FRONT COVER
Gerard Mariner
Mayfield Primary School, South Auckland
Gerard is 10 years old. The design of his artwork focuses on nature and the beautiful country of Samoa. Gerard chose to use dye for his work because the colours are brighter and that was what he wanted to show about Samoa.

Apart from his art, Gerard enjoys all sports. He enjoys watching sports and getting involved in some of them especially rugby and basketball. Music is also a favourite of Gerard’s. He plays the piano and bass guitar and sometimes plays at his church. Gerard enjoys school as there are many interesting and fun things to do.

Mayfield Primary School is a Decile 1a school in East Tamaki with a roll of approximately 500 students, 84% of Pacific Island descent and 16% of Māori descent. We value the cultural diversity of our school and also of our staff, who are dedicated to their profession and to providing high quality education for our students. Many of our students excel in the cultural areas as well – sport, music and art. We are proud and honoured to have the artwork of one of our students on the cover of Kairaranga.
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Editorial

O le ala i le pule, i le tautua.
The pathway to ownership is through serving.

Relationships have always been a driving force behind the publication of Kairaranga. The journal aims to ensure an inclusive and culturally responsive voice for a plethora of people and provides an opportunity for diverse groups to have a vehicle to disseminate and discuss topics of educational interest. In doing so, Kairaranga rises to the challenges of diversity which coincides with the focus of this year’s RTLB National Conference in Manukau, Auckland: “Rising to the challenges of diversity (eke ki te Matataki o te Ahureatanga)”.

This issue reflects a potpourri of articles highlighting different voices, cultures and stories. The vibrant cover art depicts the richness of the Pasifika, and continues the Kairaranga tradition of showcasing the RTLB conference host region with the second issue of the journal. Contributions to this issue reflect the collaborative partnership the journal has held between RTLB, the Ministry of Education and the tertiary education sector.

The interview with Keith Ballard gives a fascinating and comprehensive insight into his contribution to education. Whilst sharing his journey with the reader, his sense of humour and appreciation of significant others is evident, and is commanding reading. Kairaranga is also proud to support first-time and emerging writers. In supporting practice Kairaranga advocates that there are many forms of evidence, including the Storied Experience narratives in this journal. The opportunity to tell stories, frame reflective positions and acknowledge those who have gone before are all aspects of becoming self-determining.

In 2007, a questionnaire provided Kairaranga readers with the opportunity to provide feedback. The findings have been summarised within this current issue as part of the Editorial Board’s commitment to feedback and service. As always, we hope that you reflect on the content and use it to support your own practices, relationships and advocacy.

Noho ora mai, nā

Carol, Graeme, Jo C, Mere, Merrolee, Roseanna and Valerie

Kairaranga

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Raising Your Sights Beyond Your Immediate Understandings

An interview with Emeritus Professor Keith Ballard

If you look at those little children we saw this morning, and as a grandparent now, I’m very attentive to anyone under 5 because I want to know more about how do they do these things. When you see a little child of the first 3 or 4 years of their life, what I see is this deep trust. You can say “go there”, “do that” and they do. And this is profound in terms of what it means to be human; that these little humans have this sense of you – which is about trust. But it’s also profound in terms of saying something about learning and I think as an adult learner, what I haven’t told you is that I sat U.E. twice; obviously I failed it the first time.

When Emeritus Professor Keith Ballard was interviewed specifically for this edition of Kairaranga, he was in a reflective mood. The following day he was to give a keynote address, the Herbison Lecture, at the annual New Zealand Association for Research in Education (NZARE) Conference in Christchurch. That he was asked to give this lecture to the educational research community in New Zealand shows the esteem in which this man is held: someone who has achieved a large body of scholarly work in education, while deeply caring about people and their place. That he had entered New Zealand shores from another country 45 years ago without tertiary or teaching qualifications showed something equally important; Keith Ballard has, by and large, always known how to tread with care in new terrain, has continued to forge new pathways for himself and others, has taken the courage to talk about contentious issues he cares about, and is a risk-taker searching for an understanding of others. He has not been afraid to take the hard road. In this interview he laughed a lot, chuckled as he recalled various people and events, and was contemplative as he recalled his struggles and learning over his educational career. So what happened in those intervening 45 years when a young man, full of new beginnings, probably hope, immigrated to New Zealand without tertiary qualifications or A levels, and who at that time, had no idea what was ahead of him? Who were the people that shaped his subsequent remarkable influence on teaching, teachers and learning, both in New Zealand and internationally? Who is Keith Ballard?

In terms of what influences how I think, it probably is quite relevant to think about that background. My background is West London and I left school with very modest passes in what I think we used to call an O level and an A level exam. I came out very weak in that and so I left school in England and I began training as a laboratory technician. Part of why that is an influence is that I’ve always loved the precision of science, or what we would say now is the assumed precision probably. But there is something elegant about chemical analysis, for example, and about the ways in which we try and understand the physical nature of the world. So in a way my limited school achievements left me with two things actually. It was this respect for the notion of science, and also one teacher who one day said to me that I would pass the English exam. Now I think people very rarely told me I would pass anything, and I did pass. And English and Literature have always been a core thing for me. And so if you like, the next part of that story would be coming to New Zealand and working for a couple of years as a lab technician. Realising that this was not what I wanted to do any longer, and there were all sorts of reasons for that, I did a lot of work with animals and I can only do so much of that, and that was enough. While I was a lab technician I enrolled for University Entrance with the Correspondence School because I wanted to see if I could pass those exams. Don’t anyone ever criticise the Correspondence School. The Correspondence School is a New Zealand marvel, I tell you. The Correspondence School was the most wonderful teaching I’d ever had, those green canvas bags, they just kept coming. I failed it the first time and I passed it the second time. And I’ve always looked back with great fond regard on being a graduate of the New Zealand Correspondence School.

I then worked assembling cars in a factory for a year or more. And you see again in terms of influences, in those days we are talking the 60s, ordinary people could work at Ford Motor Factory or whatever else was available and we used to get time and a half [pay] for the first half hour of the morning until 8am. We used to get time and a half from 5.00pm or 5.30pm, and double time afterwards. And you would get these rates on a Saturday. So ordinary people could have a life, a family and a house on a working person’s salary. And that again for me was a significant part of my
memory of how a society can be. Now there were all sorts of things about that society that were seriously problematic. The treatment of women, the invisibility of Māori and so on, but I guess that memory of a society that is determined that the economic resources of a country can be organised in such a way that families can thrive; that to me has been an influence.

But anyway, after I worked assembling cars for a while I went to teachers’ college. The influence to do that was one person, Mavis was her name, and there was something that we had to do where school kids would come around and we had to explain what we were doing and I always ended up doing that. And someone said to me, “you’d be a teacher” and it was as simple as that, not quite as simple as that, but I knew that I wanted to do something else. So I went to the Wellington College of Education as an adult student and again that has been a significant influence, because I have always respected “oldies” who can go into an education environment and who like myself had no experience or background in the idea of tertiary education, none at all. So for me it was a totally unknown world. And really the idea of teachers’ college, as we called it, was that it was much safer than the idea of university, I mean that was just beyond the pale. But you’d turn up at teachers college and I really engaged if you like with the idea of reading and this time someone was saying that there is actually value in this reading, so that was exciting. Very much later in my work in the university I then deliberately began to use the notion of novels and poetry as a way of knowing the world, which was as legitimate as other ways in which we make claims about what we know and understand.

I suspect that moving to New Zealand was always seen as a permanent thing. And one of the other things again is a strong memory of what I now understand as culture shock. I came to New Zealand as a white English speaking person and there were other people that looked like me, but they weren’t. You know the meanings and the values were often different, there is so much that is different, and that is an important experience; if we think about any movement in people across countries and cultures I guess that is quite a useful experience to have.

LEARNING ABOUT BEING A TEACHER: THOUGHTFUL ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHERS

I think my education began at the Wellington College of Education with people who understood education as a process of becoming knowledgeable, so you had to know things and become aware of ways of knowing. Which I now think is a kind of political and ethical thing; that you raise your sights beyond your immediate understandings. So the college did that. It was an environment that was designed to do that.

So the next influence on my learning would have been the couple of years I spent at Johnsonville Primary School, which had the most extraordinary team of teachers. I counted the other day, I had 42 children in my first class. So I often wonder how they are all doing. But again, that was an astonishing time and there is nothing harder than being a classroom teacher. I’ve never done anything before or since that was as challenging as that. It requires enormous thought about each child. It requires enormous commitment to do something that will make the child’s learning happen. I think I was really only beginning to comprehend this when I actually left teaching after a few years.

Then I went to Victoria University of Wellington as a junior lecturer and soon after, I did my educational psychology training in Auckland. I was interested at that time in retaining a practical professional practice. So that exposed me to people like Marie Clay and Ted Glynn, who had a great influence on my subsequent work. And so I kept on with that career path of an interest in children, knowing about children.

I think if I had to name the influences there, they would be too great to name, but Marie Clay was an extraordinary person with this deep knowledge of human development. And also my memory of her is very much of her as a very...
strong person, because her development of reading assessment and Reading Recovery seemed to be way outside mainstream thought. And I think Marie Clay modelled for New Zealand researchers the notion that you need to sit alongside children. That you need to sit alongside teachers and that you need to be thoughtful about what it is you are seeing.

So again if you like, coming back to the beginning of our conversation, truth claims, what we claim to know, can come from a number of sources. But one important source is that thoughtful engagement with another person. You want to know something about how they think or what they know or what their experiences are. And indeed many years later I worked with Louis Heshusius on our book, that was really the core of Louis’ work: how we know in relationship to others.

UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN THROUGH ASSESSMENT

Keith Ballard wanted most to understand children in order to support their learning. After teaching in schools for a few years, and then as a lecturer, he turned to educational psychology as a way to understand how he could make a positive difference to children’s lives. While he thought he would find answers through his educational psychology training, he discovered the tensions in psychometric testing and in exacerbating testing regimes and contexts. Thus began the forerunner of a research agenda as he set out to question the conventional wisdom or accepted practice of psychometric testing.

I expected to learn very specific things about how you knew children. And I was going to use this knowledge and be useful. And what I found was it wasn’t like that. When I came to this requirement in our course, that we learned to give the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children and the Stanford Scale, I thought, “this will be interesting, because here is a specific thing.” And I have to say that I later thought not just that they were absurd activities, but I actually thought that it was inappropriate to ask children to do these things. And so I began to look at the whole notion of where the tests came from and the claims that were made of these tests. I mean basically they can’t be substantiated in the most simple sense and that is you have to challenge testing on its own terms.

And what I wrote about in a number of papers over several years was simply using the criteria that the test makers say are the important ones. For example, there are a number of different kinds of validity, but the only one that really matters is construct validity and that is the one that the Stanford Binet and the Wechsler Intelligence Scales do not have. What is the “construct” you are measuring? And it’s kind of extraordinary, as what is said under that heading is so critical.

I came across people like Stephen J Gould, ‘The Mismeasure of Man’ and his account of the harm done by IQ testing. You then have to have something else that you are going to use as a psychologist and so that became, if you like, the next challenge. And not just for me either, a number of other people in the field at that time were looking at ways of working that did not involve testing. But the education system itself was strongly grounded in requirements for testing for certain purposes. So to stay in an ordinary school, or to get removed from an ordinary school, you had to have that test score, so I found that a very difficult issue.

I thought there would be something magic in these boxes [that the tests came in], and what was in the box? They were basically trivial, they were devoid of anything useful to humanity and, in fact, vastly worse than that of course, I honestly believe they are deeply harmful tools, because they maintain a stereotype of human intelligence and they maintain a strategy for labelling and segregating some children and adults. So it is not an issue that has gone away, even today. I find it remarkable actually that there are still many programmes for training psychologists that would include this kind of instrument scale. Even then, compared to some other psychometric instruments, the IQ test on its own terms stands up quite well, so I mean there are a whole range of assessment tools which are so deeply and seriously flawed that unless the professional bodies take their own ethical standards seriously, I guess they’ll get replicated onwards forever.

There were a number of people who were active in developing other ways of working with children. And this is why I think behaviour analysis, I think it was such a valuable tool at that time where you had strategies for evaluating both the child and its environment. So with Ted Glyn’s approach to behaviour analysis as a strategy of evaluating the child-environment connection, that was a strong influence on me. I think that Ted and myself were never strongly operant people. We could understand the argument for the conditioning models, but I didn’t find those engaging strategies when in fact your responsibility I think was to pay more attention to the environment rather than just to some particular elements of the environment; to strive to organise the environment in a way in which it would be a more responsive environment for the child.

To understand why people choose certain ways of working I think it comes back to understanding the person – of the assessor, for example. In the same way, to understand teaching we have to understand the person of the teacher. To understand research we have to understand the person of the researcher.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Keith worked as an educational psychologist for a few years, a career that took him south from Auckland to be based in Christchurch. While these years were not particularly memorable for Keith, he did enjoy the Psychological Service and the people there.

There were some marvellous people; I mean Denis Longley and others who were very experienced psychologists with a strong commitment to children and school systems and teachers. There was a lot for me to admire and strive to be able to do the kinds of things that I needed to do as a psychologist. As a psychologist you work with parents and children but [back then] the work of a psychologist was

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1 The Psychological Service was an independent service. This was disestablished and replaced, after the 1989 Education Act, with Special Education Services, which has since been amalgamated into the Ministry of Education. Educational psychologists now primarily work for the Ministry of Education, Special Education.
pretty much trying to work out what might be happening and providing some advice and support and, hopefully, some strategies for teachers and parents.

I don’t think testing got in the way other than that I was different from a lot of other psychologists, and that is not a particularly easy thing to be. I tend to feel that we have a responsibility if we have got an idea that we feel strongly about then we should put it in the public arena. And that’s a position I think we should consider taking, because it may be an idea that could be useful to others. But equally important is your ethical responsibility to put it out there and see what happens. I received a great deal of criticism for the writings that I did about IQ testing.

It’s just something that I felt that as public servants, basically we shouldn’t hold things to ourselves. If we genuinely thought we had something useful then we had a responsibility to put it out there. Also, feedback might indicate that you have got it wrong. I felt that sense of being a public servant right the way through my career. People sneer now, “who are these people paid by the State?”, yes we are, university lecturers are paid for by the State. And because I feel we have a responsibility to say “look this might be useful, see what you think.” There are many people that have had very substantial influence on what has happened in New Zealand, by the way in which they have been able to explain systems, or explain ideologies or whatever, people like John Codd, for example and others.

COURAGE THROUGH IMAGINATION, THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

When we talked with Keith about his work, both of us having been postgraduate students of his in the late 1980s at Otago University, we asked how he found the courage to put himself constantly in situations where he was an “outsider” or taking strong positions that required ongoing debate and critique. For example, moving to a new country, working in a technician role and deciding to commence tertiary study, and tackling contentious issues such as the IQ debate, and later inclusion, where conflict was rife. We dared to mention his courage, in taking a different path. Our discussion on courage did not sit comfortably with Keith, and instead took us to a key point of his work: relationships with others, and incorporating the strengths of others to support his work. Ultimately for Keith, forging new ground and supporting learning is about relationships and how “we relate one to another.” And the answers to this have come through people, as well as through science and literature.

I think it is very kind of you to frame it like that. I’m very reluctant to have the word “courage” used at all because imagine how challenging it is for people who come from Samoa or Tonga, or anywhere, to this place, compared to a Pom. Actually one of the things I had forgotten is I never met any Māori after I first came to New Zealand. I kept expecting to see Māori people and the first time I met Māori was on the assembly line when I worked at Ford’s and so one of the things I did at university was a Māori reading knowledge paper as a way of finding out about this new place I was in.

I understand what you are saying and it is very kind of you to frame it that way but I think a reader would think “oh who is this character?” I think it is true to say that I kind of ended up a number of times in a minority position of views. My views have been minority views. And I think what I would say about that, is that it has never been comfortable. If you want a quiet life this isn’t the route at all. I guess there is some recent work as well, that comes into that.

Rather than say that I have chosen a difficult path and shown courage, for me I would delete all of that, and say that what is important to me have been particular people. You know at each time if you like, of change or learning, each time of a change or learning for me, there has been a person or sometimes several persons. And I think one of the issues there is a theme, which I am still struggling to understand, but has always been a theme of my work, and that is this issue of relationships. How do we relate one to another?

I think also the influence [of literature] has been extraordinarily important, and still this is to this day, this week, where the novelist has a highly significant position, I believe, in the human world, by telling humans about what it is to be human, because it is such a complicated thing that you need a poetic imagination to achieve that.

[Other influences included] students at every level who have said something to me, who have written something, who have asked a question and you think “goodness gracious, how do I think about that?” And I think that student energy that is part of being in that environment is an amazingly privileged position to be in. Also, the university gives you opportunity to travel and see what is happening in other places, which is absolutely critical here in New Zealand. It’s only when you leave New Zealand that you are reminded of how extremely insignificant we are in so many respects. And also you learn how good we are in some areas.

So what I did after a while was to rethink and rewrite a lot of my academic teaching within the university and I made this shift from a positivist behavioural position toward what I refer to as qualitative thought. And there was a great comfort in the sense that I could now see that there are other ways of thinking and being as a researcher, which are in fact extraordinarily demanding. I mean people seem to think that what is called qualitative research, which is many things, but qualitative research which is undertaken within a named position of constructivism or whatever is very difficult research to design, to meet the assumptions and expectations of the position that you claim to be working in and it’s very difficult to do because mostly it’s about an engagement with someone. It’s about a relationship from which you expect to know something. So this theme of relationship again emerges.

I’m still pursuing an interest in how we relate to one another as people. That is the core of what is both, I think, exciting in terms of striving to understand what on earth that actually means. You get some glimpse of how complex it is if you are located into another culture don’t you? Where you have got a language and a whole system of meanings and values that you don’t yet know.
Have you ever needed to imagine other realities for yourself?

I think that is everything I have said. Each of those moments has been a possibility of something different. I'm sure and I can think of moments that I haven't been brave enough … I think you see things that you haven't thought of and you kind of imagine "oh what if?" and then you have to make some decisions about what are the implications of that. I mean sometimes it's so intangible that it might not have anything to it, but I think that other times it is a challenge to say, "well all this time I have thought in this way and now look." And I'm absolutely sure that this will go on in our lives. That when we think we know something is probably the dangerous moment, don't get too confident.

RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Keith completed his doctoral work in behaviour analysis at The University of Otago and subsequently worked in the area of educational psychology and behaviour analysis for some years. At Otago some of Keith's initial work with postgraduate students in projects involving adults with intellectual disabilities eventually took a new direction toward qualitative research, human rights, and the study of inclusion and its meanings. Theory and practice, combined with the daily and lived experiences of disabled people, became influenced by a strong qualitative and rich research agenda for change and justice.

Where I initially found some of the most exciting teaching was with my postgraduate behaviour analysis group. We used to work primarily with adults within intellectual disabilities. We'd ask them what they might like to know or learn. It might be learning a bus route, so they could be independent going to and from home and work. I mean we never knew what it was that someone might say they wanted to work on, so that was really exciting. But after some years I made a very deliberate move into what I call qualitative thought, I felt much more comfortable then in thinking differently about the work that I was doing, which again was something I was unsure of at first. And so I shifted from the psychology work of individuals and groups to a more serious examination of the wider notion of context. Again I think this is a personal thing. I mean some people do important work in the area of individual children and families, and so on, and there is nothing critical of that, just because I shifted out of those. It is not a criticism of that at all. It's just that I felt this need to, if you like it is a selfish need, the opportunity was there, and I decided I needed to do something different, to begin thinking in a different way. And what happened was as soon as I opened up what is there I became very interested in the field of disability as a contextual issue and I had an enormous influence from Anne Bray – an unquestioned leader in New Zealand in this field of disability.

And then somehow or another from the work I was doing on social and ideological contexts I got invited to a meeting in England with Mel Ainscow and Tony Booth and Roger Slee and Linda Ware and others and this was again a life changing experience. What became known as the International Research Colloquium on Inclusive Education was a small group of people who met every other year in a different country. And we were different people at the end of it.

Our assignment was to research and write something, to send it around the group and we spent the week discussing those writings. So we were just putting our work in front of everyone in the group and I had never learnt more ever and we would critique it for as long as it took. That group across 5 or 6 years was enormously important to me. It was that kind of environment where you had a sense of respect for each other, a sense of trust and you were prepared to ask questions about responsibilities and understandings in working out what inclusion might mean. And those questions led through to the notion of social justice and then to human rights. So if you like there is some kind of personal connection here in terms of how a group of researchers have found themselves working together and learning from one another. And the same fundamental issues of relationships come through in teaching and learning.

One of the other significant areas of learning for me originated with Ted Glynn at The University of Otago when he said that we should know about the Treaty and that we should engage with mana whenua and off some of us went. We were extremely fortunate to have people like Aha Kapa, Khyla Russell and many others who provided learning and support for those of us who were striving to understand our roles and responsibilities under the Treaty. So that when Ted left Otago I felt that I wanted to continue with that agenda and one of the things I felt would be valuable was to examine what a Māori position might be in my main area of research at the time, which was in the field of intellectual disability. So I tried to find out where that might come from. And in various diverse ways I ended up having contact with a group Te Ropu Manaaki I te Hunga Haau in Eastern Bay of Plenty. And I did some work with them. We shared some research ideas, we shared research projects and the leader of that group was Tame Iti. So I had visited a number of times in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and they provided an enormous amount of support so that we might do the learning that we needed to do, an enormous amount of support for us to continue to learn.

I think that a key theme for me [in being involved with different groups] was the constant willingness to be critical about one another’s ideas and work. And to do that you have to have a great deal of trust. I think many of us know that if we are frightened it's hard to learn, it's even harder to get it right. Fear is not a context for effective learning.

LITERATURE

Keith is always reading for new ideas and directions. On the surface science and the arts are usually considered world’s apart, but they both rely on people imagining new possibilities.

And the most recent one is a beautiful book by Lynn Hunt, an American historian, ‘Inventing Human Rights’ and what I love about it is that she says that in her research into how people come to believe that there should be human rights, that is that people should have some equality in rights, is an act of imagination. That they begin to see that someone else is like themselves. And for me that is a kind of magic moment, because it takes you back to the world of literature.
where constantly you see the world in another way and you know those people are like yourself.

This notion of imagination is perhaps an extremely important one. Perhaps it’s an extremely important human capacity to make something up. So I think it must be an important basis for art which I don’t pretend to understand anything about apart from the fact that you can look at something and it will make you feel things you can’t articulate. And also imagination is as Paulo Freire says “we must imagine other realities.” Where we have got a reality that is harmful to children and people we must imagine something else as an alternative. So Freire is saying that if you accept what is there and it’s harmful then you imagine something else as an alternative. This was in part due to believing that teachers had one of the most difficult jobs in education, and partly because of a strongly held and genuine regard for people as leaders and learners based on their own understandings and experiences.

