cultures, were considered by Clark (2002, p. 96) to be the minimalist concept of biculturalism embraced by most New Zealanders. He claimed that there was unlikely to be "an equivalent measure of support for biculturalism in the sense of equality".

Varying Pākehā viewpoints were found in the literature. Christie (1999), for example, resented what he saw as the privileged treatment of Māori, arguing that within a democracy individual human rights must prevail over ethnic affiliations. Christie claimed that Māori are given unfair advantages in terms of compensations negotiated under the Waitangi tribunal and provoke dissent by claims for independence and sovereignty. In one of his commentaries, 'Brainwashing in Schools', Christie (1999, p. 71) stated:

The situation is created in New Zealand where children with even a slight trace of Māori ethnicity, or none at all ... are coerced into displaying 'Māori culture', into believing notions of kotahitanga, kingitanga, and rangitiratanga, and to assume a partisan ethnic stance ... All such thinking, though based on bunkum, is taught in schools by government directive and enforcement, with the support of academia from where it is piped throughout.

(1999, p. 71)

Pākehā scholar, Rata (2000), an advocate in the 1970s and 1980s of biculturalism as serving purposes of political justice and social inclusion, wrote of the white humanist middle class sensing defeat and retreating in the face of increasing ethnification and

indigenisation by Māori who reject the paternalism of biculturalism and multiculturalism. Rata (2003, pp. 9–10) has since ‘re-thought’ biculturalism. She claims that “despite the democratic ideals of the early Māori and non-Māori biculturalists” a misleading identification of culture with ethnicity has given rise to “an anti-democratic biculturalism”.

Māori groups, notably within a tribal definition, expressed clear views on biculturalism. They rejected what they saw as the oppressive policies of a post-colonial government, seeing their future as lying within an ethnic interpretation of culture, in which race marks both point of entry and disbarment. As example, Māori artist and scholar, Jahnke (1995, pp. 9–10), claimed that biculturalism is a deliberate Western construct, a means by which the power-holding sector can ameliorate discontent and salve conscience without surrendering supremacy. He declared:

For biculturalism to be more than a pathetic fallacy requires empathetic negotiation across the boundaries of cultural reality. To presuppose a priority of vision defined solely by Western perception merely perpetuates the cultural capital of the elite as the sole criterion of cultural legitimacy.

My research was informed by the marked difference of opinion evident in the literature about what constitutes biculturalism. Although bicultural models of education promulgated by the Department of Education (1976) and the Director General of Education (Renwick, 1984) emphasised Māori-Pākehā interaction there remain many issues for Māori. Foremost is an education system geared to a mono-cultural Pākehā frame of reference (Walker, 1973; Bishop and Glynn, 1999; Hall and Bishop, 2001). Claims by Māori that educational policies and practices were, and continue to be, developed in a framework of colonisation were a critical part of the research. However, as an educator in a state institution I felt bound to accept the particular concept of biculturalism that is written into education statutes, one that appears to rest on an ethnic determination of culture.

Problems of defining ‘Māori art’

The requirement for all students, and not just Māori, to receive a bicultural interpretation of visual arts education posed a significant question for the research – what is Māori art?

It was clear from the literature that Māori art was considered as complex and differentiated as art of the Western world. Evident as much in Māori scholarship as in Pākehā interpretation, a significant variety of opinions were expressed. For Māori, as for many indigenous peoples, art and culture were seen as inseparable. Included are forms that have been made for personal and community use, and which have pervaded the whole way of Māori life. For Māori these are much more than objects of beauty; they are the embodiment of spiritual and ancestral power (Hakiwai, 1996). Māori scholars themselves offered significantly differing definitions. At one end of the spectrum Māori kaumātua (revered elder), Mead (1984, p. 75), considered that “Māori art is made by Māori artists working within Māori stylistic traditions of the iwi for the iwi”. Hakiwai (1996, p. 54), supporting Mead’s view, explained that what the Western world has called Māori art, Māori call taonga:

Taonga or treasures embody all those things that represent our culture ... Our treasures are much more than objets d'art for they are living in every sense of the word and carry the love and pride of those who fashioned them, handled and caressed them, and passed them on for future generations.

