On Open Tents, Beaches and Cultural Divides: A Panel Discussion

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Abstract
The 2012 New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) Conference in Wellington included a panel discussion which addressed the topic: "How culture creates other: Traversing difference or fractured divide". The panellists were Tess Moeke-Maxwell, Donna Orange, Wiremu Woodard, and Jeremy Younger. Their speeches are presented in this article alongside edited highlights from the ensuing discussion, with introductory and reflective comments from myself as the panel chair.

Waitara
I te hui a te NZAP 2012 i Pōneke he rōpū matapaki, ā, e whā nga kaikōrero manuhiri: Wiremu Woodard, Donna Orange, Tess Moeke-Maxwell rātou ko Jeremy Younger. I tono atu te Komiti Matua kia huri ki te kaupapa: "Pēhea te Whakaatanga Ata Atu ā-Ahurea: Whakawhitinga Rerekē, Wehenga Whati rānei? E tuku atu ana tēnei tuhinga i ngā kōrero a ngā kaikōrero tokowhā, ā, me ngā miramira āta arohia mai i nga matapaki whai muri mai; me ētahi whakaaro whakataki, whakaata a te kaitaki o te rōpū.

Keywords: Other; bees; colonisation; monoculturalism; microagressions; cultural identity; hybridity; queerness

Introduction — Jo Stuthridge
Prior to the panel, my son, who occasionally performs as a DJ in Wellington, aptly summed up my feeling of anxiety and anticipation. He said, "Oh I get it: you're amping on a good line up". His comment formed a bridge across the small cultural divide between our professional worlds. We "got" each other in this brief moment of mutual recognition. Wiremu, Donna, Tess and Jeremy did indeed form a fantastic line-up: each speaking with distinct voices formed from unique blends of personal, theoretical and cultural perspectives. The differences between the panellists echoed the wider differences within

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the NZAP that endlessly create possibilities for division, fracture and also recognition.

At times we spoke across each other and there were other moments when we seemed to "get" each other. There were also a few moments of pause — open spaces in the discussion — when perhaps we "open our tent flaps" (Orange, 2012, p. 176) to the other. I wondered about the meanings these moments might hold.

Bees, or, An Ode to the Feral Therapist: The Tyranny of Mono-ism and the Creation of the "Other" — Wiremu Woodward (Tuhoe)

> Kei muri i te awe kapara he tangata ke, mana te ao, he ma! | Behind the tattooed face a stranger stands. He will inherit this world — and he is white! (Tipu Tapeka, 1769, cited in Baker, 1975, p. 265)

My psychotherapy whānau, it is a privilege to be addressing you all today and especially alongside such an eminent array of speakers.

In addressing the topic of the "Other", I have taken an oblique approach to exploring psychotherapy, apiculture and terrorism through the lens of the beekeeper.

European honeybees (*apis mellifera*) are the familiar golden-orange and brown species, brought to New Zealand by English settlers for honey production and plant pollination. First introduced to the Hokianga, Northland, in 1839, feral bee colonies became widely established alongside managed hives. New Zealand now has around 300,000 commercial hives in operation. These artificial hives mimic a feral hive, but are designed to simplify the management of bees. Accidental introduction of the damaging parasite *varroa destructor* to New Zealand between 2000 and 2006 has devastated the commercial industry and it is responsible for the total elimination of feral honeybee colonies (National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand, 2012).

One evening, preparing kai, distractedly listening to National Radio, an interview with an apiarist comes to my attention. The apiarist said "There are no more feral bees left in New Zealand; they have been wiped out by the varroa mite" (Lass, 2011). Instantly I feel an incredible tension expanding within my chest. Loss, sorrow and grief overwhelm me, casting a shadow over my vision. I see myself as a young boy, the sound of bees swarming faintly, a distant vibration, becoming louder, closer. I race inside quickly closing doors and windows. Moving to the lee of the house I stand transfixed as a swarm of wild bees engulfs our house and then the neighbour's. I can see individual bees peeling off from the swarm, dancing, full of life: so powerful, beautiful and yet so small. Slowly the hum fades into the bush behind our house and the radio resumes its dialogue:

> Apiarist: If the honey bee became extinct tomorrow, all higher life on planet earth would become extinct within five years. Any honeybee you see will now be from a managed domesticated hive … the apiarist must manage the hive, controlling for the varroa mite, or else the hive will be wiped out. (Lass, 2011)

I can still hear the muffled sound of wild bees omnipresent in the bush alongside tatarakihi, purring in that powerful way like a waterfall or a distant wild creature of ancient memory: a quiet ode to the summers of my youth.

My heart aches for the loss of those beautiful, wild, feral honey bees: so free, so spirited, who chose with wild abandon and grace to live on the margins of society, free from safe little boxes.

Haere ra pingipingi pii.

I start to wonder about our native bees? Though not honey-producing, they play a vital role in the pollination of plants and flowers. What has become of them? Have they been annihilated? Does their survival depend upon close and careful management?

I am relieved to discover that the native bee survives; however their existence is precarious. New Zealand's small, black native bees tend to be more solitary than honeybees and luckily *not* prone to the varroa mite. Perhaps this has something to do with their social formation, which is not as rigidly structured as honey bees. Native bees maintain an intense sense of individualism while co-existing in a connected community/hive or, as Ritchie (1963) might have put it, they are structured in a "granular manner" (p. 25): social structures organised around mutual, opportune and intersecting needs rather than rigid hierarchical structures.

This ode, as I imagine it, is a warning against totalitarianism and rigidified monolithic systems, which, in achieving their powerful potential, become wildly successful and, inevitably, destroy ecological diversity and all competing realities.

The varroa mite is, in effect, a natural correcting variable: by increasing the bees' "efficiency", people have eroded and destroyed the connecting, regulating environmental relationships that promulgated healthy bee communities. This artificial expansion has, in turn, left space for the varroa mite to enter.

Africanised honey bees *(Apis mellifera scutellata)* are a further example of distorted organisms arising from artificial ecological systems.

Headlines

"Killer bees kill Texas couple." (Praetorius, 2011)
"Killer bees kill farm animals in Bisbee." (Wasu, 2011)
"Africanised honey bees — Bee attacks in Arizona." (Heeding, 2012)

Africanised honey bees are colloquially known as killer bees. They are a hybrid of the European/African honey bee created by scientists who were trying to produce a resilient bee with superior honey producing capabilities. The strain was accidentally released in 1957 and subsequently aggressively overtook other bee populations in America (Winston, 1993).

The metaphor of killer bees is also an allusion richly rooted in the colonial dialogue of the racialised other: the European/African hybrid bees are described as "Africanised". In contrast to the gentle, civilised, desirable, domesticated, yellow European bee, the "black" African bees are associated with aggressive, wild, uncivilised, dangerous and violent traits. They are widely feared by the public, a reaction, in part, that has been amplified by sensationalist movies and media reports, which, in turn, are enshrined in

public policy and law: "European bees are our best defence against an area becoming saturated with African Honey Bees. Managed European bees are filling an ecological niche that would soon be occupied by less desirable colonies if it were vacant" (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2011, pp.1-5).

Currently the United States Department of Interior Biological Resources is attempting to manage killer bees by breeding gentler stock. (United States Department of Agriculture, 2010). Their intention is to re-domesticate the African bee. Ironically the African bee was originally enslaved and dislocated for its superior honey producing capabilities and vigorous, resilient behaviours.