I don’t think I can give advice really to anyone. I think my responsibility, such as it is, is to do what I said at the beginning and that is say “look here is something that makes sense to me at the moment.” You may choose to read this; it may say something to you. We have to take seriously the most difficult jobs in education, and partly because of a notion of a critical responsibility. It means we should be thoughtfully professional responsibility and an ethic of care. For Keith, it is within the dialogue of trusting relationships that the most effective learning is realised. The imagined becomes a possibility and then, a reality.

FURTHER READING


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Who are the Best Teachers of Pasifika Children?

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ABSTRACT
This paper discusses the complexities of engaging with Pasifika communities in Aotearoa New Zealand and examines the assumption that the best people to provide services to Pasifika children have to be Pasifika. The paper offers strategies on building the capability of non-Pasifika staff to work with Pasifika children and their families.

Position paper
Keywords
Competence, cultural differences, Pasifika children, professional training, special needs, teacher development

INTRODUCTION: AT A CONFERENCE ONE DAY
“Who are the best teachers of Pasifika children Ezra?” snapped the middle-aged, overly-enthusiastic, papalagi academic with the unidentifiable Euro-American accent from the centre of the front row. I had met him 90 minutes earlier and knew he was going to be trouble.

I decided to set up early, organise my transparencies, finally found my workshop room and discovered that I wasn’t the first one there. He was already waiting. Tap tapping his pen on the chair in front, flicking through the conference programme and circling stuff. He was the first to the room, greeted me with a huge smile and a well meaning “Talofa” and then asked if I had copies of my presentation – only so he could focus on me and the presentation rather than take notes. He had checked with the registration desk twice to make sure my workshop was in the right place as there were a number of last minute room changes to the morning programme. He was looking forward to the session as he was searching for strategies to better understand the Pacific Island boys in his school – “Great,” I thought. He was one of those guys. I was already nervous, being my first major presentation and a newbie to the education sector and now I had this guy who was hinging his whole teaching practice with Pasifika students on me – no problem.

I paused, wiped the glistening beads of sweat from my brow, took a deep breath and squeaked out my answer, which I won’t share with you now as I’ve still got 1000 words to write. It was 1997 and it was the first time I was asked that question and it remains the one I get asked the most – particularly when people find out my job title. The assumption is that the best people to provide services to Pasifika children have to be Pasifika. This certainly raises a number of issues for a predominately papalagi workforce of education and health practitioners when faced with an increasingly diverse client base.

A PASIFika POSITION
Pasifika children and families statistically have a low uptake of services provided by the Ministry of Education, Special Education. There are a number of factors that contribute to this which I describe as the triple-blind:

1. Untangling the stigma of special needs and raising the awareness of special education.
2. Engaging with ethnically and socially diverse and complex communities like Pasifika in Aotearoa.
3. Building the capability of a predominately non-Pasifika workforce to work more effectively with Pasifika children with special needs and their families.

I want to focus on the third point but briefly in terms of special needs and disability awareness, generally Pasifika peoples still have a way to go in terms of addressing and changing negative mindsets, deep-rooted stereotypes and beliefs relating to people with special needs and disabilities. There is often an association between the person’s impairment and the perception or belief that they have been afflicted or cursed by their own (or parents, village, ancestors and close family members) breach of tapu or sin – a view still held by many people within the Pasifika communities in Aotearoa (Foliaki, 2005). Secondly, many agencies and organisations continue the one size fits all engagement approach. They continue to see themselves as separate from the community and use language like them and us. The truth is they don’t fully understand the diversity and complexity of ethnic and social communities like Pasifika, clumping the six to seven diverse Pacific peoples into one homogenous group. Overwhelming them with unnecessary consultation meetings, poor and irrelevant information and complicated systems. Usually they are the agencies/organisations’ processes that are imposed on these communities. As a result families become disconnected and disinterested. I am proud to say it is an area we are improving in the Ministry through the stepped up Pasifika Education Plan 2008-2012 with its community engagement focus where we have acknowledged that we are part of the community, no longer separate.

Building the capability of our non-Pasifika staff to work more effectively with Pasifika children and their families with special needs is critical to achieving better outcomes for Pasifika children. The need for practitioners to be culturally competent and have basic cultural knowledge of Pasifika families is more pertinent today given the growth of Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa (recent projections estimate
that there will be an increasing concentration of Pasifika people in Manukau and Waitakere over the next 10 to 15 years and low numbers of Pasifika health and education professionals. The situation is particularly acute in special education because of the specialist roles. Although the recruitment of Pasifika staff is a critical strategy, it is a long term one with little promise of the investment because of the high premium on Pasifika graduates.

A key strategy for the Ministry has been the development of the Pasifika Cultural Responsiveness Programme (CRP) which has been successfully delivered nationally through the various Special Education offices by its Pasifika staff. What makes the programme so unique was it was developed by Pasifika field staff for their non-Pasifika colleagues and a significant feature of the programme is connecting the cultural knowledge and theory with practice – that solid, practical, this is how you do it stuff.

Cultural competence is about the acquisition of skills to achieve a better understanding of members of other cultures (Bacal, Jansen & Smith, 2006; Durie, 2001). The Pacific Cultural Competencies Framework for District Health Boards (2005) defines cultural competence as ‘the ability of individuals and systems to respond effectively across cultures in a way that recognises and respects the culture of the person, family, community or organisation being served’ (p. 5). The framework further highlights that ‘... cultural competencies are a process not an end point ... with the ongoing development of Pacific cultural competency framework standards there is an equally important need for the health sector to provide ongoing training in cultural competence and cultural awareness’ (p. 3).

Although cultural competency training and awareness isn’t new, I must admit it does seem to be the new black with almost every organisation, department and numerous professional bodies requiring that its members are culturally competent. Rightly so, considering the disparity for groups such as Pasifika and Māori but I am cautious about the use of the words cultural and training in the same sentence. Culture for starters is such an elusive and subjective concept because it is so fluid and ever evolving. Throw in the fact that Pasifika people are not homogenous and it does not refer to a single ethnicity, nationality, gender or culture and it is the voices of this Pasifika diaspora in Aotearoa we are focused on – one then begins to understand the complexity that is Pasifika.

Therefore developing cultural training programmes and pinning a theoretical framework to them, although terribly convenient and impressive, sometimes disguises the deeper issues to embracing diversity. That is you, the trainee or practitioner. You bring your own cultural identity, social, personal and professional experiences to the relationship – so don’t leave them at the gate. Meaningful cultural understanding and awareness comes about when one begins to empathise and relate oneself to the situation over time. Completing a two day programme certainly doesn’t make one fully culturally competent, rather its part of a continuum which practitioners need to supplement with cultural supervision and further professional learning opportunities. This may include participating in an event with your local Samoan community, celebrating a Niue haircutting ceremony, learning Cook Island Māori or attending a Tongan church service. We’ve made a deliberate effort in the Pasifika

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**Figure 1. Sei tapu Model.**

CRP to make participants more understanding of Pasifika cultures in Aotearoa as well as affirming their professional and personal skills and judgements when working with Pasifika families – a practitioner centred approach.

There are a number of Pasifika theoretical frameworks and models proposed by Pasifika researchers such as

- Tamasese, Peteru and Waldegrave’s (1997) concept of Fa’aofaletui
- Teremoana Ma-Ua-Hodge’s (2000) Tivaevae model
- Jean Mitaera’s (1997) concept of the Researcher as the First Paradigm
- Konai Helu-Thaman’s (1992) metaphor of Kakala

A recent model, and one that aligns most closely with the practitioner centred approach that we required, is the Seitapu model by Pulotu-Endemann et al. (2007). Developed for mental health practitioners when working with Pasifika clients, the Seitapu model, in the shape of a flower, places the practitioner at the centre of the model because it is they who will impact most significantly on the client and their family. The model shows that ‘competency in cultural theory and practice must work alongside competency in clinical theory and practice. This is represented by the four petals of the flower’ (Pulotu-Endemann et al., 2006, p. 8).

In the ideal world we would have more skilled and qualified Pasifika practitioners working in the system – but we don’t. Although we will continue to strive for the ideal, the development of professional learning programmes and cultural competencies to ensure non-Pasifika staff work effectively with Pasifika children is equally as important as the recruitment of qualified Pasifika students to special education. One can’t be at the expense of the other because they are so interdependent.

BACK TO THE CONFERENCE …

“… the best teachers of Pasifika children?” I repeated nervously waiting for the fire alarm to sound and then it came to me, and I repeated the words again but this time gave as my response: “The best teachers of Pasifika children are … the best teachers. It’s empathy, not just ethnicity, that’s important.” Silence for a two very long seconds. Then loud applause from the centre of the front row followed by grunts of support and approved nodding from the participants.

I’ve lost count of the number of people who have asked me for the set of protocols or guidelines of how to better engage with Pasifika peoples, seriously. People want the quick fix training programme or certificate to tick the box and often neglect their most powerful tool, themselves. Cultural training, awareness or responsiveness isn’t just learning about the other side. It should take into account one’s own cultural identity and experiences and supplement one’s own professional learning and skills. Culture absolutely counts in providing services to Pasifika children and students – just remember to bring yours as well.

NOTE

“I didn’t realise I was a Pasifika person or an Islander until I arrived at the airport in Mangere, before that I was a Samoan!” This quote illustrates perfectly the multi-ethnic diversity that is Pasifika, Pacific, Polynesian, PI or Islander and a caution not to use it freely or loosely to describe all brown people. Pasifika is a collective term used to refer to people of Pacific heritage or ancestry who have migrated or been born here in Aotearoa, New Zealand, Australia and the United States. Pasifika include recent migrants or first, second, third and subsequent generations of New Zealand-born Pasifika people. Pasifika are men, women and children of single or mixed heritages who identify themselves with their indigenous Pacific countries of origin because of ancestry or heritage, family and cultural connections with Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and other Pacific countries.

Pasifika people are not homogenous and Pasifika does not refer to a single ethnicity, nationality, gender or culture.

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This commentary by Professor Ted Glynn is in response to an article published in the last version of Kairaranga – Schooling for Happiness: Rethinking the aims of education, written by Dr Tom Cavanagh.

It is refreshing to read Cavanagh’s article which focuses our energies onto re-visiting the wider socio-cultural goals of education. The article tries to move our thinking beyond current concerns focused on accountability of teachers and students to meeting specific achievement standards and curriculum objectives. While these concerns are certainly appropriate and important, and deserve the careful attention they are now receiving from educational professionals and the media, Cavanagh’s article reminds us that we may be losing sight of much of the wider educational picture.

We might be losing sight of the educational implications of the rapidly increasing diversity of social and cultural values, beliefs and practices within our student communities and within our schools. This diversity is not well-reflect ed or represented in our pedagogies. There is a great deal of professional and media attention on the problems and challenges posed by all this diversity, and much anxiety about how and where we will find the knowledge and expertise to address the problems and challenges it presents. However, there seems to be little understanding and appreciation that both the knowledge and expertise are located within the diverse communities we are concerned about. We need to engage with this diversity in ways that are both affirming and responsive. We need to learn from it.

We might learn, for example, that our educational aims and goals, particularly those concerned with equity and inclusion, are not as responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity as we think. Our students are presently in our schools not simply there to be “prepared” for a future life and learning after school, but to participate in shaping a happy, safe, and satisfying life and learning culture here and now.

They are also there to learn how to understand, critique and challenge the values and practices of the society in which their schooling is embedded, and which has shaped the curriculum and pedagogies they experience.

Key pointers to increasing the responsiveness of our educational aims and goals are found in Cavanagh’s pleas for the central positioning of caring, respectful and inclusive relationships within classroom and school learning communities. These are the kinds of relationships that enable students both to “engage” in learning and to “belong” within learning contexts that are safe and supportive. Relationships within effective classroom and school learning communities are characterised by the affirmation and inclusion of the different cultural and social identities and knowledge bases that students bring with them into their classrooms and schools.

Socially and culturally important goals such as creating inclusive learning relationships and inclusive learning communities, in my view, can be achieved when all teachers are willing and able to engage in “inclusive teaching” practices. Rather than continuing to worry about how on earth we could possibly become sufficiently knowledgeable and competent in the many different cultures represented in our classrooms and schools, we might instead try to collaborate with our students and their communities to create a new classroom and school culture where everyone is safe “to be who they are”. Such a classroom culture would demonstrate collaboration in identifying preferred values and ways of learning, behaving, interacting, and of setting goals and defining learning tasks. Inclusive pedagogies in such classrooms would be those that respond to those collaboratively-defined values and preferences in ways that do not privilege any ethnic or cultural group, particularly the dominant group. Teaching practices might embrace, for example, collaborative learning, inquiry learning, reciprocal learning (where teacher and learner roles are interchanged freely among all participants) and holistic learning (where learning goals encompass intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing).

If more teachers, management personnel and policy makers made greater use of inclusive teaching practices, we might be able to leave behind our duplicity in “talking inclusion” while maintaining two separate systems of education, one “regular” for those who can meet our specific learning and behaviour standards and expectations, and the other “special” for those who cannot, or do not. For example, Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) were trained in accord with the Ministry of Education’s 1996 inclusive policy for special education, Special Education 2000, in a distinctly “teacher support” role. RTLB are trained to understand learning and behaviour from an ecological perspective (which highlights the importance of learning “contexts” as well as teaching strategies). They are trained to collaborate with teachers and schools and assist them to improve learning and behaviour outcomes for students with special needs. However, a considerable number of RTLB...
appear to have been relegated by their school and cluster management to work largely with individual students in a traditional withdrawal and largely exclusionary manner, which has little or no impact on the pedagogical values and practices of the rest of the school.

Inclusive education and inclusive teaching are not well served by resorting to exclusionary practices such as zero tolerance. I have a real fear that zero tolerance for challenging behaviour, for example, might pave the way towards zero care and zero responsibility. Our role as professional educators would be sadly diminished if our major strategic response to challenging behaviour were to become one of "crime and punishment". Tom Cavanagh's article leads us to think not just about defining specific curriculum aims and goals, and assessing students' progress towards these, but to think also about the nature of the classroom and school contexts we need to create, and the part that these contexts play in shaping learning and behaviour appropriate to those aims and goals. The article also provides us with a timely reminder to examine the short-term as well as the long-term goals we set for ourselves and for our students. We need to keep asking ourselves whether these goals represent and position us as educators who know and care about our students, who respect and affirm what our students already know, and who engage with our students to improve the effectiveness of classroom and school learning contexts.

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The Importance of Educating Student Teachers in Inclusive Education

A disability perspective

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ABSTRACT
In schools today inclusion involves a challenge to attitudes and expectations within educational communities.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy (Minister for Disability Issues, 2001), is a guide for government action to promote a more inclusive society. Out of its 15 Objectives, Objective 1 encourages and educates the community and society to understand, respect and support disabled people. Objective 3 looks at providing the best education for disabled people. Objective 5 fosters leadership by disabled people. The summary states that New Zealand will be fully inclusive when it’s ‘a society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation’. Educators must be committed to The New Zealand Disability Strategy because its main focus is about a fully inclusive community.

Often, through role models, strong messages challenge negative assumptions and prove that there are alternative ways of looking at the world. Generally those who are the most critical to implementing inclusion, such as teachers, are introduced to the notion by individuals for whom it is a theoretical, rather than a lived concept.

This article involves a sharing of experiences of two women who are involved in teaching inclusion at tertiary level, who live with physical disabilities and who have proved this to be a powerful combination in changing attitudes.

Storied Experience
Keywords
Classroom practices, disabilities, inclusive education, special education, teacher attitudes, teacher education.

INTRODUCTION
Parents and educators continue to express concern about the provision of education and ongoing staff development for the diverse classrooms of the 21st century, and in particular with relation to disabled students (Morton & Gordon, 2006). The question continues to be asked: how can teachers come to understand the importance and value of an inclusive classroom? This understanding can occur as part of ongoing professional development or it can be part of tertiary education of teachers.

In this paper we argue that inclusive education is an important part of any initial teacher education programme. Teachers must understand the issues associated with supporting any child with a special need. It is vital that beginning and student teachers are challenged to assess their own attitudes and values before they can get the correct messages across to fully understand the inclusive perspective. As Lunn quoted when reviewing Linton’s writing (who herself is an internationally renowned writer, consultant and public speaker on disability issues) ‘…it is the way we have been taught to think about disability, or taught to ignore disability, that has played a part in perpetuating a divided society’ (Lunn, 2003, p. 151).

At the University of Waikato, School of Education, we are members of the teaching team for the compulsory Inclusive Education paper and we are two women who are qualified and experienced teachers and who also live with congenital physical disabilities. In this paper we, Wendy Neilson and Ashlie Brink, share our perceptions and understanding of how our lived experience adds value and impact to our stories and experiences. We aim to emphasise the importance and relevance of inclusion and to show how everyone can reach their full potential. Our message promotes to future teachers the principle that all children in their classrooms, irrespective of their abilities are worthy of the teacher’s time and attention and must be provided with the opportunity to reach their full potential. The message to children with disability is that they too can achieve whatever they set their minds to.

OUR STORIES
When Wendy was born with a congenital disability her parents were encouraged by medical professionals to leave her in Wilson Home (an institutional setting) and “get on” with their lives. They would not accept this and throughout Wendy’s childhood she was encouraged to strive to achieve all she set out to. Wendy always believed she would be an independent career woman but that she would never get into a relationship. She successfully achieved and balanced both. At the end of her 7th form (year 13), Wendy applied to become a teacher, but her application was declined as the selection panel believed that she would not cope. After this set back, she tried different study options but when she was
about 22, made a second attempt to gain entrance into teacher training with the aim of teaching in a hospital school. She was accepted immediately, qualified with a Diploma of Teaching, and gradually completed her Bachelor and later her Master of Education. Wendy has two children and four grandchildren. She takes a leadership role in many national disability groups and firmly believes she lives the reality of all that the Inclusive Education paper, that she contributes to, advocates.

Ashlie, too, was born with a congenital disability, but this was only diagnosed at two years of age as the doctors believed her parents were neurotic and in their words "typical first time parents". Ashlie, who completed all her schooling in South Africa, was the only student with a visible, physical and long term disability attending her local primary school, despite professional educators' pleas for her to attend a special school for people with physical disabilities. Ashlie was compelled to attend a special secondary school, but firmly believes it was to her advantage and has made her the strong person she is today.

Like Wendy, Ashlie has always wanted to work with children in a hospital setting, ideally as a paediatrician, but realistically as a teacher. She too has completed her Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Education and a Master of Special Education. Ashlie is also a member of various national disability groups and believes strongly that, as an educator in a tertiary setting, she can make a difference to the lives of children with special needs through the students she teaches in her Inclusive Education classes at the University of Waikato.

ATTITUDES
The literature indicates very clearly that attitudes present the biggest barrier for people with disabilities (Ballard, 1994; Davis, 1997; Hillyer, 1993; Munford, 1994; Woodhill, 1994). It is the negative attitudes of individuals that so often create the barriers for those out in the community who experience the joys and challenges of diversity. People's assumptions and expectations about disabled people often form the biggest barriers' (Disabled Persons Assembly, 2004, p. 8).

It is imperative that in today's world we create awareness amongst children in classrooms and those who teach them, and that everyone deserves to be recognised and valued for their individuality and diversity. The United Nations (2007) emphatically states that it is not one's disability that hinders full and effective participation in society, but rather it is the attitudinal and environmental barriers. Disabled people seek to be fully included in all aspects of society and the economy and thus, it is essential that children are taught from an early age about disability and equal opportunity. They have the same rights to enrol and to be educated at state schools as other students. This has created challenges for schools, teachers and students. Prior to the Act, an increasing number of children with special education needs had been “mainstreamed” into New Zealand classrooms, based on the assumption that they would “fit” in without any major adjustment to meet their special education needs (Moore et al., 1999). Slee (2001) maintains that schools were never really meant for everyone, but inclusion speaks to the protection of rights of citizenship for all. In 1998 the Ministry of Education developed the Special Education 2000 policy framework where the main focus was on inclusion (Ministry of Education, 1998). The aim of the policy was to develop schools to fit, nurture and support the education and social needs of every student (Moore et al., 1999). Currently the Special Education 2000 policy (Ministry of Education, 1998) guides teachers, pupils and parents towards inclusion with the ultimate aim, “...to achieve, over the next decade, a world class inclusive education system that provides learning opportunities of equal quality to all students’ (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 5).

That decade is nearly over.
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Initial teacher education in the 21st century must be comprehensive enough to fully equip an individual to meet the opportunities and challenges of the inclusive classroom and school. It is essential that those designing and delivering these programmes as well as those receiving them, understand the complexities of individual difference in the classroom (Morton & Gordon, 2006).

New Zealand is a country of approximately four million people with a range of state supported and a number of privately operated teacher education institutions and a number of privately operated education providers. Students from some of these organisations receive limited coverage, sometimes only three hours of a three year paper, in inclusive education (Morton & Gordon, 2006). Some providers offer no direct content in inclusive education, while others, such as the University of Waikato, offer a single compulsory full paper on the topic. See (2001) acknowledges that ‘we should strive against the notion that compulsory special education units for trainee teachers is better than nothing’ (p. 175). Where there is little coverage of diversity in the classroom during their teacher education, we have had personal feedback from many teachers that they feel lost, totally overwhelmed and totally unprepared when they face children with specific learning and behavioural needs.

Wylie’s (2000) review of the Special Education 2000 policy recommended all teacher education providers be required to incorporate inclusive education papers in their core training. In addition, she recommended the appointment of a coordinator in every school to provide ongoing support and professional development, to keep resources up to date, and to network with other educational professionals and organisations. These recommendations have not been implemented (O’Brien & Ryba cited in Fraser, Moltzen & Ryba, 2005).

At the School of Education at the University of Waikato, the compulsory Inclusive Education paper covers a wide and varied range of student diversity in its content. The focus is on encouraging the student teachers to value difference and to celebrate diversity. As is true of all areas of teaching, teacher passion and commitment is a crucial component in determining how the learners engage with the content. However, effective teachers also know their subject matter well. Therefore, in essence mathematicians are suited to teach mathematics, and an artist, art. In the same manner, the perspectives and experiences of those who know the realities of inclusion are well placed to advocate and educate about how to include. Unlike curriculum subjects, inclusion is not an area that a classroom teacher can focus on for an hour a day. Each student teacher is challenged to examine their own attitudes and consider how, as leaders of the classroom, they can influence children’s understanding and acceptance of diversity of difference. Knowing that students and some teachers have developed techniques for dealing with students with special needs through special education practices will make regular teachers more inclusive (Slee, 2001).

ROLE MODELS

As tertiary educators, we believe that teachers hold the future in their hands. Teachers generally are the role models who influence how children see the world and how they will react to it. It is imperative in today’s world that we prepare children to value and celebrate the diversity that they will experience in the classroom and the world, when they become adults. As we prepare the teachers of the future, it is vital that we guide them to have ‘both a concern for equity and recognition of diversity’ (McKay, 2002, p. 162).

In so many areas, whether it be sport, media or education, the value of role models is acknowledged as a very effective and a very powerful way of getting a message across. Positive role models show how challenges can be overcome and how people can achieve great things. Often through role models, strong messages challenge negative assumptions and demonstrate that there are alternative ways of looking at the world.