Taonga, thus, has the mana or status of cultural property to be protected in treaty terms by the state which must take responsibility for it and ensure education about its meanings, origins and mana.

In contrast, contemporary Māori artists, curators, and commentators such as Panaho (1988) argued that Māori art has always been innovative and responsive to change and may quite properly employ Western materials and techniques in interpreting Māori ideology. Hotere (cited in Davis, 1976, p. 29) took issue with being labelled a 'Māori artist'. In Hotere's oft-quoted statement, "I am Māori by birth and upbringing. As far as my work is concerned this is coincidental", he denied that ethnicity had relevance in his art making. Conversely, Walsh (cited in Poland, 1999, p. 2), defined Māori art by ethnicity of the maker, claiming that "Māori art is simply work by artists of Māori descent, regardless of how it looks". Yet another position, one which did not specify making or ownership, was taken by Māori cultural commentator Parekowhai (cited in Poland, 1999, p. 2). "Māori art", she said, "is art where Māori can see themselves in the picture, either through visual motifs, reference to history, or subject matter. If it speaks to Māori, of Māori, then it is Māori".

The perspectives presented by a range of scholars, artists, curators and commentators provided the framework for investigating research participants' understandings of Māori art, its forms, and its significance.

The place of Māori art in visual arts education

The statutory requirement for schools to teach Māori art as part of visual arts education demanded a close examination of national education policy and curriculum. Analysis of the documents indicated that prior to the 1950s Māori art had been systematically rejected from art education in New Zealand schools. This rejection was grounded in policies of a dominant Pākehā society which, even in its Native Schools, adhered rigorously to a British model of curriculum. From the 1950s the then Department of Education provided some resources in Māori art to primary schools, but it was not until 1975 that a new *School Certificate Art* prescription (Department of Education, 1975), innovative in its time, required secondary school students to study the forms and significance of some examples of Māori art. A requirement of the current curriculum, *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000) is, likewise, to provide opportunities for students to learn about traditional and contemporary Māori art forms. For the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA), implemented in 2002, year 11 visual arts students (mostly 15 year olds) are assessed on their ability to "research art and artworks from Māori and European traditions and their context" (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2000).

Tracing curriculum changes in the literature was an important part of the research. It provided an incentive to investigate the view of expatriate New Zealander, Graeme Chalmers (1999, p. 176), that art education in colonial New Zealand was (and still is) "a major agent of colonisation and cultural imperialism".

The varied viewpoints on Te Tiriti o Waitangi - Treaty of Waitangi, biculturalism, Māori art, and the place of Māori art in visual arts education presented in the literature heighten the dilemma for visual arts teachers. They raised questions of how curriculum demands are to be met when art teachers are confronted with contradictory definitions of Māori art, who may and can teach it, and who will fulfil this state curriculum requirement in a system that has a pitifully small number of Māori art teachers. These questions have impacted upon my role as a Pākehā teacher educator. Despite a hardening of attitude towards the protection of Māori traditions and knowledge and towards limiting access to those traditions and knowledge by non-Māori (Whitecliffe, 1999) I have received much support and since the 1980s have developed strategies to support non-Māori (and Māori) art teachers to learn about and teach Māori art education (Smith, 1996, 2001, 2003a, b).

Whatever the stance I take, however, I am still faced with the dilemma – *May I teach Māori art?* It is, I believe, a national dilemma and was the *raison d'être* of this research (Smith, 2001). It is a question I continue to pose to art educators nationwide (Smith, 2003a).

NGA TIKANGA A NGA RANGAHAU – HOW I CONDUCTED THE RESEARCH

My research did not seek to resolve the dilemma. Instead, I sought to evaluate what was happening in a sample of schools in response to the bicultural curriculum requirement. Using qualitative research methodology I conducted an interpretative case study to raise issues and inform dialogue about this particular institutional policy. It provided an opportunity, in Eisner's (1991, p. 169) terms, to "confer my own signature upon my work".

