

Waiariki hosts AUT students

by Nick Thodey

AUT journalism students had an insight into the Maori culture, and what it means to be a Maori affairs reporter, when they were hosted by Waiariki journalism school in Rotorua in April.

The students listened to members of the Tangatarua Marae and the Waiariki Institute of Technology speak about living together in a multicultural society.

Waiariki journalism school aims to give students the skills needed to work in a multicultural environment, with emphasis on Maori cultural perspectives, says Annabel Shuler, the school's leader.

"It's an 18 month print-based programme which aims to train journalists, or students who want to become confident in Maori reporting," says Ms Shuler.

There is a severe lack of Maori journalists in the New Zealand media, and the Waiariki journalism school attends to this need, providing capable Maori journalists.

"Many of our graduates go into the mainstream Maori media, such as Iwi radio stations, and television programmes such as Te Karere and Waka Huia on TVNZ."

Gideon Porter is the Maori issues correspondent for Radio New Zealand, and graduated from Waiariki journalism school in 1986.

"I spent six months on the course, and enjoyed it very much because I was in a Maori setting, looking at the Maori perspective. It suited me down to the ground," says Mr Porter.

Waiariki journalists are taught to present stories with understanding of the Maori world, but still remain faithful to the basic rules of journalism, says Mr Porter.

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TANGATARUA MARAE: AUT students mingling with Waiariki students

PHOTO: KIM REED

as being fair and objective, but dealing with the Maori society and all things

"Maori reporting involves the same principles of being a journalist, such as being fair and objective."

involved, such as health, education and sport," he says.

Students at Waiariki are taught to follow the same news values as Pakeha reporters, but to apply them in their purest sense, and not allow them to be influenced by the dominant race.

The producer of TV3's *Nightline*, Graeme Muir, says that no media organisation can go without a Maori reporter in New Zealand, and having Maori journalists brings a number of

advantages.

"There is definitely a level of self-interest there; we would have no access to certain events or people with only Pakeha reporters. Maori journalists also add another vital perspective to Maori related stories."

Overall, combining the two journalism schools worked very well, says Ms Schuler.

When asked if she would like it to happen again next year, she replied: "absolutely".

Learning te reo key to healthy race relations

by Lucy Arthur

Learning te reo Maori could play a key part in solving the country's race relations issues, language advocates say.

Lana Simmons-Donaldson, communications advisor for Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Maori (Maori Language Commission), says at the moment especially, Maori and non-Maori need to understand each other and the past.

"It [learning te reo] would go a long way to creating a racially harmonious environment – a positive future for the country," says Mrs Simmons-Donaldson (Ngati Porou and Ngati Taranaki).

Zoe Linsell, a former translator who is now a production assistant at Maori Television, says the media

project a Maori versus Pakeha message and the only way to stop it is to learn te reo Maori.

"The language is completely tied to culture. In order to have understanding of culture you need to have some understanding of the language. If you don't understand someone how are you supposed to get on with them?"

Miss Linsell holds a Bachelor of Arts in Maori. Although she is not Maori herself, she is fluent in te reo Maori.

"I thought it was a matter of respect to learn the Maori language. I completely fell in love with it. It's given me an alternative view," she says.

Jason King, a lecturer in te reo Maori at Auckland University of Technology, says he had to learn English language and culture to

understand non-Maori. For this reason, Mr King believes that non-Maori owe the same to Maori.

"I know how to speak English and I definitely know the English culture. If you know another culture you have that much more of an open mind," says Mr King (Ngati Waikato).

"I thought it was a matter of respect to learn the Maori language."

The results of the 2001 survey on the Health of the Maori language show that 42% of Maori aged 15 and over (136,000) have some te reo Maori skills.

According to Te Tari Tatau

(Statistics New Zealand) the largest group of Maori that can hold everyday conversations in te reo Maori are aged 65 and over.

Mr King says numbers taking his night classes have gone from 20 people in one class to 80 wanting to be in one class.

"I've noticed more non-Maori wanting to learn and coming through our classes. A lot well-known people have gone through my classes – the likes of Niki Caro, Shelly Mckmeekin," he says.