As a child with a disability growing up in the 1950s and 60s, there were several role models that Wendy felt had a real impact on how she saw the world. Among these people were Helen Keller, June Opie, Douglas Bader and Theodore Roosevelt. Wendy can remember their stories inspired her to feel that the sky was the limit and that any barriers she felt might stop her aiming high were all in her own mind. These people all had significant disabilities that had not stopped them becoming high achievers.

Ashlie does not remember having such role models when she grew up in South Africa. She was always encouraged by her family to try everything and anything she wanted to as she was the only one who knew her own limits. However, as a young child Ashlie was inspired by a movie based on a true story called “Caroline”. Caroline was from a very wealthy family and was never encouraged to do anything for herself because she had cerebral palsy. She wore callipers on her legs and was extremely spoilt and pampered not because of her family’s wealth, but because of her disability this was compensated for with gifts. Caroline loved books, but could not read, this was perceived as impossible for a young girl with a disability. She was never taught how to read because, in her day, people with disabilities were not “teachable”. It was her 24-hour caregiver who secretly taught her to read because she would be dismissed for trying to teach their daughter – she was “sick” and it was not fair to get her hopes up and to believe she could amount to anything. However, Caroline’s caregiver made her believe she could do anything with her life, despite what her parents said. Caroline went on to become a school teacher and is today a principal at a top American secondary school.

For the child in the classroom who lives with the challenges of diversity, a teacher with the right positive and accepting attitude can make or break the learning experience for that individual. If that teacher is a person who lives with disability the impact of them “being there and doing that” sets very positive impressions, which can have class and school wide implications. Creating positive attitudes can remove barriers so that each child can have a much better chance to reach their maximum learning potential. As women with disabilities,
teaching the topic of inclusion, the students can and do ask us about any issues and concerns they may have about teaching in an inclusive classroom and we also use our lived experience to help explain how it can be in the classroom.

What better way can the objectives of the Disability Strategy (Minister for Disability Issues, 2001) and government recommendations be met than by encouraging people with disabilities to train as teachers? When we engage in lectures and tutorials with our student teachers our passion and commitment to what we are talking about speaks for itself. The students understand that we speak from the heart and from the “power of knowing” and they value that perspective. It is very important to state the rest of the teaching team come from a considerable background of experience and depth and are absolutely committed to the philosophy and importance of inclusion. It is just that for Wendy and Ashlie, theirs is a lived reality.

WHEN WORKING WITH OUR STUDENT TEACHERS

In our compulsory paper the student teachers are challenged to become aware of the range and diversity of the children that may comprise their classroom. The issue is that they will have to be prepared to teach children from different racial, cultural and ethnic groups, different levels of ability and disability and different socio-economic backgrounds, different behavioural expectations, or children who live with abuse. Nearly always, the student teachers express fear and concern about how they will cope with such diversity in their future classrooms. As part of their preparation these future teachers will need to become familiar with the range of syndromes, disorders and disabilities that constitute the population of students with special needs (Slee, 2001).

However, probably more importantly, their attitudes are challenged, they also consider various behavioural and learning strategies, cover New Zealand educational policy, look at the value of collaboration, using Individual Education Plans and the impact of sensory challenges. This paper also looks at the specific needs of Māori learners (Macfarlane, 2004) and the challenges of children with special abilities (Molzen & McAlpine, 1994).

Feedback from beginning teachers who have previously completed this paper highlight that they constantly reflect back to their Inclusive Education paper and value our straight-up approach to disability and the realistic examples we are able to offer as well as what is deemed politically correct and what is not. In the Inclusive Education paper we deal with the realities, give them simple coping strategies and help them to understand that their own attitudes have a significant impact on how they could be effective and caring teachers in their own classrooms. The way the teacher deals with every child in his or her classroom is a role model for the rest of the class and the way each child might respond to him or her peers. It is so important that teachers never forget this. Many teachers who have graduated from the University of Waikato’s initial teacher education programmes have expressed how valuable the Inclusive Education paper has been for them (student feedback, 2007).

When preparing teachers of the future, our prime interest and responsibility as teaching staff relates to how children who personally experience diversity, or special needs, can most benefit from how we prepare their teachers. There is no empirical evidence to support our perspective, but there is qualitative feedback from teachers in the field which supports our contribution. For example, with some Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) they emphasised that during their own teacher education, classroom diversity and children’s special needs had not always been addressed. They reported from their work with teachers in the classroom that teachers’ attitudes have an extremely powerful impact on each child and the atmosphere and attitude of acceptance in the classroom. This in turn affects the child’s self esteem and confidence and consequently their learning potential (Macfarlane, 2004).

If a child experiences diversity and difference it can have a real impact on their self-esteem, confidence, whether they are able to set goals, how they see themselves in their own world and whether they can plan for their future with confidence. This is borne out in the early years when most youngsters have not been influenced by negative events and children tend to just accept their peers with no questions asked. As children mature and listen and watch the world around them, so they are influenced to see things differently. This is where the teacher can have such a big influence by creating positive role models of acceptance and by valuing each and every member in the classroom, and by not tolerating any behaviour that is negative. For the child who lives with diversity, this helps them to feel they are valued individuals, achievers in their class, or just another individual where everyone has a place.

CONCLUSION

Although the philosophy, focus and intent of inclusion in our schools today is challenging and changing attitudes and expectations of all the students it serves, it still has a long way to go before those involved in education are committed to valuing the diversity of every child in the classroom. If we are to celebrate and value inclusion in the wider community, the classrooms of today need to be the models of the world for our future. Teachers must be prepared to set the example of acceptance along with valuing each and every classroom member.

There is an obligation for teachers to embrace and value the diversity of every child in their classroom. However, it is the attitude of the teacher that most strongly impacts on how every child is valued.

In New Zealand today, and looking into the future, teacher education must continue to develop a strong inclusive focus, and have this reflected in all teacher education programmes throughout the country. To enhance and value this, the teacher education providers must encourage and support more people with disability to train as teachers because these are the individuals who can best show how people with disability are more like everyone rather than different. If these teachers can then go on to be part of an inclusive education teaching team for beginning and student teachers, they can then also add the value of their own lived experience.
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Disability
A Pacific experience

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ABSTRACT
This paper is a personal perspective about the disability issues within the Cook Islands. It looks at how the needs of children and adults with disabilities have been addressed over the years and the vision of many people who have worked towards building an inclusive society, starting with mainstreaming in the schools to full inclusion. It discusses the challenges along the way and the challenges that continue. This paper hopes to convey a message to all readers which promotes inclusion in the Cook Islands, and that with inclusion a strong base can be developed in all individuals about acceptance and understanding of one another’s needs. To achieve this, one needs to be exposed to people’s differences and to value people’s differences. However, for this to be successful, the appropriate supports need to be in place and it is vital that all work towards the same vision.

Storied experience
Keywords
Competence, cultural differences, Pasifika children, professional training, special needs, teacher development

INTRODUCTION
Paradise! That’s where I live, blue oceans, white sandy beaches and generally lots of sunshine. Oh yeah, did I mention the wonderful sunrises and sunsets? Absolutely fantastic! Yes, the Cook Islands are definitely a “heaven on earth” and a wonderful place to live because the people are beautiful and they are caring. I know this to be true as I work with people with disabilities in the Cook Islands and have seen the love and devotion shown. However, I have also seen the struggles and frustration by many family members and caregivers dealing with supporting their loved ones who were born with a disability; struggling to care for these people with limited support and understanding of these issues on the island. Family members often feel quite isolated having to solve the caregiving problems by themselves. The same holds true for individuals who have obtained a disability due to accidents or traumas. Family members have to deal with the changes that saw their loved ones living independently, and then becoming quite dependent on them for their daily activities. If the families and caregivers struggle, then one must think about what the individual with the disability is experiencing and how this affects them personally.

Until recently, people with disabilities and their families received little or no support in the Cook Islands. In the past, the only available service was a small disability pension provided by the government, and the Cook Island Disabled Persons Centre organised by volunteers catering for all children/adults with disabilities. There were some excellent programmes within this centre that had been put in place over the years. However, the programmes didn’t last and prior to my return to the Cook Islands 9 years ago, the adult programme had not been in operation for at least 7 years. A satellite classroom had begun in a mainstream school for the children. Within the community, there appeared to be a mind set that improvement in an individual’s abilities is limited with a common belief that generally people with disabilities do not have much potential for learning or change. Therefore, until recently, our children with disabilities were kept at home. How can a population of people accept or understand people with disabilities if they do not see them out and about in their community, being a part of the community’s ebb and flow? Similarly, how can families or caregivers lobby for support when most do not actually think that there is any need, because the attitude is one of “what can be done at the end of the day”? From my perspective, there seems to be little understanding and awareness in most Cook Islands families who have loved ones with disabilities which potentially means there is generally less of the same in the larger community.

CHALLENGES ALONG THE WAY
Over the years, many successful programmes have been put into place based out of the disability centre. Programmes included life skills, vocation/prevocational, preschool and school age. These programmes were run at different times throughout the day catering for the different age groups. I remember working as an assistant in the very early stages of one of these programmes and was overwhelmed by the amount of work that was carried out by the coordinator, who was a New Zealand-trained occupational therapist. She did it all as there was no one else trained in the area, but she had great support from the committee at the time that was the driving force behind this programme. Unfortunately these programmes have not continued over the years; sustainability being a real issue.

Sustainability is probably one of the most important areas to address when looking at establishing and providing programmes and services. This is particularly so in the initial stages, as it is important that services remain not only constant, but also reliable. In my opinion, stable service delivery means that those with disabilities are more likely to achieve their goals. Much of the work carried out with people with disabilities has been organised or developed by volunteers, both Cook Islanders and people from overseas, who were relied on heavily to continue this work. This may
be one of the reasons why programmes did not survive as it was a huge commitment to expect of a volunteer.

Our committees are made up of volunteers, most holding down their regular jobs throughout the day, meeting to manage the programmes after work hours. These committee members are generally the people who find the funding, employ the staff and oversee the whole programme. It is this committee that would have first identified the need for a particular service, so the initial set up would have been required, and then the continual follow up. Our minimum wage here is $5.00 an hour (it was a lot lower years ago), so to find staff that were trained in this area and competent would be challenging in itself. The committees also change membership every two years during the annual general meetings, which gives others the opportunity to be voted on the committee, and some voted off. Changes in committees can sometimes mean changes in vision which can be either positive or not!

An example of a programme reliant on volunteer contributions was that of a satellite school, with the idea being first suggested in the mid 1990s. This was a wonderful forward thinking concept for a small country, bearing in mind that our population at that time was 18,000 people. The proposal involved placing a satellite classroom within one of our local primary schools, the intention being to mainstream children into the regular school, supported by a team of one teacher and volunteers. Although a wonderful plan, I believe, the team was too advanced for the rest of the country at the time, and received minimal financial support from the mainstream education system. Therefore this group of dedicated people had to rely primarily on fundraising and donations to support their programme. When I think about the ideas and plans they had put into place at the time, one must really admire the efforts, the outcomes they achieved, and appreciate the challenges that were experienced. Given the nature of disability is broad, it was not uncommon to have a range of children in the programme including those who were deaf, had severe multiple disabilities, learning difficulties, or a physical difficulty. Whilst some of our local teachers were sent to New Zealand or Fiji to be trained, so to find staff that were trained in this area and competent would be challenging in itself. The committees also change membership every two years during the annual general meetings, which gives others the opportunity to be voted on the committee, and some voted off. Changes in committees can sometimes mean changes in vision which can be either positive or not!

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A team of one teacher and volunteers. Although a wonderful plan, I believe, the team was too advanced for the rest of the country at the time, and received minimal financial support from the mainstream education system. Therefore this group of dedicated people had to rely primarily on fundraising and donations to support their programme. When I think about the ideas and plans they had put into place at the time, one must really admire the efforts, the outcomes they achieved, and appreciate the challenges that were experienced. Given the nature of disability is broad, it was not uncommon to have a range of children in the programme including those who were deaf, had severe multiple disabilities, learning difficulties, or a physical difficulty. Whilst some of our local teachers were sent to New Zealand or Fiji to be trained, so to find staff that were trained in this area and competent would be challenging in itself. The committees also change membership every two years during the annual general meetings, which gives others the opportunity to be voted on the committee, and some voted off. Changes in committees can sometimes mean changes in vision which can be either positive or not!

One issue that continues to arise is that of stability of teachers and support staff. The Cook Islands is a transient country with a reasonably high turnover of teachers; movement of staff can result in differing ideas predominating as new staff enter the programmes. Not all staff are for inclusion as some teachers feel it means more work. Again, this is an understandable response as teachers are expected to do much nowadays, however, if our teachers don’t teach all our children, what will happen to our children who have extra needs? Are they to move back into segregated schools where yes, they could probably make good improvements in some areas. If we had the qualified people to work with them, but what about socially? What about emotionally? What about the opportunity for all children to learn and accept each other’s differences? Most importantly, what about what the child or the parents want. We really need to ask ourselves these questions and come up with an answer that is encompassing these children’s needs, and not just our own, and find that balance and compromise to fulfill both.

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We also have to ask, when did we start to differentiate between our children in terms of those who should be taught, and who shouldn't be taught? I guess that is why we have equal rights laws now, stating "equal rights for all". These laws we must all, worldwide, advocate for strongly. Nonetheless, our education system here in the Cook Islands needs to be congratulated in regards to the work that has been achieved for our children with special education needs so far. We have an existing special needs education policy which was drafted and implemented in February 2002. Currently there is a move underway to review and refine the policy into an inclusive education policy that both reflects a wider meaning of inclusivity and will also guide the process of bringing about changes, through school-level action. All our primary and high schools are officially mainstreamed. The Ministry of Education has provided us with teacher aides and learning support teachers. Our Cook Island teachers training college also has an inclusive education component, with graduate teachers coming out into the workplace with an understanding of how to work as an inclusive teacher. Unfortunately our training college has closed down this year, as there is no need to train more teachers although it is hoped that this is only temporary. Sure, there are many teething problems, as is to be expected with any new initiative, and ongoing training and education and support is still required for our teachers, teacher aides, and staff, as well as the parents. But it is the first step.

WHERE TO NEXT?

To achieve a successful inclusive society, we must start within the school and all within the system must support. Support must start with the head of the ministry, through to principals and the teachers. I have found that it can just take one person to not fulfil their responsibilities for inclusion for a child to totally "miss out" on the "normal" experiences of an average person, that of an education and the opportunity to socialise with their peers. Our community also has an important part to play as it needs to embrace the inclusive concept for this to be successful, ensuring the environmental and social opportunities are accessible to everyone. It would be a shame to see the hard work that has been achieved by all those dedicated people from the past, whose vision was to see equality within our schools and the community, lost in return to segregation and isolation. As a teacher, a parent, or a member of society, it is our job to develop our children's knowledge base. What better way to start than by promoting inclusiveness, socialisation, understanding, and acceptance of each other for who they are and what they stand for, regardless of our personal belief systems. However, for inclusion to be realised within the schools, and then follow on into the community, more understanding is essential. It is great having teacher aides in the schools, but are they well trained to work with the children? Are the teachers supporting the teacher aides? Who is supporting our teachers and do they have a solid understanding of working with children with varying needs? Do they want to work with these children? Do our children within the schools understand the difficulties some of our children have? Have the children at the school received education toward increasing their understanding and awareness? Are the parents actively involved in the child's programme planning? Do our children have Individual Educational Plans? Are our children learning or are they just sitting in the classrooms?

All these questions need to be addressed and with one inclusive educational adviser to oversee the whole initiative, we can quite confidently say there is still a lot more work required to ensure this is successful. It has only been six years since our inclusive education policy was introduced, so we are still very new and much more needs to happen.

INCLUSION

A case study

Inclusiveness offers opportunities for individuals to develop and strengthen their personalities and character by learning from each other and imitating their peers. If surrounded by a supportive environment, both human and non-human, the individual gains confidence and self-esteem and generally feels good about themselves. I have found that our people here who have a disability generally do not have a "voice" and that decisions are often made for them. The actual task of thinking for oneself or making their own choices is not something that is commonly done. When an opportunity does eventually arise to do something that is possibly community focused, many barriers begin to emerge as the individual doesn’t know how to socialise with others well, or how to behave in an appropriate manner. Some individuals with disabilities have been brave enough to ask that they be considered a "normal" not disabled person. With this belief, the individual may not want to be involved in any activity connected with being labelled disabled. They appear to want to disassociate themselves from being labelled disabled.

Let me illustrate these points with the case study of Ina².

Ina

I once worked with a wonderful young man named Ina. Ina is 21 years old now, and was in an accident when he was 8 years old. He was sent to New Zealand straight after his accident, then returned to Rarotonga a year later. However, he never returned to school as, at the time, accepting children with disabilities within the mainstream system was not common practice.

Ina’s family were loving and caring and supported him well, and he had good family contact and socialisation. He was pretty much the centre of their environment, being raised well-protected and loved. However, as he got older his personal needs changed and he eventually attended the Creative Centre³, a programme for adults with disabilities. It was here that Ina began to experience life in a broader sense. He had a staff member who worked individually with him to help him achieve his personal goals. Although he was not totally comfortable being in a place for people with disabilities, Ina appreciated what they offered and the support he received.

This programme gave Ina many opportunities that he had not previously had, and it was the first step into a bigger social environment, even though it was disability orientated. A goal he had worked hard to achieve unfortunately did not

² Informed consent has been obtained from Ina and his family to use Ina’s name and tell his story.
³ Informed consent has been obtained from the Creative Centre management to share this storied experience.
not eventuate, and our Disability Action Team (a technical assistance initiative funded by NZAID to support the implementation of the national disability policy) was approached to see if we could assist in any way to alleviate some of the disappointment he felt. It just so happened that at that particular time I was taking a team away to compete in an international sporting competition. After some discussion with Ina and the staff from the Creative Centre, Ina reset his goals and it was decided that he would travel away with us to compete in a sport he had not previously tried. We had a month to train him. As I was travelling with a youth team, the ages of Ina and the team weren’t that far apart. The staff member who worked alongside this young man at the Creative Centre was also recruited to work with us to help maintain some form of continuity and support for Ina.

Overall, this trip gave Ina a new perspective on his life, because he mixed well with the rest of his team mates, trained hard, and gained so much from being accepted as a member of the team, rather than the guy with the disability. On our return, he was adamant that he wasn’t going to return to the disability programme, and wanted to get employment. I believe this shows a very positive outcome of the work the disability programme at the Creative Centre achieved, as they prepared this young man for the life within the community, and now, that’s where he wants to stay which reinforces the aim of inclusion by the disability programme. Work was found, by Ina going on our local television news programme to “sell himself”, and telling the public what his skills were. We received a phone call straight after he appeared on television, and Ina has been working for this company every since. He is still not keen to do much advocacy work for the disability sector, or to be involved at all, but has helped out on occasions. This awareness of himself I think is something to be commended, as Ina has made his decision on how he wants to be perceived by the community, which is the way he perceives himself. Person first!

**CONCLUDING REMARKS**

In this paper I have written about my personal experiences here in the Cook Islands. I have seen some wonderful progress throughout the years, even though it has been inconsistent. It is hoped that disability programmes that have recently been developed continue to move forward and that they follow the vision that our Ministry of Education has taken the lead in, which is “inclusion” by mainstreaming our children with special needs within the schools. The ongoing financial support that has been received from NZAID for these projects has made it possible for this vision to develop and strengthen over the years.

The same philosophy has been designed for our adult programmes, with the goal to develop individuals’ skills and get them out into the community. The Cook Islands is a small country and we have the potential to become a leader in “inclusiveness” as we are small enough and caring enough. We just need to work together and keep the vision of an “inclusive society”.

Inclusion in the Cook Islands is beginning, buildings are slowly becoming more accessible, and people with disabilities are becoming more visible, with children now included in regular schools. Although the process has been slow, it is happening, and we can only now begin to appreciate the hardship and exclusion that this minority group has lived through, and for some, continue to live through. Acceptance is a basic human need which we all strive for yet, for some reason, it can be hard to give. Let us start early and develop these qualities with the young, and hopefully they will become our role models for the inclusive, accepting people of the future.

Kia orana e kia manuia.

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To New Zealand AID who has generously supported disability projects throughout the Cook Islands towards developing an inclusive society for all. Special acknowledgement goes to Ina Little who continues to be an inspiration as he finds his way in life.

**AUTHOR PROFILE**

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Donna Smith is an occupational therapist and team leader for the Cook Island Disability Action Team. Her current role is the implementation and coordination of the Cook Island disability policy and action plan which is a project initiated and funded by NZAID and AusAID in partnership with Cook Island Internal Affairs and Cook Island National Disability Council. Her past employment has included being the local special needs advisor within the Cook Islands Ministry of Education, and a special needs teacher/classroom teacher at Te Uki O’u School, Cook Islands. Donna also worked in the late 1980s as the assistant supervisor at the Cook Island Disabled Person Centre, which has given her a good understanding of progress to date for people with disabilities in the Cook Islands.

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Are Girls Behaving Like Boys?

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ABSTRACT
This article explores some of the issues that have given rise to the perception of an increase in aggressive behaviour by females. It asserts that merely comparing girls’ behaviour with that of boys, especially the claim that “girls are behaving like boys”, trivialises the very real issues associated with females and aggression. This paper will refer to recent research into girls and aggression and will also propose that the prevailing discourse of gender dualism contributes to the lack of early identification and support services for girls at risk of severe aggression at adolescence.

Research Paper
Keywords
Adolescents, aggressive behaviour, gender differences, girls, sex roles, stereotypes, youth justice.

CONTEXT
There is general agreement, across a wide range of disciplines including developmental psychology, social psychology, psychiatry and criminology, that in most cultures males far outnumber females in terms of anti-social or aggressive behaviours (Baillargeon et al., 2007; Batchelor, 2005; Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter & Silva, 2001). However, over the past 20 years, there has been a growing perception that females are becoming more aggressive and that this aggression is becoming more violent and overt (Batchelor, 2005; McKnight & Loper, 2002; Pate, 2002; Ringrose, 2006). This perception is supported by court statistics which indicate an actual increase in the number of females charged with serious offences of aggression, and over the past 20 years countries such as England, Scotland, Canada, United States of America, Australia and New Zealand have reported a significant increase in convictions (Batchelor, 2001; Leschied, Cummings, Van Brunschot, Cunningham & Saunders, 2000; Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002; Pate, 2002).