The settings for the case study, those in which art teaching represented my specialist territory of secondary art education, had national policy and curricula in common. They comprised *nga kura tuarua* (three secondary schools), each differing in physical and environmental contexts. To protect their identity I named them *Te Kura Hine* (the girls' school), *Te Kura Tama* (the boys' school), and *Te Kura Hine-Tama* (the co-educational school). The selection, based on Patton's (1990) criterion sampling, included low to high decile classification (based on socio-economic status), geographical location and ethnic composition. In one school there was up to 50% Māori and/or Pacific Islands students. In another there was a wide range of student ethnicities, and in the third school the population was predominantly 'white' mono-cultural. Twenty-seven participants, nine in each school, and myself as the key instrument (Eisner, 1991), were involved in the research.

Consistent with case study research, participant perspectives were gained through qualitative methods which did not privilege one method over another (Wolcott, 1994;

Stake, 2000). Critical document analysis, as the catalyst, was followed by observations, then interviews. Referred to by Wolcott (1994) as examining, enquiring and experiencing, these methods were selected to gain multiple perspectives of the issues underlying the research, and the implications of these for my pre-service teacher education programme.

The data provided by the inquiry formed the substance of narrative vignettes (Erickson, 1986) in which I described events as vividly as possible to give the reader a sense of 'being there'. To add credence to my research I adopted Eisner's (1991) structural corroboration, multi-method techniques and analyst triangulation. I used the coding and categorising processes recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1992) and Tolich and Davidson (1999) in order to focus on the interpretations which the principals, art teachers and students gave to their own actions.

An interpretivist case study methodology requires scrupulous documentation, cross-referencing, referral of field notes back to those interviewed, and a great deal of what Wolcott calls "healthy scepticism" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 21). The issues of biculturalism raised ethical concerns. Not only was I required to satisfy institutional ethical protocols but had a self-imposed ethic to respond to. As a Pākehā teacher educator I am sensitive to Māori attitudes towards Pākehā intrusion into Māori cultural territory. Throughout the research I scrutinised my own involvement with both Māori and Pākehā participants, aware of Stake's (2000) reminder that researchers are guests in the private world of participants. I valued also Tolich and Davidson's (1999) advice about the ethical principle that must override every piece of social research in Aotearoa-New Zealand – to think of it as a small town in order to protect the people in the study.

NGA HUA A NGA PUKAPUKA – WHAT I READ IN THE DOCUMENTS

'Examining' involved the analysis of national curriculum documents and schools' charters, mission statements and art department schemes. As example, the Thomas Report on *The Post-primary School Curriculum* (Department of Education, 1943) contained only one reference to Māori, not in respect of art education but social studies. From 1945 Department of Education and Ministry of Education documents showed a growing awareness of bicultural responsibility and a move from 'should' to 'must'. From the 1970s all art curriculum documents included requirements to offer Māori art in programmes, culminating in *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000). I noted in successive documents the increasing use of te reo Māori (the Māori language), albeit with English translations.

Analysis of the three schools' charters and mission statements showed a strong link between the documents and the nature of the schools and communities in which they were socially and economically located. Two sets of documents indicated strong emphasis from Boards of Trustees and principals upon bicultural policy, while the third made no reference to biculturalism. The following comments from the three principals illustrate their attitudes towards acknowledging Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty

of Waitangi in school policy:

Principal, Te Kura Hine-Tama: The eighth goal in our school charter is "increased participation and success by Māori through the advancement of Māori education initiatives, including education in te reo Māori, consistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi"

(Smith, 2001, p. 70)

Principal, Te Kura Hine: The Treaty of Waitangi has had a substantial influence. The school's policy is called Tiriti o Waitangi ... and it talks about te reo me nga tikanga

(ibid, p. 83)