In Aotearoa the plight of the African honey bee resonates with our marginalised, colonised and disaffected indigenous youth. The Killer Bee (or KillabeeZ) are a feeder youth street gang for the Tribesman (see Jared, 2011). Notice the expressed unconscious wish to return to a period of legitimate authority and being. Like actual killer bees, the Killer Bees are an expression of and response to monolithic homogenising systems including imperial expansionism, colonialism and capitalist exploitation. The oppression and subjugation of indigenous peoples through these systems and processes has precipitated the destruction of an indigenous self and a corresponding internalisation of negative/hostile self-objects and projections. Ferrenczi (1949) described this process as "identification with the aggressor" (cited in Orange, 2011, p. 92) — or, more precisely, identification *as* the aggressor:

> From the outset we have identified with the others who have felt themselves, and then treated us, as burdens, as intrusions, as nuisances, as toys to be used and discarded, as useful adjuncts, as worthless, lazy, selfish, good for nothing, even as evil … and so we have developed our sense of ourselves … the aggressor's agenda has taken over the whole being of the child who becomes our patient. (Orange, 2011, p. 92)

Identification *as* the aggressor, according to Ferrenczi (1949), is the "terrorism of suffering" (cited in Orange, 2011, p. 93). This dynamic, this terrorism of suffering, equally describes the internal experience of indigenous people subjugated and oppressed through racist projections and practice.

Orange cited numerous theorists concerned with similar dynamics: the concept of the false self, as described by Winnicott (1965) and Kohut (1984) also reflects these objectifying processes; Ghent (1990) explored the idea of "non survival"; and Brandchaft (2007) described the phenomenon of "pathological accommodation".

Many other theorists have investigated these processes. Fanon (1982) and later Dalal (2002) have described this process of dehumanising as "racialization". Erickson (1966) referred to "evil prototypes". Wolfenstein (1993) described the creation of a "false consciousness", and an alienated and divided self. In her exploration of whakamā, Metge (1986) translated it as meaning "to suffer by comparison", thereby referring to a process of dehumanisation, and objectification resulting ultimately in alienation from self and other. Metge's work intersects beautifully with Orange's (2011) reflections on the suffering stranger.

African bees are wild, not domesticated. Killer bees like the Killer Bees have adapted

to survive in environments which are extremely hostile and aggressive. Their apparent antisocial behaviour can be viewed as a revolutionary effort, an effort to retain their indigenous self/spirit: heroic resistance in the face of colonial misappropriation and exploitation. In the eyes of hermeneutic therapists such as Winnicott and Brandchaft, the antisocial resistance of the disaffected indigenous is not pathological in and of itself but, instead, is a heroic manifestation of a struggle to survive total annihilation and destruction in the face of overwhelming power. It is the right to exist.

Conclusion

There is a direct relationship between varroa, killer bees, Killer Beez, and the monolithic systems that spawn them. They complement and complete each other, in a dialectical tension: the parasites inhabit the spaces left by the death of pluralism and diversity. As Smith (1999) put it: "We, indigenous peoples … have a presence in the Western imagination, in its fibre and texture, in its sense of itself, in its language, in its silences and shadows, its margins and intersections" (p. 14).

Unless psychotherapy, like apiary, is willing to examine our uncritical tendency towards monopolies and homogeneity, then we too must share in the responsibility for the inevitable creation of "monsters" and "parasites" like varroa, killer bees and KillabeeZ.

Perhaps as psychotherapists and those who practice psychotherapy we are reticent to examine ourselves, our systems and our theories for fear of admitting our collusion with the pathological elements of our dominant regulating systems, such as cultural imperialism, racism, scientific positivism, and intrapsychic determinism. The consequences of this surrender and the price of our citizenship has been conditional on the sacrifice of the Other: the misfit, the insane, the crazy, the patient, the primitive, the heathen, the feminist, the gay, and those who dwell on the margins of our society — potential rebels and terrorists all.

Any movement towards the Other precipitates an existential crisis. A terrifying recognition that we not only create the Other, but are also created and dependent on the Other. This is the moment where self and Other collapse, dissolving into one another. Can we recognise this moment? Can we tolerate our own dissolution or, terrified, will we defend and retreat locked safely inside our own singular-ness? "They can't read our moko just like they can't read our Māori books. What do they see when they look at us Māori and what will happen when they grow tired of gazing on us and look away?" (Paratini Te Manu [Ngati Wai], 1863, cited in Morris, 2011).