Whereas historically, academic studies, journal and other media articles about aggression have focused almost exclusively on males and male aggression, there has been a significant increase in academic publications, popular stories, media articles, film, television and video games that feature aggressive adolescent females (Pate, 2002; Ringrose, 2006). The media has presented girls’ aggression as a growing problem, with headlines such as ‘The rising tide of female violence’ (Brown, Burman, Tisdall & Batchelor, 2002), ‘Pitbull Women: A new breed’ (McLeod, 2006) and ‘Alarm over rise in violent crimes by young women’ (The Press, 2004). At the same time, these publications undermine serious debate of the issue by publishing trivial and sensationalised accounts of “ raunchy” teenage girls engaging in sexually at-risk behaviour (see, for example, Mann, 2007). A recent example of this has been a string of diverse articles in the Dominion Post newspaper that have focused on adolescent girls and alcohol. These articles do include a serious discussion of the issues, notably a recent research study from Wellington Hospital (Quigley, 2007) which supports anecdotal evidence of a significant increase in the number of young women admitted for alcohol-related difficulties. However, these articles also include trivial and sensational front page headlines such as ‘Blokettes told to behave like ladies’ (Nichols, 2008). The latter article was published alongside a photograph of anonymous, apparently drunk, barely-dressed young women, staggering along Courtney Place. Additionally, serious media stories of child abuse and death remind the public that New Zealand has the highest level per capita, in the developed world, of mothers who kill their children. However, this issue is frequently sensationalised by publications such as the June 14th, 2003, issue of New Idea which featured a shallow and sensational article entitled ‘Women Who Kill’, ironically presented in its “good read” section (Ramsland, 2003).

In addition to the sensationalised media coverage mentioned above, the perception of an increase in adolescent female aggression has also been fuelled by popular culture and the increasing availability of technologies such as the internet chat rooms and mobile telephones, with their capacity for sending text messages and images rapidly to a large number of people (Raskauskas, 2007). Several popular books have been published over the past few years that have highlighted this aspect of “typically female” aggression (Dellasega & Nixon, 2003; Simmons, 2004; Wiseman, 2002). Television reporters, like the newspaper and magazine reporters noted earlier, have a tendency to embellish their news stories with unrelated sensational images, as in the story about female adolescent bullying behaviour that was presented by Television New Zealand news recently. It related the individual account of a young, Auckland female victim of bullying being escorted home by a security guard. This story was given additional background visual titillation, with mobile telephone film footage of a gang of unidentified, female adolescents fighting. The fact that this was American footage and these were American girls and the story completely unrelated to the Auckland teenager was not mentioned.
With such powerful promotion, the perception of a tidal wave of adolescent female aggression is hardly surprising. However, statistics are notoriously unreliable and media stories all require further investigation (Batchelor, 2001). Many academic studies into the topic bemoan the lack of understanding of female aggression, particularly the assumption that females who behave aggressively are behaving like boys (Batchelor, 2001; Pate, 2002; Pepler, 2003). As most explanations of violence are based on studies of men’s violence, female violence is either “masculinised” or seen as a manifestation of madness, hence the view that violent women must be either trying to be men or just crazy’ (Brown et al., 2002, p. 1). These researchers challenge the assumption that more girls are behaving more aggressively and call for further research into the aetiology and social contexts specific to female aggression. They point out that the denial of female potential for aggression and the historical lack of academic interest on the topic has meant that there is a severe shortage of gender-specific early intervention and support strategies for those few girls at risk of serious aggressive behaviour.

**GIRLS AND AGGRESSION**

As previously stated, severe aggressive behaviour is far more common in young men than in young women. However, it is the contention of this paper that there have always been a small number of girls whose behaviour could be described in this way. In 1974, Maccoby and Jacklin wrote that:

> We have been emphasising male aggression to the point of allowing females to be thought of, by implication, as either angelic or weak. Women share with men the human capacity to heap all sorts of injury on their fellows. And in almost every group that has been observed, there are some women who are fully as aggressive as the men. (p. 247)

For a number of reasons, including male dominance of historical studies of aggression (Miller, 2000), aggressive girls have been seen as “other” (Ringrose, 2006) and those who have been acknowledged have been variously demoted, pathologicalised, or both (McKnight & Loper, 2002). In other words, because female aggression challenges stereotypical notions of femininity, historical studies of aggression and violence have simply ignored females. The result of this bias is that the descriptive vocabulary and understanding of female violence is limited and so females who do behave aggressively have been described as “unfeminine”, “unnatural”, “unhinged”, “hysterical” and “pathological” (Brown et al., 2002). Throughout history, characters such as Myra Hindley, the notorious British “moors murderer” and New Zealand baby killer Minnie Dean, have been depicted as the epitome of evil, at once feared and despised. Girls who do display physical or overt aggression are frequently rejected by their peers (Arnott, 1998) and tend to drift out of school early and into mixed sex relationships with deviant males. Without a vision of their career potentials and a sense of their rights for safety, aggressive girls may default to a trajectory of early pregnancy and victimisation at the hands of a deviant partner’ (Brown et al., 2002, p. 48). Many studies, including the Dunedin longitudinal study (Moffitt et al., 2001), highlight the ongoing difficulties experienced by young women who behave aggressively. They point out that, as adults, these girls are more likely than boys to experience internalising disorders such as anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation (Pepler, 2003). They are also far more likely than males to select antisocial partners; increasing the likelihood of ongoing aggressive interactions (Leschied et al., 2000). These alliances frequently result in teenage parenting, domestic violence and female depression, creating a poor outlook for the next generation (Moffitt et al., 2001).

In 2001, findings from the Dunedin longitudinal study of 1000 males and females (Moffitt et al., 2001) were published. These findings identified two main causes of anti-social behaviour: the first being a relatively rare, life-persistent, early childhood onset, neuro-developmental disorder most commonly experienced by males; and the second being adolescent-limited of short duration, as common in females as males and emerging in the context of social relationships. The study emphasises the similarities between males and females who experience this latter form of anti-social behaviour, claiming that:

> sex differences with this form are negligible; for example, the anti-social activities of males and females are especially alike when alcohol and drugs are involved, near the time of female puberty, and when females are yoked with males in intimate relationships. (Moffitt et al., 2001, p. xvi)

A Canadian review of the literature regarding female adolescent aggression (Leschied et al., 2000) partially supports this theory of similarity, but suggests that ‘it is in the emerging set of differences that the implications for these findings reside’ (p. 36). These writers point out that the degree of female aggressiveness has been underestimated in previous studies, largely because the particular forms of aggression relevant to girls’ peer groups have not been assessed. Referring to studies by Crick and Dodge (1994, 1996) and Pakaslahi, Spoof, Aplun-Peltola and Keltikangas-Jarvinen (1998), Leschied et al. (2002) state that ‘aggression with girls is more likely to be reflected in indirect or relational as opposed to overt forms’ (p. 37).

Batchelor (2001) expands on this argument, stating that:

> A common understanding of violence is of an intentionally harmful, interpersonal physical act such as punching or kicking ... (a notion) challenged by many of the girls that we spoke to, who maintained that verbal behaviours (such as name calling, threats and intimidation) were often intended and experienced as potentially more hurtful and damaging than physical violence. (p. 1)

Girls more than boys are socialised in the culture to value and define themselves within relationships (Artz & Nicholson, 2002), therefore girls who manipulate others to attack the victim or, by other means, make use of social structures in order to harm another person are seen as acting in aggressive ways (Leschied et al., 2000, p. 37).

Moffitt et al. (2001) suggest that females are more likely to express their aggression "behind closed doors" or in the confines of family and close relationships (Pepler, 2003).
It is only recently that the extent of female-instigated domestic violence has been reported and acknowledged (Connor, 2002; Ferguson, Horwood & Ridder, 2005) and most studies now indicate that women initiate violence at least as often as men (Goodyear-Smith, 2004). For example, in 2003, an Auckland University of Technology study claimed that 50 per cent of the 1400 Pacific Island women surveyed ‘admitted to violent behaviour in the home, with nearly 50 per cent saying they had attacked their partners by kicking, biting, strangling or using a weapon’ (p. 1). Much publicity has been given to the suggestion that females are just as likely to be perpetrators of domestic violence. Websites have been established to support the ‘new victims of domestic violence’ (see, for example http://www.batteredwomen.com/). There is, however, considerable correlation between female victimisation, both physical and sexual, and adolescent aggressive behaviour (Pate, 2002). Studies indicate that aggression for these girls is adaptive, and may be viewed as a means of avoiding subsequent abuse or victimisation. Arzt and Nicholson (2002) suggest that these females see themselves, and all females, as less important than males, and view other females as competition for the attention of ‘their’ male partner. Similarly, Ayduk, Downey and Kim (2001) suggest that aggression in females is frequently linked to fear of rejection and Hennessy and Wiesenthal (2005) note that fear, anger and perceptions of provocation have been found to heighten the potential for female aggression.

Research from the field of neuropsychology emphasises the biological differences between males and females, but also indicates that aggression in both sexes is due to a complex interaction between genetic predisposition and known environmental risk factors (Ridley, 2003). It appears that early puberty is particularly significant as this not only sets girls apart from their peers but also exacerbates the gap between biological, cognitive and sociocultural maturity (Gluckman & Hanson, 2006). Without the ability to reason, plan and understand long term consequences, those experiencing early puberty are especially vulnerable and in both boys and girls, early puberty has been linked to increases in deviant behaviour including more norm violations, sexual precocity, contact with the law and truancy (Magnusson, 2000, cited in Miller, 2000, p. 21).

ARE MORE GIRLS BECOMING MORE AGGRESSIVE?
Despite the media hype, many recent studies challenge this assumption, noting that, despite the increased publicity and awareness, there is still considerable misunderstanding of both the aetiology and social contexts for adolescent female aggression and a consequent lack of early identification and intervention for girls at risk of developing seriously aggressive behaviour (Leschied et al., 2000).

As indicated earlier, statistics can be misleading, and may be skewed by factors such as changes in legislation, in priorities within the justice system, in social expectations and in demographics. For example, because the number of young females apprehended for aggressive behaviour is very small, any numerical increase will appear as a very large percentage increase (Batchelor, 2001). Pate (2002) recounts a story from a Canadian provincial newspaper which cited a 200 per cent increase in female crimes of aggression. On investigation she found that there had only been an increase from one case to two cases over a period of three years. In New Zealand, despite an apparent increase in the number of young women apprehended for serious offences, the Ministry of Justice statistics summary states that ‘When the population increase is taken into account, the apprehension rate for both young males and young females actually declined over the period’ (Chong, 2007, p. 2).

Many researchers now suggest that the increase in convictions reflects a sharp increase in the criminalisation of young women’s survival skills (Pate, 2002; Ringrose, 2006). Pate (2002) cites inequalities in support systems for young women and systemic bias in the judiciary system as further factors to be considered. She claims that the relaxed treatment of traditional social controls has led to increased use of the juvenile justice system as a way of managing the ‘unmanageable’ behaviour of adolescent girls. Lashley (2002) notes that an increase in the number of females with authority in the judiciary and the police has recently led to women being treated as ‘fully functioning adults who are responsible for their behaviour’ (p. 90) and that the female prison population is growing as a result. A study from Kansas State University reports that the judiciary in the United States of America is ‘cracking down on women’ (Dominion Post, Friday 2nd December 2005, B2). Other studies claim that media responses to women’s violence have increased dramatically since the 1970s, with a “new mythology” linking feminism and the women’s movement to violent offending by women (Phillips, 1999). Following a spate of reports of female violent offending in the United States of America, Fox News reported that, ‘the gender equality efforts over the last twenty years – coupled with a general increase in mean-spiritedness – have pressured girls to become more aggressive to the point of violence’ (Beaucar, 2001).

Ringrose (2006) blames a backlash against feminism for the current “moral panic” about adolescent female aggression, claiming that ‘The dual dynamic of both fear and repudiation of feminism (painted by McRobbie) is indicated by the enormous panic girls’ aggression incites’ (p. 419). In discussing the unprecedented media attention to girls’ aggression, she states that the ‘vulnerable girl has recently been replaced by the “mean girl” in public consciousness’ (p. 406). Chesney-Lind (2002) states ‘As young women are demonised by the media their genuine problems can be marginalised and ignored. Indeed, girls have become the problem’ (cited in Pate, 2002, p. 5).

GENDER DUALISM
This article contends that historical denial of females’ potential for aggression stems from the belief that such behaviour is biologically unnatural, challenging the gender stereotype of females as naturally gentle and nurturing. Many studies have demonstrated that boys’ aggression is not only indulged but may be actively encouraged (Gross, 1996) and the statement ‘boys will be boys’ used to excuse such behaviour. Little girls, on the other hand, are encouraged to be good, quiet, and compliant (Middleton & Jones, 1997). There are certain types of characteristics usually associated
with males and females (Ridley, 2003). In general, males are associated with adjectives such as adventurous, determined, opinionated, rational, serious, and tough, whereas women are more likely to be described as cautious, emotional, fickle, modest, frivolous and weak (Williams & Best, 1994). Gender stereotyping increases between the ages of 5 and 8 years and continues to increase throughout adolescence whilst the diversity between cultures decreases as children get older; that is, stereotypes become more similar across cultures with age (Williams & Best, 1994). This gender dualism pervades all aspects of life across all cultures, and ‘The seduction of binaries such as male:female, boy:girl often prevents us from seeing the full range of diversity and differentiation existing in one gender as well as between categories of male and female’ (Reay, 2001, p. 159). Girls at risk of serious aggression at adolescence, particularly those who have been physically or sexually abused, are known to internalise their difficulties until puberty and do not come to the attention of teachers or other authority figures until that time (Arnott, 1998). It is the contention of this article that the girls who are noticed prior to puberty are the physically active and challenging ‘tomboys’ who deny the stereotype and enjoy the rough and tumble games of their male counterparts (Reay, 2001). This opinion is informed by the personal experience of the writer.

As a child, the writer certainly did not fit the gender stereotype for little girls. She was boisterous – bigger and tougher than the other girls and her best friend was a boy. Together they made up fantastic role play games, took her sister’s dolls apart to see how they worked, climbed trees, played cricket and made models from Meccano. At school, teachers found this behaviour challenging and she was frequently blamed for behaviour that she did not commit. Her extended family called her a tomboy; described by the Oxford Dictionary as “A bold or modest woman” (Fowler & Fowler, 1979) and by the Penguin Dictionary as “A girl who behaves like a boy” (Garmonsway, 1979). However, in common with most tomboys, she became a confident and flexible adult, able to reap important benefits in adulthood, such as better psychological adjustment, and higher self esteem (Van Volkom, 2003). In adult life she worked at a residential therapeutic community, where she witnessed severely aggressive adolescent female behaviour which bore little resemblance to the rough and tumble physicality of the “tomboy” that she had been. These girls had such severe emotional and behavioural problems, expressed as aggression towards other people, objects (usually windows) and themselves, that they were unable to live safely at home or in the community. In accordance with the theory of victimisation discussed earlier, these girls all had histories of childhood sexual abuse yet had not been identified as in need of help until they reached puberty. On the contrary, they had internalised their difficulties, indulging in acts of self-harm and self-medication, such as cutting of arms and legs, inhaling substances such as butane gas lighter fuel and aerosol propellant, and sexual promiscuity.

The behavioural patterns of these girls support the theory suggested by Moffitt et al., (2001). Their aggressive behaviour did not become apparent until puberty, from which time the severity increased dramatically. They regularly abused alcohol and other substances and all of them created strong attachments to older, deviant males. Many of the girls developed such extreme psychiatric difficulties that they were committed to secure accommodation for their own and others’ safety. There is an enormous qualitative difference between the behaviour of these girls and the raunchy “ladettes” portrayed by the media. This article contends that the current media focus on “mean girls” and “ladettes” does nothing to inform understanding of female aggression but only serves to entertain and titillate a mainly male audience.

SUMMARY

The suggestion of a dramatic increase in the number of girls behaving aggressively is based on perception, and not empirical data. This perception is influenced by a range of factors including the historical denial of female aggression and the sensational manner in which the various media currently represent adolescent females (Ringrose, 2006). Relational aggression has been identified as a gender-specific form of violence and has spawned a whole industry of films, publications and parental support groups for a predominantly white, middle-class audience (Ringrose, 2006). Reported incidences in the number of young women convicted for crimes of violence have increased, but, for a number of reasons already discussed, are unreliable as a gauge of the actual increase in incidence. What is apparent is that the circumstances that have been identified as likely to correspond with adolescent female aggression have become more problematic. Puberty is the time when serious aggression is most evident in females and this is occurring at an increasingly early age (Gluckman & Hanson, 2006), increasing the potential gap between physical maturity and the cognitive ability to make sensible decisions. Alcohol abuse is another major contributing factor and several studies report an increase in hospital admissions of girls as young as 13 for alcohol poisoning (Needham, 2005; Quigley, 2007). This issue has become particularly noticeable since the lowering of the drinking age and the introduction of sweet “alcopops”. Party pills and the easy availability of cannabis in New Zealand exacerbate this issue. The physical changes that occur at puberty conspire to make girls look older than they are, increasing the differences between them and their age peers. It also increases the opportunity for access to drugs and alcohol and the likelihood that girls will become involved in relationships with older males; another indicator for aggressive behaviour. As Moffitt et al., (2001) state, ‘the social stimulus consequences of females’ puberty for their peer relationships, the opportunities and contextual motivations that promote illicit activities surrounding drugs and alcohol, and the special situation of abusive intimate relationships and assortatively mated offender relationships are of key importance’ (p. 405).

For most young people, adolescence is a time of optimum health, fitness and energy as well as emerging intellectual capability, and these individuals maintain close and warm relationships with their parents (Dahl, 2003; Gross, 1996, Lerner, 2002). However, young people who already experience risk factors for aggression when they begin puberty, those for whom there is a wide gap between
their physical and sexual maturity and their cognitive development (Lerner, 2002; Moffitt et al., 2001) and those for whom the combination of developmental factors occurs simultaneously are more vulnerable (Leschied et al., 2000). It is this relatively small group of at-risk young women that contributes to the ‘soaring rates of serious accidents, suicide, homicide, aggression and violence, use of alcohol and drugs, emotional disorders and health consequences of risky sexual behaviour’ (Dahl, 2003, p. 17).

As previously mentioned, the prognosis for young women who behave aggressively is grim and it is more likely to be grim for their offspring and so on into the next generation. Earlier identification and intervention for such young women may help to break the cycle of aggressive behaviour because ‘Avoiding the issue of women’s violence represents as much of a threat as we previously felt talking about it did’ (Miller, 2000, p. 7). Helping teachers and other authority figures to recognise and understand the particular circumstances of young women at risk of seriously aggressive behaviour is the first step. Keeping these girls in school and offering early intervention and support to them and their families, may help avoid the ongoing cycle of aggression and abuse.

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AUTHOR PROFILE

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An Insight into the Educational Needs of Deaf High School Students
Interviews with school staff and students

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ABSTRACT
This article provides an insight into the educational needs, experiences and school support for deaf high school students attending a mainstream school, from the perspectives of the deaf students themselves, their teachers and support staff. Themes emerged from interviews with the students and staff around learning, communication, school culture and social interactions. The gathered information highlighted that the deaf students’ ability to communicate directly with the school staff and their peer group formed a central part of their educational experience. This article also provides an insight into the practical strategies perceived as effective by the students and staff, which were discussed and highlighted to ensure an overall visual approach can be employed when working with deaf students.

Research
Keywords
Deaf education, inclusive schools, communication, social interaction, school culture, secondary school students.

BACKGROUND
Listening to students’ voices can provide educators with powerful insights into their own experiences and it can highlight that students can and should be involved in planning their own education (Iantaffi, Jarvis & Sinka, 2003; Royal National Institute for the Deaf, 2002). This current research project was based on a study in the United Kingdom which looked at deaf students’ personal experiences of attending mainstream schools, including the perspectives of the deaf students themselves and the perspectives of hearing students who had deaf students in their classes (Royal National Institute for the Deaf, 2002). The practical strategies which emerged from this UK study demonstrated that students themselves are a key source of information in relation to “successful inclusion” in a mainstream school, whilst also highlighting the importance of involving students in the monitoring of the educational successes for deaf students within the school system.

Listening to the voices of students and staff to gain their “insider” perspectives in relation to the education of deaf students can provide us with a wealth of practical information, which can be brought together with the wider school system in order to help support a positive learning environment. Within a mainstream classroom, the teacher-based instruction and learning tasks are established on the assumed knowledge and communication experiences of hearing students (McKee & Biederman, 2003). Therefore, insight into the adaptations and accommodations that can support deaf students’ educational needs within a mainstream classroom can be highly beneficial for staff working with deaf students and for the deaf students themselves.

The New Zealand Sign Language Act (2006) recognises New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) as an official language of New Zealand and gives it equal status to that of spoken language. The recent launch of New Zealand Sign Language in the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) may extend opportunities to hearing students to learn NZSL, to learn about Deaf culture, and to also interact with other users of the language and enhance participation in education by those whose first language is NZSL (Ministry of Education, 2006). This current research project was timely due to this recent advancement towards supporting an inclusive New Zealand society and education system.

THE PROJECT
Staff and students involved in the education of deaf students at a local college were interviewed to examine the educational experiences, needs and school support for deaf students at the college. The local college has a total roll of 924 students (Education Review Office, 2006). The Deaf Resource Class, which is situated within the Learning Support Centre at the college, had a roll of six deaf students at the time of the research project, who attended classes within the Deaf Resource Class and in the mainstream. This project was undertaken in 2007 as part of the postgraduate Diploma in Educational Psychology. The objectives of this project were to document the experiences and perspectives of the deaf students, teachers and support staff at this college with regards to the educational needs of deaf students, and to identify any themes that emerged from the interviews.

Participants
The participants consisted of five deaf students ranging from 13 to 18 years of age attending an urban secondary school, two teachers of the deaf who work in the Deaf Resource Class

1 In this article the lower-case form “deaf” is used to refer to the deaf participants including those who share a language (New Zealand Sign Language) and cultural values that are distinct from the hearing society, and those who may not use New Zealand Sign Language fluently but may still have culturally- and linguistically- diverse experiences. Uppercase “Deaf” is used in referring to the Deaf community and Deaf culture.
at the school, two support staff (teacher aide/communicators) who work with the deaf students in the Deaf Resource Class and out in mainstream classes, and two teachers who work with deaf students in mainstream classes.

Three out of the five deaf students identified as being “Deaf”, in relation to their hearing loss, whilst also adding that they have a degree of hearing or speech. For example:

- “Deaf, I can do both speak and sign.”
- “Deaf, that’s it. Sometimes I can hear a loud bang.”
- “Deaf, with a little hearing.”

One student identified as being “Half deaf, just a normal thing”. One student identified as being “Half deaf and half hearing, because sometimes at night time I can hear noises.”

Four out of the six staff members described themselves as being “Hearing”. One staff member identified as being “halfway between Hearing Impaired and Deaf”, and one staff member identified as being “born Deaf … I am full Deaf and I use Sign Language.”

Methodology
The project used semi-structured interview methodology where the data was collected through one-to-one interviews with the participants. The advantages of using a semi-structured interview, which is informal but guided, allows natural conversation to flow, freedom for the interviewee to explore thought, and flexibility of the interviewer in selecting aspects to follow up on (Coolican, 1999). The interviews were conducted using the participants’ preferred mode of communication (for example, spoken English, NZSL). Four out of the five interviews with the student participants were conducted using NZSL by the participant and the researcher, and one interview was conducted with the participant and researcher using spoken English supported with visual communication strategies (for example, key signs, gestures). The interviews with the staff participants consisted of one interview being conducted using NZSL, one being conducted using spoken English supported with visual communication strategies and four interviews being conducted using spoken English.