Principal, Te Kura Tama: There is no monitoring of inclusion of bicultural imperatives ... Heads of departments are not required to report on whether the Treaty of Waitangi is referenced in schemes, a task I would not agree to personally

(ibid, p. 83)

Analysis of art department schemes similarly illustrated differing attitudes. At *Te Kura Hine-Tama*, where both teacher participants were Māori, the art department scheme was in the form of an Art Department Accountability Statement. This contained a written undertaking between the Board of Trustees and staff that they would support school policy in terms of biculturalism and the treaty. Te reo Māori was expected to be pronounced correctly (this was indeed confirmed in the interviews with both Māori and Pākehā students); study units related to Māori art and cultural heritage were to be incorporated in courses at all levels; the teaching style was to accommodate Māori preference for learning styles; and tikanga Māori was to be supported. The scheme at the girls' school, *Te Kura Hine*, although designed for a dominantly Pākehā body of students and art department staff, demonstrated a particular concern to honour treaty obligations and illustrated the overall ethos of the school. By contrast, in *Te Kura Tama's* scheme neither Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi nor the word 'Māori' were mentioned except in excerpts from national curriculum documents. There was no use of te reo, even in a year 11 Māori art unit.

Thus, it was clear that the ways in which Ministry and school documents were interpreted and acted upon by principals and art department staff varied substantially and revealed much about school policy making. The findings from the analysis of government and schools' documents were used to inform the subsequent interviews and observations.

NGA WHAKAUTŪTU – WHAT I HEARD AT THE INTERVIEWS

'Enquiring' involved interviews with principals, art teachers, and students at years 10, 11, and 13 (mostly 14, 15 and 17 year olds). Interviews and their documentation

and analysis represented a major dimension of the research. The following comments from principals and heads of art departments (HODs) at nga kura tuarua illustrate their attitudes towards Te Tiriti Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi and bicultural education:

Principal, Te Kura Tama: I actually don't give a toss about the partnership

(ibid, p. 108)

HOD art, Te Kura Tama: A lot of boys from this school come from backgrounds where that prejudice is part of their culture at home ... it's a very hard thing to fight against. I've had a letter from a parent saying I do not want my son to be taught Māori art and I want him to be taken out of the class when anything to do with that happens

(ibid, p. 93)

Principal, Te Kura Hine-Tama: The school schemes would say the right things but what I am interested in is not what they're saying but what they are doing ... putting subjects into a meaningful context. If you talk to Māori teachers they feel like they're carrying this huge burden ...

(ibid, p. 82)

HOD art, Te Kura Hine-Tama: I feel confident with the Māori students ... but I would feel very inadequate if asked to present my findings on teaching Māori art to Māori educators ... Māori are hard on Māori ... they would eat me alive

(ibid, p. 93)

Principal, Te Kura Hine: ... what actually has to happen is a change ... that is both intellectual and emotional ... so first you have to know your history and ... the sociology of indigenous peoples ... and about the impact on a culture of a dominant culture

(ibid, p. 84)

HOD art, Te Kura Hine: I would like to think we are very explicit about the significance of Māori art. It's not just about looking and drawing but the idea of knowing and understanding ... we have made great effort to ensure that it isn't tokenism

(ibid, p. 88)

Overall, there was a strong correlation between the views of principals and their staff. As example, the HOD at *Te Kura Hine* maintained that the positive attitude of the principal permeated the school and, consequently, the art department. Conversely, the negative response of the principal at *Te Kura Tama* towards bicultural inclusion appeared to filter down to staff and students.