The Government's Maori language strategy was established in 1997 and one of those strategies is Ma te reo.

Ma te reo is a Government funded programme that was established in 2001 to help regenerate Te Reo by funding projects like language programmes and classes.

Ta moko — sacred ritual or just another tattoo?

by Zoe Hooper

Ta moko is traditionally a sacred cultural rite given and received only by Maori, but the tapu (sacred) tattooing is becoming more mainstream.

Phill Matthias, owner of Dermagraphic Tattoo Studio in Auckland, has tattooed about six facial moko and thousands of body moko – even though he is not Maori.

"As a New Zealander I believe I have every right," he says.

However not everybody agrees with him.

Mark Kopua (Ngati Ira, Ngati Porou and Hauti) is a master carver

and moko artist. He says Maori culture is exploited when tattoo parlours use moko to make money.

"I'm drawing a story using the language. To me it's the same as writing it in French, Arabic or Greek."

"They do it without any negotiation, consultation or consideration for our culture."

Mr Matthias charges his clients for body moko, but says it is just

like any other tattoo.

"I'm drawing a story using the language. To me it's the same as writing it in French, Arabic or Greek."

However, he agrees with Mr Kopua that facial moko should not be used for profit.

"If someone non-Maori is doing it as a commercial venture they're totally missing the point."

"I would be too if I was taking money for it, but I don't do it for a reward."

Mr Matthias says he has always followed traditional procedures when tattooing facial moko.

The moko design represents the person's tribal history, character and

position in their tribe. They will fast for six to ten weeks, followed by karakia (prayer), singing and blessings from their tribal elders.

Inia Taylor (Ngati Raukawa) owns a tattoo studio in Auckland, Moko Ink, which specialises in body and facial moko.

"I think it's hilarious Dermagraphic seems to think they're doing anything traditional," he says.

Mr Taylor says non-Maori would probably make a mess tattooing a moko, but people of any race should be able to wear one.

"My family tattooed 12 of them [non-Maori] before the Treaty of Waitangi.

New group for Maori diabetics

by Esther Bennett

Maori diabetics in Auckland can now find help through a new support group – the first of its kind in New Zealand.

Te Roopu Awhina Maori ma te Iwi Mate Huka (the Maori Diabetic Support Group) is run by kaumatua Cliff Gregory and is based on the North Shore.

Mr Gregory says the purpose of the group is to teach Maori to take control of their health, rather than avoiding doctors, or going to them as a last resort.

"Normally Maori are shy – we've got to be pushed to go to the doctor. We have a light-hearted attitude, and don't realise the seriousness of it. Nine times out of ten it's too late."

Group member Sophia Hita has lost five of her whanau to diabetes, and says one of the most dangerous mindsets Maori have is denial.

"A lot don't believe they have it, and that nothing's going to happen. You think you can get away with it – that you're invincible," she says.

Getting Maori to admit they have high susceptibility to diabetes is part of Mr Gregory's work with the group.

"We've got to realise it's not just something we're unlucky to get. A big percentage of Maori will end up with it," he says.

The group meets every month at Te Puna Hauora, a Maori health provider in Northcote, to discuss problems, encourage one another, and to be educated further about the life sentence they have with diabetes.

Eliza Sneglar from the Auckland Diabetes Office equips the group with "goodies" – special biscuits, lollies and jams that will not send sugar levels up.

She also gives diet advice, which Mrs Hita says is much needed.

"Maori have a different way of eating. We need to learn to eat properly because there's so many of us that have got it wrong," says Mrs Hita.

Eating is often done with family, which is one reason why Mr Gregory places a high emphasis on whanaungatanga (family involvement) within the group.

He encourages members to bring along the whole whanau, "so the kids can understand why dad can't have fish and chips".

Mrs Sneglar agrees with this family approach, and says it makes all the difference at their meetings.

"The thing with diabetes is that it obviously affects the whole whanau."

According to Te Tari Tatau (Statistics New Zealand) Maori are five times more likely to die from diabetes than non-Maori.