Informed consent was gained from the participants which included the interviews conducted using NZSL to be video-taped for transcribing purposes, the opportunity for the participants to review notes taken during the interviews and the generalisation of the participants’ views according to the themes that emerge, so that no participants were identified.

By capturing the voices of the deaf students and the staff that work closely with them, it was expected that an insight would be provided into the educational experiences of the deaf students attending various classes throughout the school. The research carried out by the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (2002) formed the foundation for the themes that this research project was based on; the aligned themes that emerged from the interviews illustrating the educational experiences of deaf students at the college.

THEMES
- Learning
- Adapting modes of communication
- School culture
- Social interactions

LEARNING
Support Staff
Support staff are seen as central to the deaf students’ learning at the college. Four out of five students reported that the support staff explain the learning material and content clearly to them, which was perceived as vital, especially in the mainstream classes. Providing in-class support was perceived by the deaf students as helping them understand the work and providing them with assistance if they are having difficulties. The support staff’s ability to be a good signer, to interpret the learning material into NZSL in the mainstream classes and to communicate the learning material in a variety of visual methods was also reflected in the students’ responses. One student said: “They write things down, draw diagrams, give examples and show different ways of doing things.” Interestingly, three out of five students commented that there were no unhelpful aspects of what the support staff can do in relation to supporting their learning. Potential barriers to learning, in relation to support staff, were when students believe that the support staff are too busy to provide assistance at times when working with more than one student, or if the support staff’s level of signed communication was inferior to the signing deaf student’s. Comments from the staff also support the view that clarifying and explaining as much information as possible, noting down the learning material and providing feedback to the classroom teacher and teachers of the deaf that reflect any areas of difficulty the deaf student may be facing, are helpful strategies for support staff to employ to support the deaf students’ learning. Unhelpful learning supports that support staff can do were reflected by the teaching staff as including the support staff not communicating enough of the lesson content for the signing deaf students, answering questions out loud in class and creating a sense of dependence between the deaf student and the support staff member.

Direct Communication
Direct communication between deaf students and teaching staff was identified as important to the deaf students’ positive learning experience. The supports that the deaf students perceived as the teacher communicating directly with them included:

- “If the teacher does some signs, a little bit of signing, like “tree”, “rain” etc, that helps me.”
- “Teachers can write things down, when explaining things to me.”
- Using pointing and gestures when there is no teacher aide present.
Strategies for communicating directly with deaf students in class were perceived by the teaching and support staff to include using more of a visual approach and to “chat” with the deaf student occasionally, instead of only communicating via the support staff. A member of the support staff suggested: “...it would be quite nice if [the teachers] actually knew the sign names of the students just to make it a bit more personal.”

Staff and students spoke of barriers to communication between deaf students and mainstream teachers. When mainstream teachers did not communicate directly to students this could be viewed by the students as teachers not understanding their needs:

“Some teachers just leave me and some teachers don’t know about me – they don’t talk to me, or help me.”

“I go up to the teacher if I want to ask a question about the work. I go up and say ‘hi,’ and then ask the question. Teachers don’t come up to me.”

However, certain mainstream teachers were identified as initiating communication with deaf students by using eye contact, simple gestures and also disciplining the deaf student when they misbehave: “Whether it be to discuss something, to point something out or, you know, to treat them like any other kid.”

Effective strategies to accommodate the deaf students’ learning needs

The students reported many ways in which mainstream teachers supported them during lessons. These support strategies could be perceived as simple but clearly effective and were seen by the deaf students as worth reporting:

- not talking for too long
- electronic access to the course material and online discussions with the subject teacher
- using practical activities in the classroom
- “write on the whiteboard and I can copy it down.”

These strategies suggested that the teachers need to be aware of the deaf students’ educational needs and to adopt appropriate strategies in the classroom. It is interesting that the majority of these strategies could also be seen as important for all of the students in the class. The staff members also reported supportive learning strategies for the deaf students, which included the use of visual resources and ensuring that the speaker’s face is visible for lip-reading.

Examples of the supports that are in place within the Deaf Resource Class, which the deaf students perceived as beneficial to their learning, included it being easy to request help, having the support staff and teachers of the deaf present and being able to communicate with fellow classmates about the class work.

ADAPTING MODES OF COMMUNICATION

Most of the students agreed that being able to communicate with other deaf students and staff in the Deaf Resource Class had some distinct advantages, such as ease of communication, not feeling isolated and a shared understanding. These feelings are illustrated in the following quote: “deaf and deaf is the same as two hearing people talking to each other.” The majority of the students commented on altering their methods of communication with their hearing peers, which included writing things down, using the support staff to interpret, or using a few key signs: “there is a deaf way and a hearing way, which is different ... It’s like a “hearing” road and a “deaf” road and I go down the middle changing from road to road.”

Communication during group work in mainstream classes was acknowledged as being fairly limited, for example the deaf students reported on:

“Miscommunication. It’s hard. I stay back and don’t understand.”

“I will sit near the teacher aide. I never communicate with the hearing students, only the teacher aide.”

The staff identified the deaf students as also being isolated when involved in group work with other hearing students, adapting their communication modes to go via the support staff or using pen and paper. However, communication and social skills shared by both the hearing and deaf students were recognised by the majority of staff members as being an influential factor for communicating with their hearing peers:

“[X] has less difficulties with that because some students know some signing, and she is more socially adept at fitting in.”

“I think it depends on the relationship between the two teenagers and their communication skills ... and if the deaf student can understand, read lips, or if the hearing student can sign.”

The mainstream staff at the college perceived the communication between the deaf students and the staff in the Deaf Resource Class as the “model communication” for deaf students in the rest of the school. Communication is not alleged to be perfect within the Deaf Resource Class; however the communication tends to be free-flowing with shared understandings. Due to the ease of communication and the close knit community created within the Deaf Resource Class, some issues were identified with students crossing the boundaries that are apparent between a staff member and a student.

SCHOOL CULTURE

Having other deaf students at the college was viewed by the deaf students as a positive part of the school culture, by raising the deaf students’ sense of well-being as well as increasing the level of awareness amongst the hearing students and staff:

“I like it because we’re the same, we have grown up together, known each other for a long time and we like the same sports – we have a good relationship.”

“It’s good. A nice family here. It’s like a family and good friends.”
When discussing the positive aspects of having other deaf students at the college, a couple of the students also commented on liking the presence of the hearing students at the college as well.

The hearing students learning Sign Language was perceived as a significant factor for raising the deaf awareness in the school. This was identified across the responses from the students and staff. The students perceived themselves as raising the deaf awareness in the school by teaching hearing students from their mainstream classes some NZSL: "I teach Sign Language, that's good. I teach three other students from my mainstream class." The NZSL classes held some lunchtimes in the Deaf Resource Class, meeting other deaf people, and seeing the support staff interpret information in class were identified as being examples of raising deaf awareness:

"It's amazing how many people ask you things – "how do I sign this?" or "how do I say that?", which is good. And also some of the teachers … [Teacher] now signs "thank you" and it's quite nice."

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

The deaf students reported that they could communicate more easily with their deaf peers and felt that they were the peers who understood their needs and situation. The deaf students stated that the social interactions with their hearing peers involved talking "in little bits", with few opportunities for in-depth conversation. For example, they often talked about "rude things, because [the hearing students] understand the rude signs." The deaf students identified things that they cannot discuss with their hearing peers as:

• "All things. With hearing peers it's like using baby sign. [I can't talk about] what happened in the weekend, fun things, going to parties etc."  
• "The Deaf community."  
• "Sometimes people don't understand the communication and I have to find someone who can understand."  
• "Sometimes signing is hard and different so I write stuff down."  

The staff members identified communication as being an immense barrier for deaf students' social inclusion. Social interactions between the deaf students and their hearing classmates were identified as being dependent on the individual's personality, however the support staff acknowledged that they are used a lot of the time to communicate between the deaf and hearing students: "Well, they look at me really; they just turn to me and start talking so that I have to sign to the [deaf] students."

Some students identified that the majority of the deaf students live far away from school and have little or no social interactions with students out of school times: "I don't socialise with other people from school." A couple of students identified social interactions after school occurring on the bus, or through attending a party at their friend's place.

SUMMARY

Deaf students' ability to communicate with staff members and their peer group at the college appear to form a central part of their educational experience. The practical strategies currently used in some classes were perceived as effective by the students and staff. Ensuring that more of a visual approach is employed, acknowledging the deaf students' mode of communication and supporting their access to the classroom lessons will continue to support a positive educational experience for students at the college. The findings indicated that teachers acknowledging that the student is deaf and being "deaf aware" are viewed as crucial to the deaf students' learning and positive school experience.

Deaf students being able to communicate effectively with other deaf and hearing students at school was also viewed as enhancing the educational and social experiences of deaf students. Hearing people who have knowledge of some Sign Language and visual communication strategies, having other deaf students at school and having a Deaf Resource Class are significant factors to support communication. It was apparent that the deaf students felt a sense of belonging in the school due to these factors and they perceived school as an enjoyable place to be.

Relationships depend upon good communication and therefore for deaf students there are likely to be issues with this area (Royal National Institute of the Deaf, 2002). A statement by a deaf student at the college, "... because we talk lots, that makes a good relationship" is reflective of the perception that communication is central to social interactions and building relationships. This can also be seen in relation to the communication between the deaf students and the mainstream teachers. It was identified that the limited communication between some of the deaf students and the mainstream teachers impacted on the quality of their relationships and the students' feelings of being acknowledged.

Four out of the five deaf students identified strategies they use to help them to interact with their hearing peers, such as writing things down, or teaching their peers some key signs. The majority of these strategies were consistent with the effective teaching strategies mainstream teachers can use to support their learning. Practical strategies used consistently by mainstream teachers can enable deaf students to access lessons more effectively (Jarvis, 2003). The practical strategies identified in this project could be perceived as straightforward and simple, but were considered as effective by the students and staff and therefore are important to report on.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Future research in this area may include a focus on the specific practical strategies perceived as effective by the students and staff, with the objective of developing a practical guide for educators. A guide for educators around adapting and accommodating the deaf students' educational needs would be highly beneficial in order to further support positive classroom relationships between deaf students, their teachers and peers, whilst also supporting access to the curriculum. Extending the project
to all deaf students who attend mainstream classes throughout New Zealand and the supports that will encourage them all to have a positive educational experience is a further area for study within the New Zealand context.

In summary, for education to be successful for deaf students, the learning environment and curriculum is required to be genuinely reflective of, and responsive to, a student’s specific cultural background (Leigh, as cited in Beattie, 2001). As with many students, positive relationships are developed with some teachers better than others. However, in the case of deaf students, this seems to be based on whether or not teachers use strategies in the classroom which support interactions with the deaf students and allow the deaf students to access the lessons (Royal National Institute of the Deaf, 2002). This was a predominant feature for the deaf students in the current research project, where acknowledgement that the student is deaf and being “deaf aware” is viewed as crucial to the deaf students’ learning and positive school experience.

REFERENCES


AUTHOR PROFILE

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Collaboration is our strength

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ABSTRACT
A delegation from the Ministry of Education, Special Education (GSE) went to Tokelau in 2007 in response to a request from the Tokelauan government to help establish services for children with special education needs. The team was led by Ezra Shuster and made up of a special education advisor, a speech-language therapist, an advisor on deaf children, and a physiotherapist. This article discusses the work of this team and describes their unique, challenging and incredibly fulfilling experience.

Storied experience
Keywords
Cultural values, Pasifika children, Pasifika communities, service provision, special needs.

Malo ni ki te mamalu o na kaufaigaluega i loto o akoga mo te fehoa hoaonga o fanau. Greetings to colleagues working in the area of special education.

In October 2007, a delegation from the Ministry of Education, Special Education (GSE) went to Tokelau in response to a request from the Tokelauan government for help establishing services for children with special needs. The goals for the trip were developed in close consultation with Lili Tuioti, Tokelau’s Education Advisor, and the Tokelau Department of Education. They included raising public awareness of special needs education, starting a database of children with special needs, and providing individual assessments for children whom the schools had identified as at-risk. The team was made up of Tim Andersen, a special education advisor in Whangarei; Kathryn Meredith, a speech-language therapist in Wellington; Louella Neale, an adviser on deaf children in Lower Hutt and Colleen Taylor, a physiotherapist in Dunedin. The team was led by Ezra Schuster, National Pasifika Manager. Some of the most valuable work was done in the pre-planning stages in Wellington, Auckland and Apia. The majority of the Tokelauan population lives in Wellington and numbers approximately 5,000. We were able to visit Tokelauan preschools in the area and meet with people who told us about the way of life on the atolls. Our boat journey out to Tokelau took on a life of its own through these stories and meetings and it was hilarious to watch a preschooler acting out the memory of his own trip by swaying around and falling over.

Tokelau is 500 kilometres north of its nearest neighbouring country Samoa, and is accessible only by sea. Tokelau is made up of three tiny coral atolls which are each very remote. The three atolls are Fakaofo, Nukunonu and Atafu and they have a total population of approximately 1450. The culture is influenced by Samoa and Tuvalu due to missionary work, with some influence remaining from the era of Peruvian slave ships.

Before leaving for Tokelau, we anticipated feeling overwhelmed by being in such a remote location. The reality was there wasn’t a lot of down time to reflect on the solitary nature of the islands, and technology has made links with New Zealand and the rest of the world reliable and accessible. Also, the population density on the islands further belied any sense of the isolation we had expected. There were, of course, many quiet moments spent on boats in the Pacific Ocean. It took 26 hours on the MV Tokelau for us to reach the first atoll, and 80 hours on the MV Samoa Express to return from the furthest atoll. Between these two main journeys we also travelled between the atolls and to smaller outer motus1 within each atoll.

The hours spent on the ships were rich with experiences. We experienced the enjoyment of motion and motion sickness, the fear, relief and exhilaration of trying to jump from a dinghy to a larger unanchored ship in large swell conditions, and awe at the expanse and depth of the ocean (at one stage

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1 Islands
the bottom of the ocean ceased to register on the navigation equipment which only measured 1.6 kilometres below). It was delightful to see dolphins, green turtles and flying fish which distracted us from our desire for land and our favourite foods. The journeys by ship were a new experience for us, but a familiar experience for Tokelauans and it gave a sense of how strongly the people are connected to the sea. For people in Tokelau, the sea is an instrument of existence rather than of leisure as it tends to be in New Zealand.

The shipping timetable is influenced by the weather and people on the atolls are reliant on incoming supplies of supplementary food and medicines. Access to specialist services and emergency medical supplies, and services are a minimum of 26 hours away.

Arriving in Samoa, we spent a short time in Apia before departing for Tokelau. The cultural learning we experienced in trips to Samoan villages, church, government departments, families and schools was extremely powerful. As a team, we were given a gentle introduction to Pacific ways of life in Samoa and we all felt incredibly humbled by people’s hospitality and openness. The importance of a culturally respectful and hospitable introduction to our services for the families we work with, was highlighted. As professionals

we frequently introduce families to our system and services and we also do understand that it is paramount to develop relationships with Pacific families before getting down to business. However, the reality is that we are under time pressures which cause us to rush and it is rare that we truly spend time building relationships in introductory sessions. As a largely non-Pacific team we were on the receiving end of being introduced to a different cultural system. People in Samoa and Tokelau were generous hosts, placing as paramount our comfort and welfare. Our purpose was important, yet equally prioritised was the personal connection between us. Our introduction to Pacific life in Samoa gave us the time to adapt a little to a new environment and prepared us for the fast pace of our work in Tokelau. The foundation was laid for us to be able to work at the level of intensity needed to achieve our objectives, which was incredibly pressured by the boat schedule which allowed a specific and often short amount of time on each atoll. On each of the atolls after our initial community discussion, the list of people wanting to see us increased hugely. We frequently worked into the night and caught up on discussions and paper work on the deck of the MV Tokelau as we travelled between the atolls. We had to put the laptops away if the swells were too big because the ship had an open deck.

At each of the atolls we first met with the Taupulega, the village elders who govern the atolls. We discussed our plans with them and received their blessings. Villages are structured so that the Taupulega have ultimate control over the running of the island. There is the Fatupaepae and the Aumaga/Taulelea who take responsibility for the tasks that need to be done on each island, whether it is building, cleaning, providing for the needy or administration.

Tokelau has a cultural system called inati which essentially means sharing of resources, such as the daily catch of fish, so that all people are provided for.

Education is important to Tokelauans and there are high attendance and literacy rates. Each atoll has a school and preschool on it and caters for students up to year 11 (year 12 education is being introduced in 2008). Some of the schools were in quite poor physical condition and are now in the planning stages of rebuilding. This provided an extra opportunity for our contribution to ideas about the best physical structure to give access for all children. On most occasions the children nominated for assessment were systematically seen by all members of the GSE team. Usually we saw children in schools and preschools. We often worked after school had finished using either makeshift clinics in a room where we were staying, or in government buildings and the occasional home visit. We gathered comprehensive assessment data and delivered strategies that informed both the individual and collective needs of children in Tokelau.

Our approach took the form of a trans-disciplinary model which was a real key to our success in gathering information in a time-intensive way. We worked in pairs or individually with children, teachers and families and learned a lot from working with each other. Our respective disciplines and experience had added to the collective knowledge of the team. Sitting as a group to discuss our findings was valuable and informed a truly ecological perspective for each child. As well as giving information back on an individual level to children, families, the doctor and teachers, we held meetings on each atoll and discussed our findings with the communities. These were fantastic opportunities to feedback to almost the entire population. It was a great forum to discuss a range of topics including ear health, importance of communication between health and education services, attitudes to children with special education needs, early identification of needs, inclusion in schools and communities, and multilingualism. We experienced the warmth of people at these meetings who often ended by thanking us through music.

As professionals it has been hard for us to return to New Zealand knowing that we are walking away from children whose needs cannot yet be met in Tokelau. There is a balance between providing support at an individual level and providing systematic support which will enhance service and resource provision in the long term. One success we have had since our return is in the securing of funding for three individualised wheelchairs and pressure care bedding for children on the islands. We also take solace in the fact that this trip was only the beginning of support for children with special education needs in Tokelau.

A lasting impact for us all is in our confidence to work with Pacific families here in New Zealand. Living with a Tokeluan family allowed us to closely observe the importance of family life, church, dress, personal conduct and food.

We all appreciated the cultural insights and guidance given to us by Ezra. Our first-hand experiences in Tokelau and Samoa have increased our cultural understanding of families in New Zealand who come from Pacific Island countries. For all of us this was a unique, challenging and incredibly fulfilling experience.

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Footnotes:

1. The Fatupaepae is the women’s village working group. The name of the group has been taken from the role of the female within the extended family. The Fatupaepae is the person that is responsible for the welfare of the extended family, for example, pastoral care, advice and importantly the distribution of resources to all members of the family.

2. The Aumaga/Taulelea is the men’s working group.
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Kathryn is a speech-language therapist working in early intervention in Wellington. Kathryn has travelled and worked throughout Asia and the Pacific and has strong interests in cross-cultural work, child development and education. Kathryn is currently studying towards a Masters of Development Studies and is researching inclusion in education for children with special education needs in developing countries.

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Anticipated Death in New Zealand School Communities

Katherine Broughton

ABSTRACT
Few resources seem to be available to support school communities that have a child whose death is anticipated. The present article draws on the experiences of school staff and special education employees who have been involved in New Zealand school communities where a child was terminally ill and died. These experiences could help other school communities to provide optimal support and avoid pitfalls. Schools could use this article to develop a plan to fit their own unique situation.

Practice paper
Keywords
Crisis management, death, inclusion practices, Māori culture, parent school relationship, school role, terminal illness, traumatic incidents

INTRODUCTION
The death of a student impacts significantly on the school community. This is evident in the many resources available both nationally and internationally for helping schools respond to the unexpected death of a student. Many of these traumatic incident resources have been tailored specifically to New Zealand schools (Edwards, 2002; Meakin, Allen & Hanifan, 1995; Ministry of Education, 2002; Rivers, Hornbrook & Allen, 1993). This article sets the scene for ideas to guide New Zealand schools that have a student whose death is anticipated and reports findings from New Zealand teachers and Ministry of Education, Special Education staff.

BACKGROUND
Anticipated death
Anticipated death occurs when medical professionals have predicted that a person does not have much longer to live. During this time there is an opportunity to begin to come to terms with losses of the past, present and future (Gilbert, 1996; Knott & Wild, 1986; National Cancer Institute, 2005) and frequent absences from school (American Society of Clinical Oncology, 2005; Holland, 2003). It is important to acknowledge the illness but not allow it to become the focus of relationships with the child. Students can help by making cards, writing letters, and drawing pictures for him or her, making a video with the child (American Society of Clinical Oncology, 2005), and visiting the home or hospital (Meakin et al., 1995). The Ministry of Education High Health Fund is available to students whose poor health means they need help accessing the curriculum and their health would be likely to deteriorate further without the support of a teacher aide (Ministry of Education, 2006).

When there is warning before a person dies it provides opportunities for loved ones to say goodbye to show the dying person how much they are cared for, and to begin to come to terms with the loss. Those involved have an opportunity to put things right before death occurs (National Cancer Institute, 2005). Loved ones begin to let go of the future with the person, yet continue to invest in the present relationship. The pain of the situation (Winston’s Wish, 2003) sometimes results in people detaching themselves emotionally from the dying person while continuing to care for their physical needs (Knott & Wild, 1986). This can make the dying person feel uncared for and abandoned (Gilbert, 1996; Holland, 2003). People are in a particularly vulnerable position when they expect a child to die and he or she takes longer than anticipated, or unexpectedly recovers (Knott & Wild, 1986). The difficulty people experience with reinvesting emotional energy into such a relationship is well documented and is known as “The Lazarus Syndrome” (Knott & Wild, 1986).

When a school student is expected to die, this has an impact on everyone involved. There are opportunities for the school community to support the dying child, his or her family, and friends in their grief. The anticipated death is likely to have a significant impact on some of the school staff and students as they experience grief of their own. People respond to grief differently depending on their developmental level (Rivers, 1994; Silverman, 2000; Tonkin, 1995; Worden, 1991), previous experience with losses, and skills already learned for responding to grief (Tonkin, 1995). Death can trigger strong emotions about losses that people have already experienced in their past (Alberta Department of Education, 1992; Holland, 2003; Klass, Silverman & Nickman, 1996; Meakin et al., 1995; Tonkin, 1995).