An aim of the interviews with the nine Māori and nine Pākehā students was to discover their knowledge of Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi and awareness of biculturalism in their art programmes. With the exception of one year 10 Māori boy (who had been brought up in a traditional way, spoke te reo Māori, and had studied the treaty since he was a small child) and one year 11 Pākehā girl (who had gained a comprehensive knowledge of the treaty in social studies) the majority showed little understanding. The comments of two students illustrate the superficial understanding held by the majority:

Yeah, we studied the treaty but I can't remember. I remember a beach somewhere. The Māori don't know how to sign so they did little signs or something

(ibid, p. 102)

We learnt about the flag. Hone Heke took it down

(ibid, p. 105)

In contrast, all students were aware of Māori art. Their comments about the kind of study they made of Māori art appeared, however, to reflect the nature and policies of their schools and the attitudes towards it:

Year 10 Pākehā girl, Te Kura Hine-Tama: We look at the work at the marae. Our teacher takes us there, we look at the panels and she tells us some things about the meaning ... We do a lot of cultures. We're doing African ...

(ibid, p. 101)

Year 10 Māori boy, Te Kura Hine-Tama: We're lucky, people get to study whatever kind of art they like, their kind of art ... I just love to take up more Māori than anything else

(ibid, p. 101)

Year 10 Pākehā boy, Te Kura Tama: Our course doesn't really include Māori art. For the last exam we had to sketch a (Pacific Island) tapa cloth

(ibid, p. 102)

Year 13 Māori boy, Te Kura Tama: I don't know anything about my Māori background ... I'm happy using European models

(ibid, p. 107)

Year 11 Pākehā girl, Te Kura Hine: In the work we've just done we had to incorporate both Māori things and European aspects ... incorporated

together, an equal amount of Māori things. Our course is bicultural, incorporating half European and half Māori – bicultural as in two cultures. I feel as if the Treaty of Waitangi sort of comes across in my work

(*ibid*, pp. 104–105)

Analysis of the student interviews suggested that the school's circumstances affected the confidence and responsiveness of students. Where the art programme was focused within a bicultural context, this was transmitted to students whatever their ethnic identity. Where tikanga Māori and Māori art had an insignificant place in a school's programme, in school policy, and in the school community, this was similarly reflected in students' responses.

NGA KITENGA I NGA KURA – WHAT I SAW IN THE SCHOOLS

'Experiencing' was achieved through school and art room observations. There was evidence from the art classes observed (which included the majority of the 18 students interviewed) of a strong correlation between the data collected through analysis of school charters and art department schemes, through interviews, and from observations. This correlation helped support the validity of the triangulation of data collecting techniques used in the research.

My observations did reveal, however, information not apparent in the document analysis and the interviews. I concluded, for example, that the quality of students' art performance in biculturally-oriented programmes depended as much upon economic circumstance, teacher knowledge and understanding of Māori art, the degree of teacher direction, and the resources available to students, as it did upon school policy.

Student ethnicity was not a major factor affecting attitude or performance. Some Māori students appeared disaffected in respect of Māori art. Others saw their art programme as an opportunity to find and reclaim their cultural heritage. Some Pākehā students showed considerable empathy with and knowledge of Māori art and its significance. Others were singularly lacking in knowledge or interest in any aspect. I detected too that the artistic merit of students' work did not necessarily correlate with cultural understanding. So-called 'good' art work influenced by Māori art could be executed in ignorance of its cultural relevance. Correlation or connection, when it existed, arose from teaching approaches which incorporated knowledge of the cultural base.

My observations revealed that the mandatory inclusion by the Ministry of Education of a bicultural dimension in the art curriculum in no way guarantees that all students gain some understanding of "the unique position of Māori in New Zealand society" or are brought to "acknowledge the importance to all New Zealanders of both Māori and Pākehā traditions, histories, and values" (Ministry of Education, 1993, p. 7).

