



EDUCATION IN THE PACIFIC, 2007

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES



Prof Konai H Thaman

The University of South Pacific, Fiji

Konai is currently Professor of Pacific Education and Culture and the UNESCO Chair in Teacher Education and Culture at the University of the South Pacific (USP). She was born and raised in Tonga where she received her primary and secondary education. She studied at the University of Auckland (BA in Geography), Auckland Secondary Teachers' College (Teaching Diploma), the University of California at Santa Barbara (MA in International Education), and the University of the South Pacific (PhD in Education). She taught in high schools in Tonga and has been on the staff at the USP since 1974. She has researched and published widely in the areas Pacific curriculum and teachers, indigenous education and development, women and university management and Pacific research frameworks. She has held a number of management positions at the USP including the Director of the Institute of Education, Head of the School of Humanities, and Pro Vice Chancellor. She is currently a member of the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee on the Recommendation on the Status of Teachers (CEART), and a Fellow of the Asia Pacific Centre for Educational Innovations in Development (APEID). She is also a widely read and published poet, with five collections published and several poems translated into several languages. She is married and has two adult children.



"Re-Thinking and Re-searching Pacific Education: further observations of."

Abstract In 1996 at a Pacific Education Conference in Auckland organized by Skill New Zealand I suggested that Pacific people needed to re-claim their education and make decisions about what is worthwhile to teach and learn in their schools. In this address, I would like to carry on from where I left off, and share some information about recent development in Pacific education that many may not know about because it is happening quietly, slowly and painstakingly. Slowly because some of us Pacific researchers and educators are as much concerned about process as we are about outcomes, and we want to ensure ownership by Pacific people in what they want to do or be, in the name of educational development in our region. I will outline some of the challenges that continue to plague Pacific Island education and advance a couple of reasons why educational standards seem to have deteriorated rather than improved after three decades of donor-driven educational reform. I will then briefly outline some of our efforts to deal with these challenges, especially in the work that we are doing under the UNESCO Chair in teacher education & culture (in partnership with the USP Institute of Education and the Pacific Association of teacher educators), as well as the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative (RPEI), and finally I will outline a couple of research initiatives that have been initiated by the USP PVC Research & Postgraduate Affairs, in an attempt to raise the awareness of staff and students about Pacific research frameworks and their application in our region, particularly through the IOE/NZAID funded Sustainable Livelihood Education Project (SLEP).

Prof Russell Bishop

The University of Waikato

Russell Bishop is foundation Professor and Assistant Dean for Maori Education in the School of Education at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. He is also a qualified and experienced secondary school teacher. Prior to his present appointment, he was a senior lecturer in Maori Education in the Education Department at the University of Otago and Interim Director for Otago University's Teacher Education programme. His research experience is in the area of collaborative storytelling as Kaupapa Maori research,



having written a book Collaborative Research Stories: Whakawhanaungatanga and published nationally and internationally on this topic. His other research interests include institutional change, Critical Multicultural Education, and Collaborative Storying as Pedagogy. The latter area is the subject of a book, co-authored with Professor Ted Glynn, published in 1999. This book Culture Counts: Changing Power Relationships in Classrooms, demonstrates how the experiences developed from within kaupapa Maori settings; schooling, research and policy development, can be applied to mainstream educational settings. His most recent book, Pathologising Practices: The impact of deficit thinking on education, co-authored with Carolyn Shields and Andre Mazawi, and published by Peter Lang, investigates how deficit thinking pathologises the lived experiences of children and prevents minoritised children from achieving their full potential in schools.

He is currently the project director for a large New Zealand Ministry of Education funded research / professional development project that seeks to improve the educational achievement of Maori students in mainstream classrooms.

"GPILSEO: A model for educational reform."

Abstract This paper promotes a model of educational reform that is based on indigenous peoples' aspirations that education promotes power-sharing relationships between self-determining individuals within non-dominating relations of interdependence. In Young's (2004) terms, indigenous peoples' aspirations for self-determination are relational, acknowledge interdependence and "are better understood as a quest for an institutional context of non-domination". That is, being self-determining is possible if the relations in which peoples and individuals stand to each other are non-dominating. To ensure non-domination, "their relations must be regulated both by institutions in which they all participate and by ongoing negotiations among them".

Such a model challenges arguments based on a 'schools barrier' culturalist argument or a 'home/system barriers' structuralist argument, for while they might identify necessary conditions for educational reform, in themselves they do not provide sufficient conditions; the former down-playing external considerations, the latter denying teacher agency. This model of educational reform, based on a relational discourse, suggests that educational reform is more a function of the interactions between these two sets of players;. This paper will suggest how such an analysis offers explanations of variation in achievement and provides solutions to problems of educational disparities.