Responding to the death
The forewarning of death does not mean there will be less pain or grief for loved ones who are faced with living without the child (Gilbert, 1996; Knott & Wild, 1986; National Cancer Institute, 2005; Rainbow Trust, 2005; Silverman, 2000). Schools are best supported by a well constructed, established...
support plan. The main areas relevant to the anticipated death support plan are communicating the information and providing support. It is important to communicate with the family, teachers, students, and other parents about the death. Schools should maintain up-to-date contact information for students, school staff, other service providers, and support organisations in case they need to be contacted quickly (Ministry of Education, 2003a). When a death occurs, principals would usually contact the family to offer support, get consent to share information with staff, students and parents, and prepare a written statement (Dean, 2006; Ministry of Education, 2003a; Rivers, 1994; Rivers et al., 1993). The principal would then usually arrange for previously identified people to be contacted via a telephone tree including close friends of the child (Alberta Department of Education, 1992) and those whose own child or sibling had previously died (Tonkin, 1995). It is important to encourage these people to go to school as staying in a familiar routine provides support to those in grief (Meakin et al., 1995). Leaving members of the school community out can have a negative impact on the school community (Ministry of Education, 2003a).

A spokesperson for the media may be designated and should only be able to give information provided in a written statement. It may not be appropriate to discuss the incident with the media (Rivers et al., 1993). The principal may arrange relief teachers who are made available to teachers from the start of the day. A designated staff member such as the deputy principal may circulate the classrooms and monitor which teachers need time away from their classroom. The principal should convey news to staff in a school meeting as soon as possible (Rivers et al., 1993). Consideration should be given to teachers who would usually have responsibilities such as sports coaching after school. It may be appropriate for other teachers to take over these roles temporarily to reduce the demands on the staff who need extra time to be with others, or on their own (Ministry of Education, 2003b; Rivers et al., 1993). Teacher aides, under the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) collective agreement (2005), are entitled to 4 weeks of pay after losing their job for any reason including the death of their student.

After school staff have been informed about the death, it would be appropriate to inform the students. A teacher or the school principal could inform the students class-by-class so that the children have opportunities to ask questions (principal, 09.03.06; teacher, 14.03.06). School staff should only tell the students what is in the written statement (Rivers et al., 1993; Ministry of Education, 2003a) and ensure that confidentiality is maintained about information that is not specifically provided by them for the school (Ministry of Education, 2003a; Rivers, 1994; Rivers et al., 1993). When the children talk about the loss it may be necessary to reduce ideas of self-blame (Ministry of Education, 2003a; Rivers et al., 1993) and increase physical closeness among the students by playing games with physical closeness such as duck, duck, goose (Rivers et al., 1993). Teachers could read the book about death after a terminal illness such as Brodie by Joy Cowley (2001) and discuss it with the class.

Maintaining routines can help prevent extra stress (Meakin et al., 1995) but avoiding talking about grief does not make it go away (Holland, 2003; Meakin et al., 1995; Perry, 2006; Tonkin, 1995). In contrast, this can lead to people developing psychological, behavioural, and/or social difficulties (Alberta Department of Education, 1992; Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). Children are in a particularly vulnerable position when someone they know dies as they may not have yet developed skills to respond to grief in healthy ways (The Dougy Centre for Grieving Children and Families, 2004; Perry, 2006).

Developing skills to respond appropriately to grief can benefit people at the time that they are grieving and when they experience losses in the future (Tonkin, 1995). In most cases, the support that is most effective comes from natural groupings within a community (Rivers, 1994). Teachers can help children develop skills for dealing with grief by sharing some of their own thoughts and feelings (Perry, 2006). Teachers need to be aware that normal grief reactions in children can include behaviour that is unsettled, disruptive, attention-seeking, sad, moody, inattentive, and withdrawn for a time (Rivers et al., 1993). While their academic schoolwork may also deteriorate (Holland, 2003; Perry, 2006; Tonkin, 1995), their desire to express their thoughts and feelings through art may increase (Tonkin, 1995). Some people may react immediately while others may do so weeks or months later (Rivers et al., 1993).

MĀORI PERSPECTIVES ON WELLBEING

A Māori perspective of health (or wellbeing) is considered to comprise four vital areas, te taha hinengaro, te taha tinana and te taha wairua, in the context of the family and community (te taha whānau). Known as Te Whare Tapā Whā (Durie, 1994), these areas are represented as the four walls of a house, each of which must be kept strengthened for the overall wellbeing of the person. If a person is lacking in one area the whole “house” is no longer strong. In this context, many iwai compare the transience of human life with the permanence of whenua.

MĀORI PERSPECTIVE: LOSS AND GRIEF

When an anticipated death involves Māori, be sure to include tangata whenua to provide guidance and support for the school community’s response (Ministry of Education, 2003b; Rivers et al., 1993). Māori approaches in such circumstances are guided by kaupapa Māori perspectives. Therefore, actions such as reciting a karakia at the beginning of a school assembly could serve to strengthen te taha wairua of those connected with the student. Likewise, expressions of awhina would serve to strengthen the bonds within te taha whānau. The giving of a koha to the whānau such as food or money would enable te taha tinana to be strengthened (Durie, 2006; Ministry of Education, 2003b). Schools would be considered discerning if they were to maintain a putea for the purposes of offering koha, so as to enable the provision...
of food, or a money donation, to replenish whānau resources (Ministry of Education, 2003b). The overarching criterion is to abide by tikanga as it pertains to respective iwi. Tikanga will determine how the interactions and protocols should transpire in relation to individuals and groups of all ages.

OTHER CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS
In addition to discussing Māori cultural and religious backgrounds it is important to ask the family if they identify with any other culture or religion. For example, the family may be Māori on the paternal side, Tongan on the maternal side, and they may identify as being Catholic. It would be helpful to discuss cultural and religious backgrounds and beliefs with the family whether they are Māori or non-Māori, how these impact on their perspectives of death, and how they would prefer to be supported.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN ANTICIPATED DEATH RESOURCE
Rationale
Most schools have a crisis response plan in place for incidents such as sudden death, injury, or natural disasters (Ministry of Education, 2003a; special education field staff, 04.04.06). This can be used as a tool to prompt those involved to do important actions that may otherwise be forgotten about in the midst of the crisis (school staff, 09.03.06; special education field staff, 21.02.06) so that optimal support can be given to those involved (Ministry of Education, 2003a; Rivers, 1994; Rivers et al., 1993; school staff, 09.03.06). Schools adapt the crisis response resource prior to a crisis to provide the maximum support in case of the child’s death. They do this by taking into consideration their school policies, the culture of their school, and supports that would be available (Ministry of Education, 2003a; school staff, 09.03.06; special education field staff, 21.03.06) and they update it as they go (school staff, 09.03.06).

The anticipated death resource is unique in that it is specifically for schools that have a child whose death is anticipated. The writer was unable to find any resources for schools that catered for this need. As with a sudden death, it is important that the school has a plan to follow so that decisions can be made in advance and more effective support can be provided prior to and after the child’s death (Holland, 2003). A current project involves the development of a resource based on professional literature and the experiences of New Zealand schools. This resource is intended to assist schools with providing an optimal level of support for all those involved. Consistent with the views expressed in several New Zealand traumatic incidents manuals (Meakin et al., 1995; Rivers 1994; Rivers et al., 1993), the resource will provide guidelines for schools to adapt to their own school culture and situations within it.

Procedures for the development of the resource
The following steps were taken in order to gather appropriate information for the anticipated death resource. A memo was sent out to special education staff asking them to identify potential schools where an anticipated death had occurred. They were also asked about their willingness to contribute to the resource. Several special education staff responded to the memos and provided helpful information about their own experiences in schools with anticipated death and sudden death. They gave the names of two schools that had anticipated deaths several years earlier and the principals of these schools agreed to take part in interviews for the anticipated death resource and a teacher and a teacher aide were also interviewed. School staff and special education field workers were directly involved in this study but parents and children were not. This was due to the sensitive nature of the research. During the interviews the school staff were invited to share their own experiences around the death of the student who had been expected to die and what they would suggest for other schools experiencing a similar tragedy. This was done through the following interview questions:

What did staff and students do to support________and his/ her family during this difficult time?

What did staff and students do to support each other?

What did the school staff and students do in response to news of________’s death?

What guidelines would you recommend for other schools with a terminally ill student?

What other information do you think would be useful in a resource for schools responding to an anticipated death?

The interview responses were summarised and linked to relevant literature where appropriate.

Ten special education field staff (three managers, two Māori field staff, and five New Zealand European field staff from various parts of New Zealand), and four school staff (two principals, a teacher, and a teacher’s aide) were involved in providing feedback on the resource, and the resource was adapted where appropriate.

DISCUSSION OF EXPERIENCES OF ANTICIPATED DEATH
Anticipated death
When four school staff members were interviewed about their experiences of having a student whose death was anticipated, they emphasised the importance of including the child as much as possible in the classroom (school staff, 06.03.06, 09.03.06, 14.03.06) and playground (school staff, 06.03.06, 14.03.06). It is important to be aware of this need because as their health declines the child can become vulnerable to isolation (Winston’s Wish, 2003) due to a number of factors including frequent absences from school (school staff, 14.03.06), grief (American Society of Clinical Oncology 2005; Gilbert, 1996; Knott & Wild 1986; National Cancer Institute, 2005), feeling unwell, and looking and behaving differently (special education field staff 10.03.06). Although they acknowledged the physical condition, they did not allow it to become the focus of social interactions with the child (American Society of Clinical Oncology 2005; school staff, 09.03.06).

School staff and Ministry of Education, Special Education field staff gave a number of examples of children who continued to be included in the school community as their...
health deteriorated. For example, a child who was confined to a wheelchair due to her deteriorating health was involved in games in the playground such as “tag”, where other students hopped instead of ran. In the classroom, school staff provided support for the child’s changing learning and social needs through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with the help of a teacher aide (school staff 14.03.06). Teacher aide funding may be available through the Ministry of Education High Health Fund if a student’s poor health means they need help accessing the curriculum and if their health would be likely to deteriorate further without the support of a teacher aide (Ministry of Education, 2006). At a school where several students were suffering from terminal illnesses, their peers made video diaries for each of them. These were presented to the families who said that they appreciated the thought put into them and the record of their child at school (special education field staff, 28.02.06). Making videos for terminally ill children was also recommended by the American Society of Oncology (2005).

When a student’s health deteriorates s/he may spend long periods of time away from school. Their classmates could continue to involve them in the classroom activities by making things specifically for them such as drawing pictures or writing letters (American Society of Oncology, 2005; school staff, 14.03.06), and by giving them work that they did as part of regular class activities, for example balloon creatures they made during art. These would have been brought to the children when they were at home or in hospital by a designated member of school staff. It may be a good idea for children to visit their ill classmate at home or in hospital, especially when s/he is absent from school for long periods of time (school staff, 14.03.06). However it would be important to check with the family about the appropriateness of visits (Meakin et al., 1995) because it is important to be aware of the family’s need for both support and space (school staff, 14.03.06). It may be necessary to designate a liaison person to monitor the number of visitors to prevent stress to the child and his or her family (special education field staff, 31.03.06).

It may be appropriate to inform the other children about the child’s deteriorating health and how it may impact on the child. A parent (school staff, 06.03.06) or someone such as a relative, hospital staff member, or social worker could come into the classroom and give a brief explanation to the children to prepare them for changes in the way the child functions and/or looks (special education field staff, 10.03.06). For example, explaining to students that when the child gets back to school after cancer treatment he may have no hair and he may not feel as energetic as he used to. It may be appropriate to tell students that the child is not expected to live as long as they are (school staff, 14.03.06). This would need to be done after checking with the child and the child’s caregivers about accuracy of information and what they want to be shared at school, respecting their need for confidentiality (Dean, 2006; Ministry of Education, 2003a; Rivers, 1994; Rivers et al., 1993). The caregivers and their child may not want other children to know that s/he is likely to die. It is not advisable to tell the school community how much longer the child is expected to live because this would set them and the child up for additional stress (Knott & Wild, 1986). Students are likely to ask how long the child is expected to live so it would be appropriate to respond by saying something such as ‘We hope Emily is comfortable and with us for as long as possible. No one knows how much longer she has to live’ (special education field staff, 31.03.06).

As part of their response plan for anticipated death, schools should maintain up-to-date contact information about students, school staff, other service providers, and support organisations in case they need to be contacted quickly (Ministry of Education, 2003a). It may be appropriate to involve agencies such as the Ministry of Education; Special Education; Barnardos; tangata whenua (special education field staff, 10.03.06, 27.03.06; Ministry of Education, 2003b) and church (school staff, 14.03.06) for guidance and support (Rivers et al., 1993; school staff, 09.03.06). It may be helpful to establish a relationship between the school and a kaumatua* who would be available to provide Māori cultural support and guidance where appropriate. Schools can do this by contacting the Ministry of Education, Special Education which could connect them with relevant people (special education field staff, 10.03.06, 27.03.06). It is important to remember that some of these people may be unavailable, so including back-up people would be helpful (Ministry of Education, 2003b). Information about other organisations can be easily accessed on the internet. For example, Skylight is used by school staff and special education staff and can be found on www.skylight.org.nz.

Response to death

Although the children had been diagnosed with health problems and were not expected to survive until adulthood, their deaths came as a shock (school staff, 06.03.06, 09.03.06, 14.03.06). This is consistent with the literature which indicates that even when the death of a child is anticipated, this does not make it easier than it would have been if it was unexpected (Gilbert, 1996; Knott & Wild, 1986; National Cancer Institute, 2005; Rainbow Trust, 2005; Silverman, 2000). The school staff who were interviewed indicated that their school’s crisis response plans were used after the anticipated deaths of their students so that the family, teachers, and students would receive optimum support (school staff, 06.03.06, 09.03.06). The school principals contacted the families to offer support and prepare a written statement. They then told the teachers about the death, offered grief counselling, and provided relief teachers (school staff, 09.03.06, 14.03.06). Schools found it helpful to designate a staff member such as the deputy principal to circulate the classrooms and monitor which teachers needed time away from their students (Rivers et al., 1993; school staff, 09.03.06, 14.03.06). In one school, a special assembly was held where all students were informed about the death together (school staff, 14.03.06). In another school, students were informed class-by-class and given an opportunity to ask questions and weep (school staff, 09.03.06, 14.03.06). If students have access to mobile phones in class, this could potentially result in some children finding out about the death via text rather than from a supportive adult. In this case, informing the classes simultaneously would help reduce this risk.

* Māori elder
It is important to note that people respond differently to death depending on their developmental level. Letters were sent home to inform parents about the death, that it may impact on their child, and that support was available to their child at school [school staff, 09.03.06; special education field staff, 28.02.06]. Teachers and their students shared happy memories of the child, and made booklets and cards [school staff, 14.03.06]. It is important for schools to realise that they are the best source of their own support so it may not be appropriate or necessary to bring in counselling [special education field staff, 12.04.06].

It is important that the principal asks the parents of the deceased child about the school’s presence at the funeral [school staff, 09.03.06]. In the case of a tangi it would be important to talk to the kaumatua and find out what is appropriate and what is inappropriate [special education field staff, 27.03.06]. It is important to ensure that all children going to the funeral are given parental consent to do so, and it may help to meet with the parents and children before the funeral to discuss it together. It is advisable that the children attend the funeral with their parents [school staff, 14.03.06]. After the funeral, it would be helpful to invite the family to continue their relationship and involvement with the school community even if they no longer have children at the school [special education field staff, 31.03.06].

When a child dies, it is possible that some members of the school community may be overlooked during the time of grief. If the child has a taxi driver it would be important to inform them about the death. This would need to occur as soon as possible to prevent the upsetting event of going to collect the child who has died. Informing the school health nurse about the child’s death would ensure that they did not come to check on their wellbeing only to find that the child had died [school staff, 14.03.06]. This highlights the importance of including these people in the anticipated death resource. It would also be important to remind schools to contact people such as the caretaker, canteen staff, cleaners, and itinerant teachers. Leaving people out can have a negative impact on the school community [Ministry of Education, 2003a; school staff, 14.03.06].

If a child has regular contact with a teacher aide, this provides ample opportunity for them to develop a strong bond. If the child that they have been supporting dies, it may result in the teacher aide losing their job and as a result losing the support of the school community. In order to include the teacher aide in the school’s grief process it has been recommended that the teacher aide is invited to the funeral, has access to grief counselling, and is invited back to the school to grieve with the rest of the class. In some cases the death of the child may result in financial vulnerability for the teacher aide [school staff, 14.03.06]. It would be essential for schools to know that under NZEI teacher aides are entitled to four weeks of pay after losing their job for any reason including the death of their student [New Zealand Education Institute, 2005]. If the death occurs during the school holidays the teacher aide is paid for the first four weeks that they would have been back at school [special education field staff, 17.03.06].

Not all schools choose to hold a memorial service or put a memorial on the school grounds because of the difficulty of gauging emotional reactions from various members of the school community [special education field staff, 20.02.06; school staff, 09.03.06, 14.03.06]. Schools must negotiate a fine line between providing support and avoiding the inherent dangers of accentuating social responses to death [Dean, 2006]. Several special education staff and a principal noted that giving a lot of attention to the deceased can lead to an idealistic view of death and has the potential to disrupt a whole school community [school staff, 09.03.06; special education field staff, 20.02.06]. It has been recommended that if a memorial service is held at the school or a memorial is placed on the school grounds it is important to make these standard for the death of any child regardless of how they died [The Douguy Center for Grieving Children and Families, 2004; special education field staff, 20.02.06].

School staff and special education field workers were directly involved in this study but parents and children were not. This was due to the sensitive nature of the inquiry. Future investigation could include parents’ and children’s experiences with a student whose death was anticipated. This would offer a wider range of insights into ways of providing support for members of the school community.

In summary, a resource tailored for schools that have a child with a terminal illness would be helpful for optimising support in a school community when a child’s death is anticipated and after the child dies. School staff, special education staff, and the literature indicated that an effective support plan provides specific guidelines on what information to convey and why, appropriate support for people who are grieving, and inclusion of each member of the school community.

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Katherine Broughton (nee Chernishov) is an Educational Psychologist who wrote this article during her internship at the Ministry of Education, Special Education, Southern Region. She wishes to thank everyone who contributed.

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Ethical Issues for an Editorial Board: Kairaranga

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The Kairaranga Editorial Board is mindful of, and has been discussing, ethical issues. At the November 2007 board meeting, the author was invited to speak to the editorial board about ethical issues of interest to the board. This paper covers some of the issues discussed in the presentation. The article is being published in Kairaranga as the Editorial Board feel it would be useful to document a paper on ethical issues, and this will support ongoing discussions between authors and editing teams to ensure that articles are ethically robust.

ABSTRACT
With academic journals, we think of the ethical aspects of the research contained in the articles rather than with the journal itself. However, journal editing has its own set of ethical concerns, which this article addresses. One is ensuring that the anonymity of institutions and participants, in research and the reporting of practice, is preserved. Another is to ensure a clear separation between “owner” of the journal and the editorial judgement, so that editorial independence is preserved. This defence of free speech is especially important when a journal, its editorial board and contributors, are variously associated with a government agency or Board of Trustees.

Position paper
Keywords
Ethics, informed consent, professional practice, publications, research ethics

INTRODUCTION
Editing a journal can be a demanding task. Considerable time lapses between the receipt of a manuscript for consideration and its appearance in published form. Between first and last there is reviewing to be done, which on some occasions is effortless and on others, not. Contributions have to be formatted, proofed, collated and then sent to the printer. Finally, the finished journal appears: contributors are delighted to see their article in print and those who have produced it heave a sigh of relief with getting one issue out of the way as they gear up to begin the process all over again with the next issue.

Now, if publishing journals were simply a technical matter then life would be so much easier for those who either contribute to, or produce them. But, as with all human affairs, ethics has a habit of intruding on our activities and placing constraints on our conduct, and journals are no exception to this. This is especially so of journals devoted to reporting on aspects of what we humans get up to. There is, I suggest, a common core of ethical concerns surrounding journals which contributors and editors alike need to be aware of. In addition, some journals have particular characteristics which entail further ethical duties beyond the common core, and Kairaranga is one such journal.

ETHICAL POSITIONS
As a starting point for considering the ethics of journal editing, we could begin with thinking more clearly about three general positions on ethical deliberation. The first is teleological: to determine, according to a principle, whether an act is right or wrong, what matters are the consequences – an act is right if it promotes more good than harm and wrong if it produces greater harm than good. For the ethical egoist, it is what is good for me; for the utilitarian, it is the greatest good (happiness) for the greatest number, bearing in mind that the legitimate interests of some might be sacrificed for the greater good of others (Mills, 1962). The second is deontological: to determine, according to a principle, whether an act is right or wrong is given by the inherent nature of the principle. It is the right thing to do regardless of the consequences, for it is my duty to act in this way or it is a just thing to do (Kant, 1964). The third, virtues, is grounded in human qualities. A morally good person is one who displays virtues (for example, honesty, care) and eschews vices (for example, greed, envy) (Aristotle, 1993). Few of us locate our moral life in just one of these positions. Sometimes we anguish as we weigh up the consequences; other times we act out of firm conviction that this is the right thing to do (or not do); on occasions we applaud the virtuous person for their example.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES
Ethical principles are few in number, general in nature, and rather universal in their application. While other principles have been proposed, for our purposes, those principles identified by Snook and McGeorge (1978) will serve us well enough, if for no other reason than they are located in a New Zealand context of ethical decision-making and do provide sound direction. The principles are:

- minimise the harm you cause
- maximise the good you do

* The Kairaranga Editorial Board is currently a collaborative partnership with representatives from three sectors – Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB); Ministry of Education, Special Education; and Tertiary.
• be fair to all concerned
• have some concern with truth
• do not unnecessarily impede others in their pursuits. (p. 16)

Other principles which could be added to the above include personal autonomy and justice.

These are good maxims for sound ethical conduct, but they need to be cashed out into ethical rules if we are to live our lives in an ethical sort of way. “Maximise the good you do” may be good advice, but how we do this in any particular situation is open to judgement. From a principle we can extract any number of rules and often these will be in conflict. Hence, the moral dilemma for the individual or the moral conflict between individuals (as well as groups, nations and the like).

A further set of concepts, which cut across this framework, have particular relevance to the ethics of journal editing. These are often presented as dualisms but in nature they are continuums. The first concerns objectivity and subjectivity, the second, absolute and relative.

Can ethical judgements be, in some sense, *objective* or are they merely expressions of *subjective*, personal preference? In the aesthetic realm of value, we say such things as “This is a good painting but it does not appeal to me” or “I like this song even though it’s not particularly good.” Here, we distinguish between what we like as a personal preference, which says something about our subjective state, and qualities about that object being good according to some criteria, which raises judgement beyond subjectivity by appealing to something more objectively inherent in the properties of the painting or song. Likewise, ethical judgement rises above more subjective liking/disliking to claim an objective edge. Quite what this is remains open to debate.