NGA KITENGA A TE RANGAHAU – WHAT I
CONCLUDED FROM THE RESEARCH

The search for answers to my questions, What is the political and social agenda which lies behind Aotearoa-New Zealand's bicultural education policy and what are the perceptions, behaviours and performances of the participants in relation to the bicultural curriculum imperative?, confirmed that my task was complicated by many factors – historical, sociological, anthropological, economic, racial, political and educational. I arrived at several conclusions:

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Treaty of Waitangi, though not itself binding in law, has influenced the shape of Aotearoa-New Zealand society and its policies for education. Subsequent legislation has not protected Māori from policies of colonial imperialism and assimilation that contradict the intent of the treaty. Their low status in economic, social and cultural terms denotes cultural inequality with Pākehā;
- Liberal humanist doctrines of the 1970s have led to government policies which endorse a species of biculturalism rather than multiculturalism. It is policy deriving from a specific political and ideological stance not shared by all New Zealanders;
- Māori belief that their 'arts' are the central vehicle of their culture makes visual arts education a significant dimension of curriculum if true bicultural policy is to be sustained. What might constitute appropriate practice in terms of bicultural art education is not well-defined and results in variable practice from tokenism to informed comprehension about Māoritanga (traditions, practices, beliefs) and tikanga Māori (respect for Māori cultural values);
- The imposition of current bicultural requirements may place unrealistic burdens upon teachers. The mandatory inclusion of a bicultural dimension in the visual arts curriculum does not ensure that all students gain some understanding of "the unique position of Māori in New Zealand society" or are brought to "acknowledge the importance to all New Zealanders of both Māori and Pākehā traditions, histories, and values" (Ministry of Education, 1993, p. 7).

As a consequence of this research I am left with the sobering knowledge that what to begin with I thought of as an enlightened government policy in a liberal climate towards the indigenous people of Aotearoa-New Zealand may not be more than yet another piece of paternalism. Such paternalism within a government's education system is intolerable in terms of Giroux's (1992, p. 15) claim that "educators have a public responsibility that by its very nature involves them in the struggle for democracy. This makes the teaching profession a unique and powerful public resource". Giroux typifies teaching as a profession, which in the best interpretation means that teachers are not merely the providers of instruction, but accept a responsibility to examine the circumstances or conditions with which they are faced, explore the best possible solutions based upon sound and evaluated information and research, implement with skill the programmes they devise, and accept responsibility to face and deal with outcomes, positive or negative. It is a role which requires teachers to evaluate the philosophies, objectives and directives of the state and its education system, a large demand perhaps but one essential if professionalism is to prevail over instructional obedience.

In Aotearoa-New Zealand, historically, teachers colleges or colleges of education have been stand-alone institutions under the direct control of the Ministry of Education in terms of establishment, resourcing and curriculum. In this circumstance it would appear difficult, if not subversive, for colleges of education to offer pre-entry training which was not obedient to Ministry guidelines. What became evident from my research, however, is the need for teacher educators (and their students) to be able and willing to question the Ministry's position on such issues as national curriculum. Subsequent to my research there has been much critical debate about *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993). As example, Clark (2004, p. 35) regards the curriculum framework as "philosophically problematic and politically conservative". O'Neill *et al.* (2004, p. 43), similarly, see the document as one which "does not embrace an educational or pedagogically informed approach to teaching and learning". One of the centrally mandated requirements for teacher registration and employment is, however, that pre-service teachers are familiar with and competent to offer programmes consistent with the curriculum framework. Clark (2004, p. 35) claims that "this means little more than simply getting students to accept as a given the Ministry approved position". Such criticisms must be taken seriously by visual arts teacher educators, a position I have advocated in arguing for the displacement of a monocultural view of curriculum in favour of cultural equity (Smith, 2004). Passive acceptance of the Ministry's acknowledgement of the value of Te Tiriti o Waitangi-The Treaty of Waitangi and of New Zealand's bicultural identity is not enough in itself.

I have come to the conclusion as a result of my research that the ideological bases of our bicultural policy require scrutiny, not least by those involved in teacher education and school reform. It may be that existing bicultural policy rests on a faulty premise regarding ethnicity and culture. It is imperative in my view that the teaching profession itself takes the lead in examining and researching the validity of existing bicultural policy, but it is less likely to do so when teacher education is required to be obedient to state dictates. What is required is that teacher education takes upon itself the responsibility to act as the conscience of society and have the courage and determination to withstand the shifting ideological and politically motivated impositions of government.

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