

Book Review

Home: Here to stay **Edited by Mere Kēpa, Marilyn McPherson and Linitā** **Manu'atu**

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A collection of 12 essays considering a range of issues and ideas close to the heart of Māori and other indigenous peoples of the world, *Home: here to stay* tugs on your heart strings, and draws you in to some of the most pressing issues indigenous and colonised communities face today. This book covers topics around the spiritual, physical and emotional concepts of home for Māori, including language loss and preservation, the loss of home and the retention of land, various aspects of Māori health, and an introduction to many aspects of Te Ao Māori (the Māori world).

Home: here to stay is the third book in the series of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga edited collections. Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga: New Zealand's Māori Centre of Research excellence (CoRE), conducts research of relevance to Māori communities and is a vehicle in supporting Aotearoa to be a key player in global indigenous research and affairs. Previous titles in this collection include *Māori and Social Issues* and *The Value of the Māori Language*.

The content of the book developed out of years of dialogue and critical reflection between the authors and fellow researchers and indigenous scholars. The authors introduce the concept of home for indigenous and colonised peoples to be something of an apparition, a distant memory and fond ideals, something that cannot always be touched and is not necessarily tangible, but visible in people's culture, language, health, stories, hopes and dreams.

The opening chapter essay, written by lead author Daniel Hikuroa, explores the concept of home from an emotive perspective of belonging, or tūrangawaewae – having a place to stand and a right to residence. Progressing through time, he explores indigenous people's whakapapa (relationship with the land) in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and explores the implications of this throughout history. Hikuroa introduces the stories and histories of tangata whenua (people of the land) both from a scientific approach, but, also with strong links and comparisons to the historical and legendary stories of Māori and their ancestors.

The reader is then taken on a journey by various authors, through topics of iwi, home and the Māori language, home-making and Māori homelessness and whenua whānau. Whilst the authors all have unique styles of writing, some topics are easier to grasp than others, due to the short nature of the essays, and many of the topics are discussed in simple terms with translations and explanations, for those new to Te Reo me ngā Tikanga Māori (Māori language and culture). However because a lot of the concepts covered are those at the heart of Māoridom, they at times could be challenging to comprehend if you are not already somewhat familiar with Te Ao Māori (the Māori world).

As the reader progresses through the chapters, topics move on to cover retention of land, tobacco use in the home, loss of home through trauma and natural disaster, ageing and health, Māori at home with IT, and Māori end of life decision making processes. The authors invite the reader to engage in their own critical thinking on such topics, elaborating on research and statistics relevant to each discussion, whilst debating and considering possible outcomes and solutions for the range of issues discussed. The reader is given the opportunity to develop understanding of these issues from a Te Ao Māori perspective, something I feel the authors have worked hard to consider when writing these essays.

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In the editors' self-authored final chapter, they emphasise the importance of acknowledging that this is not a book to attack the coloniser or the prevailing New Zealand Pākehā society, but simply a resource to question and contemplate how colonised and indigenous communities might regain their languages, culture, histories and power in living their lives today and in future. The authors appeal to the philosophers, moralists, and ethicists of society, inviting engagement and consideration of issues, and how these might be resolved in our now multi-cultural society in Aotearoa/New Zealand as well as within other indigenous and colonised communities globally.

The structure of the book means that the different chapters can be read in any order, and enjoyed by different audiences for different purposes. This is not a book that needs to be read cover to cover, although it might be important to start with developing an understanding of Te Ao Māori and Māoridom in the beginning chapters before moving on to explore and understand later chapter topics.

Academics, researchers and anyone interested in the various essay topics would find this a useful addition to their repertoire of knowledge around Māori concepts and histories, or those of indigenous peoples. The authors have written in such a way to make these ideas understood by people with a range of backgrounds and understandings of indigenous and colonised peoples world-wide. This book would also be a fantastic resource for early childhood and wider education professionals wishing to deepen their understanding of Te Ao Māori and the implications that have arisen from Te Tiriti O Waitangi. Education professionals will develop a deeper understanding of the histories of Māori as tangata whenua, and issues that we must consider in supporting Māori communities and children as part of our education and care settings and indeed within our multicultural society.

Home: here to stay is an informative, emotive and contemplative collection of thoughts and dialogue likely to empower engagement in moral and ethical issues faced by Māori and indigenous peoples world-wide. This book would be a powerful tool to inform, invite understanding, and develop one's ability to relate to concepts of Te Ao Māori and indigenous peoples in a range of social and educational fields.

Reference:

Kēpa, M., McPherson, M. & Manu'atu, L. (Eds.). (2015). *Home: here to stay*. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.