The second contrast is between the *absolute* and the *relative*. The former expresses the view that there is but one account of what is morally good or right such that opposing views are wrong. There is some merit to this, for all of us have some fundamental ethical beliefs so dear to us that they would be the very last we would give up, and in doing so we would forgo our humanity. Yet there are problems with an absolute stance. What if two absolute principles conflict? Take “Always tell the truth” and “Never cause harm to others” – what to say to a killer seeking a particular victim whose whereabouts I know? Do I tell the truth, and the victim is harmed, or do I tell a lie in order to prevent harm to the victim? We cannot have it both ways. Other things being equal, harm outweighs truth. And all too often we are prepared to write in exceptions, but how far down the slippery slope do we go before at some point we draw a line? So, being somewhat liberally inclined we accept ethical pluralism – each to his or her own, live and let live – but this comes at a price, for the spectre of relativism looms. If all views are equal such that none can be judged better or worse, one’s own included, then there is no rational justification for us to prefer our own views over any other, so paralysis rules. Or, less severely, if we are moved by the virtue of tolerance (accept or put up with something even if we find if disagreeable), then how far do we countenance intolerance – does anything go, or to what extent should the tolerant tolerate the intolerant who have no tolerance for the tolerant? Most of us draw the line somewhere between what we will tolerate and that which we will not.

So, as we move to consider some quite explicit ethical concerns of journal editing, we do need to ask to what extent our reflections are grounded in teleological, deontological and virtue assumptions and the degree to which we verge towards the subjective or objective, the absolute or the relative.

**ETHICAL PRACTICE: KAIRARANGA**

In considering the ethics of journal editing as this bears on *Kairaranga*, a helpful starting point is to outline what the journal is about, what it will publish and how it will review contributed material. An editorial (Watts, Nobilo, Annan, Davies & Margrain, 2007) states the purpose of *Kairaranga* clearly enough: ‘the promotion of effective practice and relevant research in special education’ (p. 2). The following will be considered:

- **practice papers** ‘celebrating effective practice and implementation of programmes’
- **position papers** ‘outlining an author’s view on a current educational issue’
- **research papers** ‘summarising research studies involving quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of data or reviews of literature’
- **storied experience papers** ‘reporting the experiences of children, parents, caregivers, teachers, support staff and professionals in various learning settings’ (adapted from *Kairaranga* Editorial Board, 2007, p. 52).

*Kairaranga* is a “blind” peer review journal such that ‘neither the name of the author nor the name of the reviewer will be known to each other’ (*Kairaranga* Editorial Board, p. 52). Noted also is a disclaimer: ‘Views expressed or implied in this journal are not necessarily the views of the Editorial Board, Ministry of Education or the New Zealand RTL Association’ (p. 53).

**ETHICAL ISSUES**

With all of this behind us, we can now move on to explore some ethical issues involved in editing *Kairaranga*. I do so from three vantage points: first I am a philosopher with a particular interest in ethics; second, I am the Vice-Chancellor’s nominee on the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC); third, I am a joint editor of *Delta*. I shall draw off this to shape the account to come. I have also taken the opportunity to peruse some recent issues of *Kairaranga* and will use several examples to illustrate the ethical points being made.

**Empirical studies**

A key ethical concern regarding empirical studies, be they practice papers, storied experience or reported research, is preserving the anonymity of the participants, except in just those cases where the participants, have given their informed
consent to be publicly identified in the writing up and publication of the study. In many cases of quantitative inquiry, the aggregated data is such that individuals cannot be identified, but this is less clear-cut with more qualitative investigations. Either way, anonymity can be protected by giving a school or a person a pseudonym along with avoiding descriptive words of geography, status, etc., which may lead to identification. In six articles in one issue of *Kairaranga*, institutions are clearly identified by author affiliation (and ‘my school’ in the text) or mentioned by name in the article. For example, Morris and Katon (2006) do both; so too do Hirannahia and Mahoney (2006), Wilson and Evans (2006), Naidoo and Maicker (2006), Mears and Stevenson (2006) and Ellery and Trafford (2006). If the research has been through a robust ethical appraisal process, such as that undertaken by Massey University’s Human Ethics Committee, then the schools’ Boards of Trustees (BOT) would be required to give written consent to the research being undertaken, such that the BOTs are aware of and willing to approve the public identification of their schools. Some journals require confirmation of proper ethical clearance. In *Kairaranga*’s case, an accompanying letter of consent from the management of schools or early childhood services should suffice to allay any concerns. It is important that the Kairaranga Editorial Board keeps records that such consent was gained from schools, early childhood services and participants, and that authors indicate within the article that consent was gained. Otherwise anonymity must prevail.

A related ethical worry lies in the anonymity of individuals. Identification of a school, class level, year and so on can sometimes lead to a rather good guess as to the identity of a teacher and/or student(s) and the Editorial Board does need to be vigilant to this possibility. For example, Bourne (2007) provides her institutional affiliation and then discusses the case of a particular child, who is Māori, with ADD and who arrived at the institution several years earlier. Not many children fit this set of descriptive characteristics. The child is initially named as “Aroha” (with quotation marks) but subsequently Aroha (without them). The quotation marks imply a pseudonym but a note to this effect, as is standard practice, would put the matter to rest. Whether the pseudonym, in this instance, would preserve anonymity is, of course, an open question. In fact, “Aroha” was a compilation of several case studies and thus no single individual existed with the specific situation described in that early childhood centre. Nevertheless, the Editorial Board needs to be alert to protecting the identity of participants and clear in alerting readers to how this has been done. In the absence of an independent peer review process undertaken by authors, responsibility does fall on to the Editorial Board to undertake stronger ethical oversight than would normally be required of editorial boards which publish more traditional academic journal articles. It is a common experience of MUHEC to find that practitioners reporting on their own practice tend to fall a little short of grasping the many ethical demands that research on teachers and students place on them. This is usually through ignorance rather than deliberate malpractice (of not always seeing that the “researcher hat” has to replace the “teacher hat” over access, consent, and so forth). Conflict of interest can be reduced to a considerable extent by recognising that the ethical constraints on seeking permission to research teachers/students in another school are equally applicable to one’s research on one’s own students. This is usually picked up and rectified by the MUHEC process.

When the Editorial Board is of the view that a submitted article has not been subject to prior ethical review, then it is incumbent on the Board to obtain from the author(s) such confirmation as is required to allow the identification of an institution or person. With more formal research articles, confirmation of ethical approval can be requested as part of the review process (for example, MUHEC allocates a unique identifier to each successful application which can be checked with the Ethics Office if need be).

Position papers

Position papers give rise to a rather different set of ethical problems. Whereas empirical studies describe an actual state of affairs, position papers outline ‘a writer’s view on a current educational issue’ (*Kairaranga* Editorial Board, 2007, p. 52). A point of view expresses an opinion, judgement, evaluation and the like, and in doing so it tends to be rather more prescriptive by conveying an account of what could, should or ought to be. In short, an expressive position paper is likely to present a coherent argument to justify the position advanced on a particular educational issue. It seems reasonable, in this regard, to distinguish between those authors who are employed by the Ministry of Education and those who are not. To start with the latter first. Authors employed by universities (and other tertiary education institutions) have a legislated right to be “the critic and conscience of society” and to perform this duty, and to perform it well, requires the intellectual freedom to pursue an argument to its logical conclusion. Short of libel, incomprehension or objectionable language, there seems to be no rational ground for the Editorial Board of *Kairaranga* to censor opinion contrary to its own or that of the Ministry of Education. The general principle of free speech extends in the same way to others, such as parents, teachers and the like. The disclaimer is protection enough for *Kairaranga* and its Editorial Board.

Teachers, whether they be general classroom or early childhood practitioners or resource teacher, have the same general right to free speech as their academic colleagues, except in one relevant respect. There is no reason for such teachers not to express a point of view on some aspect of interest to them; the restitution comes only if reference is made to their own situation that things written about their own institution identify the institution. It is probably prudent to exclude identifying reference to one’s own location in a position paper.

Employees of the Ministry of Education enjoy the same general right to intellectual liberty, except in one relevant respect. As citizens, they, like all others, possess the right to express a view on all manner of issues without Ministry restraint. This includes opinions on any and all government policy which does not fall within the purview of the Ministry. However, as employees of the Ministry of Education, on matters of educational policy, the right to free speech is
curtailed. To be sure, in the formulation and evaluation of education policy, Ministry officials no doubt do express their views, sometimes robustly, but this debate is private, in-house, and not for public consumption. Once policy is determined by the government of the day, officials have a duty to implement it and not publicly criticise it. However, one could resign in order to further dissenting opinion. On the other hand, on educational matters about which there is no official policy, or no policy in the making, then there is no good reason to deny a Ministry of Education employee the same right as any other individual to pass comment. If the editorial board is persuaded of the rightness of this position then it has a duty to defend it in the face of arguments to the contrary.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

In addressing the ethics of editing Kairaranga, we cannot avoid considering the Ministry of Education and what its proper role might be in regard to two matters: the contributions from ministry employees and the determination of editorial policy.

From the previous discussion, a general principle can be derived for the limits placed on the ministry in relation to monitoring, approving and censoring the contributions of its employees. On matters other than education, no interference is justified. On descriptions of empirical states of affairs, likewise. However, the ministry does have a legitimate interest in ensuring that the views employees publicly express about policy are consistent with the policy itself. Public servants are employed to implement government policy, and are employed on this understanding, so it would be a contradiction to both undertake to implement the policy yet express a contrary view to the stated policy, such a contradiction to be resolved, generally, in favour of the policy. The question to be asked is this: what role should the Ministry of Education exercise when employees write position papers for submission to Kairaranga? Here there will be disagreement but I would advocate a light touch rather than a heavy hand. Persuasion rather than coercion ought to prevail. Encourage authors to have trusted colleagues read their manuscript for advice; line managers, at most, should do no more than counsel authors to bear in mind the strictures on critique of policy and the likely consequences for doing so. There is no place for censorship prior to publication, however well-meaning more senior colleagues might be. If prudence and good sense on the part of the author are absent, and publication proceeds with predictable consequences, then and only then are there justifiable grounds for the ministry holding an employee to account.

The second matter surrounding Ministry of Education involvement with Kairaranga lies in ownership of the journal and what, if anything, this implies for editorial control. The Editorial Board consists of members drawn from a triumvirate partnership of: RTLB; Ministry of Education, Special Education staff; and academics. However the proprietary rights over the journal are less clear. Who owns the journal; who has the final call on its affairs? Here are some more questions, and there may be others. Should the Ministry of Education have any role to play in determining which of its staff should serve on the Editorial Board of Kairaranga? Should the Ministry have a general right to intervene in the shaping of the editorial policy of the journal? Should the Ministry be permitted to exercise an over-riding veto on material published in the journal? To each of these three questions the answer must be “No”, thrice. This is not to suggest that, as a matter of fact, the ministry has ever acted in these ways, but only to assert that it ought not do so.

CONCLUSION

The founders of Kairaranga, in an interview (Hickman, 2006), stated: ‘The Kairaranga journey is likely to be a long one, and its evolution and progression will occur over a much longer period than a single year’ (p. 3). Exploring the ethics of journal editing is one small part of this journal of discovery, but with a difference. Some elements of editing and publishing a journal, being technical, can be settled relatively easily, and here one can think of journal style, format, readership and the like. But contributors and contributions are far less predictable; an ethical response is often required. But ethics is not a simple matter of a formula, a rule or an axiom. Ethical deliberation is complex, often gives rise to disagreement, and sometimes eludes final consensus. The ethics of journal editing shares these characteristics and how the editorial board grapples with the sometimes conflicting demands of, for example, seeking truth, avoiding harm, and gaining trust needs to be worked out in an open, transparent and honest way.

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Kairaranga Survey Feedback

Responses to the 2007 readers’ questionnaire

The Kairaranga Editorial Board

ABSTRACT

*Kairaranga* operates as a partnership between the Ministry of Education, Special Education, Resource Teachers: Learning and Behavior (RTLB) and the tertiary sector. The journal was published by and for RTLB from 2000 to 2003, but the partnership model has been in operation since Volume 5, Issue 2, 2004.

After three years of collaborative journal production, the Kairaranga Editorial Board surveyed readers. Survey responses were sought in order to inform editorial decision-making and constructively enhance the journal for the benefit of readers. As Kairaranga has always valued partnership, the survey provided an opportunity to include the voices of journal readers. This paper outlines a summary of the feedback for Kairaranga readers.

Feedback

Keywords

Publications, surveys, feedback, questionnaires, professional practice.

OVERVIEW

A questionnaire was developed following a ‘brainstorm’ of ideas on what information was sought from readers. The questionnaire was developed in Microsoft Word, and then transposed to an online format using SurveyNet tools (http://www.survey.net.nz). Some of the questions were open-ended, enabling qualitative feedback and other questions used a five-point Likert scale. A summary of topics posed within the questionnaire is provided in the Appendix.

The survey was included in hardcopy as a handout within Kairaranga Volume 8, Issue 2, 2007, which was launched at the RTLB conference in Wellington in September 2007. A pre-paid addressed envelope was attached to the questionnaire handouts. The online version was made available at the same time, with a hyperlink provided on all hardcopies of the questionnaire, and within the Kairaranga 8(2) journal editorial. In October 2007 and January 2008 email reminders were sent to Ministry of Education, Special Education (GSE) staff, with a hyperlink to online and Microsoft Word versions of the survey. All submissions were received anonymously.

ANALYSIS

The survey.net programme provided raw data scores for the quantitative questions. The quantitative data were also displayed by survey.net in bar-graph format and as percentages of all responses. For example, the data from the ‘overall presentation’ question were displayed across the five points in the scale (excellent, very good, acceptable, poor, very poor):

- The standard of editing is excellent – 48%
- The standard of editing is very good – 45%
- The standard of editing is acceptable – 7%
- The standard of editing is poor – 0%
- The standard of editing is very poor – 0%

For the purposes of this article, the percentages have been accumulated to give feedback at each point or higher. As an example, using the data above, the following statements can be made about presentation:

- 100% of respondents stated that presentation is acceptable or better.
- 93% of respondents stated that presentation is very good or better.
- 48% of respondents stated that presentation is excellent.
- No respondents stated that presentation was either poor or very poor.

Qualitative responses from open-ended questions and comments were printed in full and recurring or powerful themes were identified. Within this article many of the themes have been illustrated with verbatim quotes from respondents.

RESPONSES

Seventy-three questionnaires were received in total; seven of these were completed online and sixty-six were manually completed and posted in. The fact that less than 10% of the returned surveys were completed electronically reinforces the idea that hardcopy is a medium that Kairaranga readers find more manageable in their daily work lives.

While we recognise that the views expressed by respondents do not represent those of the entire readership, the feedback does provide some qualitative insight into the relevance, usefulness and quality of the journal.
INFORMATION ABOUT SURVEY RESPONDENTS
Of those who responded, RTLB and GSE staff were the main readers of Kairaranga, and these readers were employed by schools and GSE.

OCCUPATIONAL GROUP
Eighty occupational identifications were made; as only 73 questionnaires were completed this means that some people stated that they had more than one occupation. The highest category responses were

- RTLB (25), were one third of the respondents
- Special education advisors (23)
- Psychologists (9)
- Early intervention teachers (6)
- Speech-language therapists (5)

The remaining individuals were spread across 13 additional categories of occupational group. These occupational groups, with between one and five respondents for each group, included lecturers (4), occupational therapists (3), physiotherapists (3), researchers (2), parent/whānau members (2), subject teacher – secondary (1), early childhood education teacher (1), principal/tumuaki (1), district Māori advisor (1), music therapist (1), kaitakawaenga/GSE Māori liaison (1), administration staff (1), and other (1).

Employer
The largest employer cited was the Ministry of Education, employing over half the respondents to this survey (n=43). The next largest group was schools (n=24), either individual schools or on behalf of clusters. The only other employers cited were universities (n=5). One respondent did not have an employer.

Geographic region
Approximately one third of all the respondents who replied to this question were from the Central North Island (n=23), with the next largest groups being Auckland (n=13), Lower North Island/Wellington (n=11) and Canterbury (n=9). There were six or fewer replies from each of the remaining areas in New Zealand, and none from Southland.

QUALITY OF THE JOURNAL
Relevance
- 85% of respondents stated that there is at least something in every journal relevant to their work
- 53% of respondents stated that at least most material in the journal is relevant to their work
- 24% of respondents stated that the journal content is highly relevant to their work.
- 14% of respondents stated that only occasionally are there articles of relevance to their work.
- Only one respondent stated that the journal has no relevance to their work.

This statistical feedback indicates that the journal is relevant for respondents, and as one respondent noted, “Very useful, informative, important.” However, there were also comments that some articles were too lengthy and academic, and this is important for the Kairaranga Editorial Board to consider.

• “It is all very, very academic. Some storied experiences from RTLBs for example in everyday language would be very acceptable. A good tool or method should be able to be written simply.”
• “Some articles are too lengthy. Would like this to be addressed as people I share articles with find them daunting.”

Article categories
All five categories of article were enjoyed by respondents, and many respondents ticked most or all categories. Position papers (n=36) and interviews (n=41) received the lowest scores, practice papers (n=52) and storied experiences (n=54) were strongly enjoyed, and research was the most enjoyed category (n=64).

- 100% of respondents stated that the mix of categories is acceptable or better.
- 75% of respondents stated that the mix of categories is very good or better.
- 21% of respondents stated that the mix of categories is excellent.

This feedback validates the importance of each of the categories, and reinforces the importance of continuing to ensure a mixture of categories within issues. The statistical responses indicate that research is endorsed as a valued category.

• “A good variety of topical and professional interest articles, please maintain the mix.”
• “Keeps pedagogical practice current backed by relevant research.”

However, although not a large number, it is of significance that there were some comments encouraging further research articles, and more contributions from RTLB.

Editing and presentation
- 100% of respondents stated that the standard of editing is acceptable or better.
- 88% of respondents stated that the standard of editing is very good or better.
- 43% of respondents stated that the standard of editing is excellent.
- No respondents stated that the standard of editing was either poor or very poor.

Similarly,
- 100% of respondents stated that presentation is acceptable or better.
- 93% of respondents stated that presentation is very good or better.
- 48% of respondents stated that presentation is excellent.
- No respondents stated that presentation was either poor or very poor.

This feedback validates the standard of editing from Kairaranga editing teams and reinforces the expertise developed within the Kairaranga Editorial Board. The feedback also affirms the overall presentation style of the journal.
• “Very professional. I would be quick to pass on to colleagues in education.”
• “Rigorous even!”
• “I think the appeal and design are excellent.”

One comment provided a pertinent reminder that expectations should be high in order to positively reflect the professionalism of our work.

• “It needs to be really good because it is an educational journal.”

Peer review process
Kairaranga has a blind peer review process. Comments about this process validated that this is managed rigorously.

• “I found it sensitive, yet robust.”
• “Kairaranga has a reasonable turn-around period but there is a relatively elaborate process to go through to get published.”

Cover art
• 100% of respondents rated the cover art as usually good or better.
• 95% of respondents rated the cover art as generally very good or better.
• 47% of respondents rated the cover art as excellent.
• No respondents stated that the cover art ought to be improved or was of poor quality.

This feedback endorses that readers value the children’s and young people’s art displayed on the cover of Kairaranga, and this should be continued.

• “It’s great having work by children and adds to the uniqueness of the journal.”
• “I love the fact that you use art from a varied age group, and a wide range of abilities.”

Book reviews
• 92% of respondents rated book reviews as usually useful or better.
• 47% of respondents rated book reviews as usually very useful or better.
• 18% of respondents rated book reviews as excellent.
• 11% of respondents stated that book reviews were only occasionally useful.
• 1 respondent stated that book reviews were not at all useful.

This feedback implies that book reviews are worth including, but that not all reviews appeal to all readers, therefore these require thoughtful selection.

• “These generally keep you up to date with new trends and new ideas.”
• “This is a useful resource to have access to. The reviews need to be genuinely critical.”

One reader reminded the Editorial Board that reviews were intended to be broader than books, and could include resources and programmes.

Diversity of abilities and disabilities
• 93% of respondents stated that a reasonable or better range of abilities and disabilities are represented in the journal.
• 58% of respondents stated that a broad or better range of abilities and disabilities are represented in the journal.
• 13% of respondents stated that an excellent range of abilities and disabilities is represented in the journal.
• No respondents stated that an extremely narrow range of abilities and disabilities are represented in the journal.

Although this feedback suggests that the journal is doing a “reasonable” job in representing a range of abilities and disabilities, it also indicates that the journal can do more in this area. Philosophically, the journal aims to represent a diverse range of abilities and disabilities, so this is an area in which the journal should be more consistently recognised as having strength.

• “Cultural, educational diversity all covered. Excellent resource.”
• “[The journal needs] articles by ethnic community members about how [they] see educational provisions at schools and whether their student’s needs are being met.”

Māori as tangata whenua
• 96% of respondents stated that a reasonable or better acknowledgement of Māori values and practices are represented in the journal.
• 64% of respondents stated that a broad or better acknowledgement of Māori values and practices are represented in the journal.
• 15% of respondents stated that an excellent acknowledgement of Māori values and practices is represented in the journal.
• No respondents stated that an extremely limited acknowledgement of Māori values and practices is represented in the journal.

This feedback affirms that the journal’s intention of acknowledging Māori values and practices is evident within the journal. This is an area in which progress can and should continue.

• “Always room to do better in this area for all of us.”
• “If we are serious about this, then this is an area that we certainly can improve on.”

Multiculturalism
• 63% of respondents stated that a reasonable or better range of ethnicities and cultures is acknowledged in the journal.
• 29% of respondents stated that a broad or better range of ethnicities and cultures is acknowledged in the journal.
• 6% of respondents stated that an excellent range of ethnicities and cultures is acknowledged in the journal.
However,
• 35% of respondents stated that a limited range of ethnicities and cultures is acknowledged in the journal.
• One respondents stated that an extremely narrow range of ethnicities and cultures is acknowledged in the journal.

This feedback suggests that the journal is mostly doing a "reasonable" job of acknowledging a range of ethnicities and cultures within the journal. However, the feedback also suggests that this is the area the journal could most improve on.

• "There is a need for more information for professionals practicing with Asian families as well as Pasifika."  

A broader interpretation of multiculturalism was called for
• "Especially immigrant/problems e.g. South African, British, Russian, Middle East, Asian, ESOL/Learning disabled."

FUTURE INITIATIVES
Order in which articles are read
Readers had a diverse approach to choosing the order of articles. If a particular pattern had emerged, this would have guided the editing team as they ordered material in future journals.

Hardcopy/online
• 77% of respondents indicated that they wished to continue receiving the journal in hardcopy, as at present.
• 12% of respondents indicated that they wished to received the journal in electronic only format (PDF or Word).
• 5% of respondents indicated that they wished to receive the journal as a printable CD Rom.
• 6% wished to receive combinations of hardcopy, online and CR Rom.

This feedback strongly indicates that Kairaranga readers value receiving the journal in hardcopy format. Only a limited number of readers wished to receive the journal in alternative formats.
• "I can take it home and read it at leisure. A computer version would sit at work and not get read."
• "I prefer hardcopy as it is 'in your face' and here, if it were electronically I would probably not download."

From those who endorsed combinations of format, it was recognised that different formats served different purposes and that electronic formats were kinder to the environment.

Value for money
The journal’s subscription cost is currently $25 for at least two issues per year.
• 97% of readers consider that value for money is acceptable or better.
• 69% of readers consider that value for money is very good or better.

• 31% of readers consider that value for money is excellent.
• No readers consider that value for money is poor.

However, two respondents stated that they considered value for money was very poor.

Suggested articles/topics for articles and reviews
Respondents suggested a number of ideas and topics for future articles. These will be forwarded to the Kairaranga Editorial Board, and while the journal content is reliant on receiving submissions from contributors, these suggestions can contribute to the priorities given to submissions.

FAVOURITE ARTICLES
The following articles were cited as “favourites” by Kairaranga readers. The range of articles nominated illustrates the diversity of content within the journal. The number in brackets following the reference illustrates how often an article was nominated.


Reasons for nomination of above favourite articles included that articles were informative, amusing, useful, practical and/or relevant. This information tells us that it is important that the journal continues to include articles with these features as they are valued by readers. However, it is worth noting that most of the articles nominated were from recent issues; these may have been nominated because they were most recently read, rather than necessarily more valued than earlier articles.

Two people also specifically acknowledged the entire 2006 special issue, which focused on the Enhancing Effective Practice in Special Education (EEPISE) project.

**CONCLUSION**

The *Kairaranga* survey affirms the direction of the journal and Editorial Board and should be encouraging to all those who contribute to the journal in many and varied capacities, including as editors, peer reviewers, contributors, readers and financial contributors.

• “I always look forward to new editions of *Kairaranga*.”
• “Keep up the great work. It is a very professional journal.”
• “It reflects the work I do well!”

Areas of particular acknowledgement for the journal are the relevance of the journal to readers’ work, the standard of editing and presentation, and the variety of valued articles.

The purpose of the survey was to gain information to further enhance the journal. The survey findings indicate that it is important to readers that the following features of the journal are maintained: professional editing, inclusion of material that is varied and relevant to key reader groups, availability in hardcopy, and the celebration of children and young people’s art work on the cover. This feedback from readers will inform any future journal decision-making.

Areas for development identified from the feedback include the need to ensure a balance of article categories and contributors, coverage of useful topics, and bicultural practices and values. An area that the journal can particularly improve on is with regard to multiculturalism within the journal. The *Kairaranga* Editorial Board will certainly consider potential ways of enhancing these aspects of the journal.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to the 73 *Kairaranga* readers who took the time to complete and return the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was developed by Valerie Margrain, with the assistance of Jill Bevan-Brown, Gail Connelly, Joanna Curzon, Bernie Holden, Sonja Macfarlane and Merrolee Penman. Responses were collated by Valerie Margrain.

**RELEVANT WEBSITE**
http://www.survey.net.nz/

**AUTHOR PROFILE**

The *Kairaranga* Editorial Board

The *Kairaranga* Editorial Board is a collaborative partnership between the Ministry of Education, RTLB, and the tertiary education sector. The board are united in their commitment to inclusion, effective practice and collaborative relationships.
APPENDIX

The following notes summarise the content of the Kairaranga questionnaire:

1A Description of reader’s role (24 options provided).

1B Who the reader works for (11 options provided).

1C Geographic region that the reader lives in (9 options provided).

2A Quality of the cover art (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

2B Usefulness of the book reviews (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

2C Categories of article that are enjoyed by readers of Kairaranga (any or all of the 5 provided categories could be ticked, comments invited).

2D Mix of categories in Kairaranga (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

2E Relevance of the articles published in Kairaranga to readers’ work (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

2F Standard of editing within the journal (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

2G Overall visual appeal and presentation of the journal (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

2H Process readers usually adopt in deciding what to read initially, and thereafter (8 options provided, comments invited).

3A Reflection of diversity of abilities and disabilities in New Zealand (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

3B Acknowledgement of Māori as tangata whenua (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

3C Reflection of multiculturalism in New Zealand (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

4A Hardcopy/online access options for the journal (6 options provided, comments invited).

4B Value for money (5-point Likert scale provided, comments invited).

4C Suggestions for articles/topics invited

4D Suggestions for book or programme reviews

5 Favourite/valued articles noted, with reasons why.

6 Comments on the peer review process

7 Thanks.
UNREASONABLE FORCE: NEW ZEALAND’S JOURNEY TOWARDS BANNING THE PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN.
Beth Wood, Ian Hassall and George Hook, with Robert Ludbrook

As stated in its sub-title, *Unreasonable Force* traces New Zealand’s journey towards banning the physical punishment of children. At a time when some people are campaigning to force a public referendum to overturn the 2007 historic political agreement passing the Crimes (Substituted Section 59) Amendment Bill, this book reminds us about the reasoning behind the efforts to repeal the previous section 59 defence used by parents who were formally charged with assaulting their children.

The book is set within a rights framework, that is, the rights of children to ‘human dignity, to safety and protection, and to equal status as human beings in the law’ (p. 52). While the right of children to equal legal protection against assault and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989 international treaty that was ratified by New Zealand in 1993), both provide a compelling rationale for law reform, these authors outline the reasons why the actual campaign for change was framed around protecting children from assault rather than securing their rights.

The book is based around three parts of the journey towards law reform in this country. The first part locates the Crimes (Substituted Section 59) Amendment Act within the New Zealand context. Prior to reading this book I considered myself to have a good knowledge of the new Child Discipline Law. However, the historical overview outlined in Chapter Two was not only fascinating and informative; it also extended my understanding of the sequential milestones and key influences leading up to and beyond the passing of the Bill into law. Many events that readers might not necessarily know about are included in this section and help to set the scene for change.

The second part of the book explores the various factors that had an impact on the journey to end legalised physical punishment of children in New Zealand. In particular, the role of religion, child advocacy, media, politicians and public opinion is clearly articulated and raises awareness of the issues. The final part of the book offers a way forward by discussing the implications of the new legislation and providing possible responses and ways of addressing the emerging issues.

The authors make no secret of the fact that they were key advocates for the repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act; however, their accounts of relevant events and perspectives are balanced and present both sides of the argument. The language and writing style is very readable, thus making the book accessible to a diverse audience. Parents, educators, advocates, politicians, policy analysts and indeed the wider public will all find this book to be of interest.

My only criticism concerns the back cover of the book. Section 59 of the 1961 Crimes Act is highlighted in red and any person idly picking up the book without opening the cover to read further could mistakenly assume that the wording of Section 59 on the back cover applies to the new law. Although it seems more likely that most people have heard about the repeal (given the barrage of publicity), nevertheless it may have been more helpful to highlight the new subsections 59 (2) and (3) rather than the previous wording of Section 59 that is now repealed.

*Unreasonable Force* provides a timely reminder to readers that the repeal was not about taking away the rights and authority of parents, but rather removing excuses for assault. I think this book contributes to the redress of common misconceptions as a consequence of the heated public debate. Specifically, it explains the difficulties associated with the Bill’s “anti-smacking” nickname. Most importantly it contributes to the larger societal goal of preventing and reducing the high level of child abuse in this country.

While changes in attitude can bring about changes in legislation, legislation does not always bring about changes in attitude. I have high hopes that *Unreasonable Force* will help to facilitate further changes in attitude.

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA**
**Title:** Unreasonable Force. New Zealand’s journey towards banning the physical punishment of children.
**Author:** Beth Wood, Ian Hassall and George Hook, with Robert Ludbrook
**Publication Date:** 2008
**Publisher:** Save the Children New Zealand
**Price:** $25.00
**ISBN:** 978-0-473-13095-4

**REVIEWER PROFILE**
Dr Janis Carroll-Lind is a Senior Lecturer at Massey University College of Education. For 2008 she is seconded to the Office of the Children’s Commissioner as an Education Advisor. Recently Janis completed her PhD on *Children’s Perceptions of Violence: The Nature, Extent, and Impact of their Experiences*. 
SUPPLEMENTARY SPELLING ASSESSMENTS
Cedric Croft

According to the Teachers’ Manual (Croft, 2007) the ‘Supplementary Spelling Assessments’ (SSpA) are designed to augment the assessments of spelling teachers make on the basis of how, and how well, children spell in their writing’ (p. 6). The SSpA is therefore designed as an additional assessment that should supplement, not replace the ongoing monitoring procedures that teachers may already use to assess spelling within regular writing lessons.

The SSpA has two Parts; Part 1 contains three Tests of Achievement and Progress and Part 2 contains two sets of Diagnostic Assessments. Part 1 Tests (i.e., Tests 1, 2, & 3) assess various skills including general spelling ability (from dictated words), beginning sounds (although most of these are consonant blends, the author does not use this term), and various tests of spelling error recognition. The Part 2 Diagnostic Assessments assess the recognition of spelling errors, knowledge of beginning and ending sounds, the identification of silent letters, and knowledge of conjunctions.

The three Achievement and Progress tests are designed to be used with years 4–6 students. The Teachers’ Manual (Croft, 2007, p. 12) lists the year group ranges for the Progress and Achievement tests as Years 4 (Test 1), Year 5 (Test 2) and Year 6 (Test 3). It is also suggested in the Teachers’ Manual that the Diagnostic Assessments have been developed for students from year 5 and up who have a history of slow progress and significant weaknesses in spelling’ (p. 45). The Diagnostic assessment is not recommended for use below the year 5 level, although this is difficult to understand as many of the problems associated with poor spelling and writing performance at year 5 could well be remedied earlier with effective and focused spelling assessment and instruction (Berninger et al., 1998; Graham, Harris, & Chorzempa, 2002). The recently released draft Literacy Learning Progressions (Ministry of Education, 2007) suggest that children should be spelling beginning and ending sounds, for example, by the end of Year 3.

There are three sets of norms and stanine tables for each of the three Achievement and Progress tests. The three sets of norms allow for the tests to be used at various times of the year. Stanines are provided for February–April, May–July, and August–October. A separate “Student Report” summary page is also available for the teacher to photocopy as a record for each student’s progress.

There are several issues with items in the subtests that users of this assessment should be aware of when scoring and making diagnostic judgments. In the Achievement and Progress Test 1 the second task assesses what the author defines as twelve ‘beginning sounds’. However, many of these ‘beginning sounds’ are voiced consonant blends (e.g., cl, dr, bl etc) so we feel that these beginning sounds should be referred to as consonant blends. However, a more serious issue relates to the three ‘beginning sounds’ that are not consonant blends. These three items require the student to insert a section of the words that may cause confusions.

Three words are presented with the first two letters missing (e.g., ___velope, ___cket, ___ndle) to represent envelope, bucket and candle. The first word (envelope) has been split at the first syllable but for the child who does not already know how to spell the word they will only be able to hear the sound of the letter-name of n and will, in many cases, not include the required ‘e’.

It is also difficult to understand the rationale for the split at bu in bucket and ca in candle. Two similar items appear in Diagnostic Test 1 in which the student is required to insert the first two letters (bu) in button and (ca) in carrot. The addition of the vowel to the initial consonant adds a dimension of difficulty to the most struggling of spellers.

In both items the letter-sound label of the initial consonant includes the sound of the following vowel, thus the speller who does not already know how to spell the word will not include the vowel as they will be unable to hear it (Treiman & Kessler, 2003). In these items a prior knowledge of the spelling pattern is required, and thus does not assess level of spelling ability.

Another issue relates to the Set 5 task (Identifying Silent Letters in Words) in the Diagnostic 2 Assessment. The instructions for this task are as follows: “Mark the letter or letters in the word that do not have a sound that you can hear”. The words include: high, right, mouse, tie, grow, cough, crumb, phone, night, and smile. The answers that are presented in the manual for this task suggest that (for several of the ‘correct’ responses) the author has a confused notion of “silent” letters, particularly in relation to the influence of the position-specific role that certain letters represent. In the words high, right and night for example, the author considers that the ‘silent’ letters are gh. While they are certainly not pronounced in these words, they belong to the unit igh which is the set of letters that comprise the grapheme that represents the sound of the long vowel i. The words night and fight for example both have three phonemes and in each word the medial phoneme is represented by the spelling pattern igh. If the gh wasn’t included in this pattern the j-sound would not necessarily be long, (e.g., nit & fit versus night & fight). It therefore seems pointless to require any separation of these letters in this spelling activity for these particular words.

A third issue with this task is that the author maintains that the gh in cough is ‘silent’. The word cough has three sounds (k/o/f), so we cannot understand why the author thinks that the gh pattern is ‘silent’, as it is the spelling of the final sound. We also have a problem with separating the w from grow or the e from smile which the author maintains are ‘silent’ letters. As stated earlier, although these letters may not be pronounced, the position they hold in the words play an important role in determining the sound of the preceding vowel. In all previous tasks the focus has been on identification and knowledge of accurately spelt spelling patterns, and the sudden shift to the sounds in words rather than accuracy in spelling patterns is difficult to appreciate. In addition, it could cause confusion for the developing speller to be asked to undertake a task such as this.

Weaving educational threads. Weaving educational practice.
We are also concerned about the author’s statement suggesting that spelling skills should mainly be taught within the context of writing and that such words should only come from the writing needs of each individual. Croft (2007) notes for example that

Although spelling is a skill best acquired within the context of learning to write, there is still a place for learning selected words (or groups of words which share common features of spelling), provided that all words to be studied are necessary for each individual’s writing. (p.7)

This is a typical whole language comment which (like the teaching of reading skills) maintains that children do not require any explicit teaching of skills outside the context of regular reading/writing (see Graham, 2000). The problem with this stance is that the poorest spellers require more spelling instruction and that much of this additional instruction must be explicit and outside the context of their personal writing needs (Graham, Harris & Chorzempa, 2002). This is because these poor spellers require additional skills that would enable them to attempt words beyond their regular but limited skill-set that they use in their personal writing. Focusing only on words used in regular writing would not allow for such diversification for the poor spellers.

The author focuses heavily on tasks that assess spelling knowledge related to the initial and final units in words. However, there is evidence to suggest that poor spellers (like poor readers) have problems with the medial parts of many words (see Ehri & Saltmarsh, 1995; Greaney, 2008). Perhaps there might have been a balance that included some tasks that investigate medial spelling unit knowledge.

While the author has designed the SSpA for older primary school children (e.g., year 4 plus) we suggest that perhaps some of the tasks may well be suited for younger children. Likewise, we suggest that leaving any diagnostic spelling assessment until year 5 may already be too late for many. Finally we note that little reference was made to New Zealand spelling research undertaken by Alcock (2006), Brann (1996), and Brann and Hattie (1995). The work of these researchers would have further enlightened the author particularly with regard to the phonemic segmentation knowledge required when learning to spell.

Apart from these issues we see that the SSpA is a useful supplementary assessment tool that should encourage teachers to undertake a deeper analysis of their students’ spelling strategies and to help them design more focused interventions to deal with the problems.

REFERENCES


REVIEWER PROFILE

Dr Alison Arrow
Dr Alison Arrow is a Lecturer at Massey University College of Education. Alison’s research interests include the development of reading and spelling during the transition period between preschool and formal schooling. She teaches literacy in the pre-service primary programme.

Dr Keith Greaney
Dr Keith Greaney is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Learning and Teaching at Massey University College of Education. Before coming to Massey, Keith was a primary school teacher for 28 years, including two years as a special class teacher and 12 years as a Resource Teacher: Reading. He is also a trained Reading Recovery teacher. Keith teaches a paper in the postgraduate Diploma in Literacy Education course and assists with the supervision of students undertaking Masterate research in literacy-related areas.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA

Title: Supplementary Spelling Assessments
Author: Cedric Croft
Publisher: NZCER Press
Date of Publication: 2007
ISBN: 978-1-877398-21-6
RRP: $20.00
Weaving educational threads. Weaving educational practice.

HAERE – FAREWELL, JACK, FAREWELL.

By Tim Tipene

‘It was a cold day when Koro Jack died.’

This beautiful, sensitive book follows and celebrates the circle of life, making death and how people deal with it an integral part of this natural cycle.

The narrative starts when Koro Jack dies and moves through the tangi as the family stay with him, cuzzies arrive, Koro is carried to the marae, photos are placed around the wall, manuhiri arrive and food is shared at the wharekai. Stories and memories about Koro Jack are shared through the night and songs are sung. Koro Jack is buried in the urupa and soon after, baby Jack is born.

This is a wonderful book for all New Zealanders. Even though it is presented as a children’s picture book it really has an audience of all ages. While it expresses some of the sadness when a loved one dies, it is not a sad book. It shows how the grief is supported by the process: rituals, ceremony and connection with whānau and friends. It illustrates how life goes on.

Add it to the booklist of all schools; people involved in working with Māori and those interested in healthy expression of grief. It is a finalist in the New Zealand Post Children & Young Adults Book Awards.

The story is enhanced by wonderful illustrations by Huhana Smith. They are soft and realistic showing emotion and deftly supporting and enhancing the story, including showing the shadowy outlines of tupuna. Huhana also wrote Taiawhio: Conversations with Contemporary Māori Artists.

Tim Tipene is already a well known children’s author having penned Rewi Finds his Wings, Warrior Wing, Kura Toa, Wooden Fish and Taming the Taniwha. Taming the Taniwha was selected for the White Ravens International Youth Library Catalogue as one of the world’s top 250 children’s books for 2002.

REVIEWER PROFILE

Fliss Newton

Fliss Newton has worked as a Special Education Advisor for the Ministry of Education, Special Education in Wanganui since 1999. Most of her work has been with the Severe Behaviour Initiative, including co-facilitating Incredible Years Programmes. Fliss also works one day a week for Family Works counselling children who have witnessed violence. Occasionally Fliss writes book reviews for the Wanganui Chronicle. She has two daughters, one a speech-language therapist for the Ministry of Education, Special Education in Auckland.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Title: Haere-farwell, Jack, farewell
Author: Tim Tipene
Illustrator: Huhana Smith
Publisher: Huia
Date of Publication: 2005
ISBN: 1-86969-104-0
RRP: $17.00 from www.skylight.org.nz
Acknowledgement of Peer Reviewers

The Editorial Board of *Kairaranga* expresses appreciation to peer reviewers for their time and constructive feedback.

*Kairaranga* articles are blind peer reviewed, however approximately every three issues peer reviewers are acknowledged.

The peer reviewers named below contributed to one or more of the following journal issues, and have agreed to publication of their names within this acknowledgement:

- Volume 9, Issue 1, 2008
- Volume 9, Issue 2, 2008

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Brigid Carroll
Cherie Chu
Barbra Cowan
Ike Crous
Joanne Cunningham
Joanna Curzon
Jo Davies
Vijaya Dharan
Sue Dymock
Sandy Elkin
Liz Everiss
Michael Gaffney
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Avril Maxwell
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Graeme Nobilo
Merrolee Penman
Eileen Piggott-Irvine
Anna Priestley
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Daphne Rickson
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Craig Sharp
Jeff Sigafoos
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Adrienne Tomkin
Chris Tutty
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Carol Watts
Paul Woller
Jocelyn Wright
Submission Guidelines

GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS SUBMITTED TO KAIRARANGA

- *Kairaranga* considers the following education related papers as written documents:
  - **Practice Papers** — Papers celebrating effective practice and implementation of programmes. (Up to 2,500 words).
  - **Position Papers** — Papers outlining a writer’s view on a current educational issue. (Up to 2,000 words).
  - **Research** — Papers summarising research studies involving quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of data, or reviews of the literature. (Up to 3,500 words).
  - **Storied Experience** — Papers reporting the experiences of children, parents, caregivers, teachers, support staff and professionals in various learning settings. (Up to 1,500 words).

*If you have the kernel of an idea that doesn’t quite fit the above please email kairaranga.journal@min.edu.govt.nz and you will be connected with one of our editors who will support you on your road to publication.*

- An abstract of not more than 150 words should be submitted along with each article.
- Articles sent as hard copy should be on numbered, separate and single sided sheets, with double line spacing. Articles can also be emailed to kairaranga.journal@minedu.govt.nz and you will be connected with one of our editors who will support you on your road to publication.
- Minor abridgement of articles will be at the discretion of the editing team. If time allows, authors will be contacted before the publication of edited articles.
- *Kairaranga* will retain copyright of all articles published.
- Articles submitted to *Kairaranga* should not have been published with exactly the same format or content elsewhere.
- Authors are asked to submit a 50 word personal profile of themselves, their organisation, and/or other affiliations for reader interest.

PEER REVIEW PROCESSES AND GUIDELINES

- *Kairaranga* is a journal evolving through work submitted across the education sector. Peer review involves constructive feedback on your written contribution. The suggestions made will help you in editing your final piece of work.
- The peer review process for *Kairaranga* is “blind”. This means that neither the name of the author nor the name of the reviewer will be known to each other.
- Written contributions will be matched to peer reviewers who have topic, professional or cultural strengths in the area of the written work submitted.
- The Peer Review process is as follows:
  - Papers are submitted to the Editorial Board.
  - A decision is made by the Editorial Board to forward the article through to peer review, with a view to future publication.
  - Papers are returned to the Editorial Board.
  - Feedback is given to the author.
  - This feedback may include an offer of peer support by the Editorial Board for amendments made to the article submitted.
  - The Editorial board retains the right to decline papers for publication. This will be reflected in the feedback you receive from the peer reviewer.
- Writers will receive feedback which may be:
  a) accept as is.
  b) minor editorial revision by the author.
  c) revision of content by the author and modifications based on this review.
  d) not accepted for publication
- When papers are declined reasons will be given and resubmission may be possible.
GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWS OF TEXTS, RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMES

• Reviewers are asked to submit a 50 word profile of themselves, providing their professional details and affiliations at the end of the review. This information may also be submitted as part of the review.

• Reviewers will take responsibility for the appropriate and correct use of people, places, companies, publishers, etc.

• Reviews will become the property of Kairaranga.

• Reviews will reach the Kairaranga address by the date published on the letter of invitation.

• Abridgement of the review will be at the discretion of the Editorial Board.

• We are looking to explore many varied and potentially contradictory views on issues relating to educational practice which may be included within the texts, resources or programmes. This should result in views being expressed that do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Board.
Editorial, Editorial Board and Contact Details

Raising Your Sights Beyond Your Immediate Understandings
An interview with Emeritus Professor Keith Ballard
Roseanna Bourke and Michael Gaffney
Interview

Who are the Best Teachers of Pasifika Children?
Ezra Schuster
Position paper

Comment on Schooling for Happiness:
Rethinking the Aims of Education
Ted Glynn
Position paper

The Importance of Educating Student Teachers in Inclusive Education
A disability perspective
Wendy Neilson and Ashlie Brink
Storied experience

Disability
A Pacific experience
Donna Smith
Storied experience

Are Girls Behaving Like Boys?
Rosie Arnott
Research

An Insight into the Educational Needs of Deaf High School Students
Interviews with school staff and students
Tracey Esera
Research

Ko te Maoopopo ko te Lima Malohi
Collaboration is our strength
Kathryn Meredith, Tim Andersen, Louella Neale, Colleen Taylor and Ezra Schuster
Storied Experience

Anticipated Death in New Zealand School Communities
Katherine Broughton
Practice paper

Ethical Issues for an Editorial Board: Kairaranga
John Clark
Position paper

Kairaranga Survey Feedback
Responses to the 2007 readers’ questionnaire
The Kairaranga Editorial Board
Feedback

Kairaranga Book reviews

Acknowledgement of Peer Reviews

Submission Guidelines