Insiders and Outsiders: Inclusion and Exclusion — Donna Orange

In New York, I have been a *shiksa* among my colleagues and friends. This Yiddish term designates a non-Jewish woman, seen as a threat to become involved with Jewish men, who, particularly after the Shoah, or holocaust, should be marrying only within their faith. (Earlier, in Nazi Germany, German girls could be tortured for wanting to marry Jewish men, and worse, of course, would happen to the Jews themselves.) Ironically, I am sometimes mistaken, even by Israeli colleagues, as being Jewish — which would be fine

with me. In my own experience, however, I am a hybrid white American: part Irish, part English, part Dutch, part I don't know what. Our family gatherings include several cherished African-American members — we are culturally atypical in this respect, though, unfortunately, my father would not allow them to visit him at home, for fear that the neighbors would see. Yes, culture defines us as other, and outsider, even to ourselves.

But culture itself has not been the subject of my professional and academic studies, as it has been of many of my co-panelists. Instead, I have worked clinically with otherness in its many forms, and tried to learn from my patients as well as from you who study these matters more closely.

One of my beloved patients, for example, grew up in a very white suburb, the son of a white nurse and an African-American high school teacher from the American South. His grandparents had been slaves. These parents fought bitterly, and my patient remembered his father as good but mostly absent. Tremendously confused about belonging anywhere, this patient found it very difficult to find or sustain primary relationships, which he believed he wanted more than anything. Highly intelligent and creative, he seemed always to choose women who mistreated him; then he would decide angrily that therapy could not help him (I became his fifth therapist) because he was just too damaged; and often he considered suicide. Only if I caught this downward slide early enough could we begin to work on its sources in his early experiences of desperate outsiderness in his family, and as the only dark-skinned child in his school, now repeated in his attraction to light-skinned romantic partners. Until now — and, experientially, even now — he had no one to help him with this utter aloneness.

Let me say something here about mistakes. Even if a therapist cultivates the attitude that Martin Buber called inclusion, and that yesterday I spoke about as clinical hospitality, we will make thousands of mistakes, committing what many theorists call "microaggressions" (see http://www.microaggressions.com/). This term, originally coined by Pierce in 1970 in the context of racial microaggressions refers to "subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are 'put downs'" (Pierce, Carew, Pierce-Gonzales, & Willis, 1978, p. 66), it is common in the literature of cultural sensitivity, and defined by Sue et al (2007) as: "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of other races" (p. 273). If we allow ourselves to be taught, we can begin to hear our own racist, sexist, and other microaggressions, but we will never be free of them. Always situated within culture, we cannot hear the way we sound to the other.

For years, in the New York area, I have worked with many patients from China, India, and other places whose cultures I scarcely know. I have learned, sometimes, to ask patients to say important things in their own language, and then to translate for me. I have learned to ask them to correct me as often as possible when I misunderstand or hurt them, and to teach me the most needed things about their own culture. The same goes for sub-culture like black American, Latino, and gay, lesbian and transgender cultures. I say to the other: I need your help, and I will try to keep learning and changing. It is not always possible to make a referral to a therapist who already understands. In a spirit of hospitality, it is up to me to stretch.

Here, in your specific historical context, few distinct cultures appear, and you are better equipped to address the ways that otherness emerges in and between cultures here. I am deeply grateful to have been invited into this conversation among you, and I will return enriched by our time together.

"Face to Face": Working with Ethnically Diverse Māori — Tess Moeke-Maxwell

In 1840 the British Crown took two heterogeneous groups of peoples and discursively created two homogenous groups from British settlers/Tauiwi (commonly referred to as Pākehā) and New Zealand Māori (made up of iwi/tribal groups). Afterwards, Te Tiriti o Waitangi | The Treaty of Waitangi (signed in 1840), the nation's founding document, was buried beneath a mono-cultural nationalism. The "we are one people" catch cry worked to assimilate Māori cultural values, beliefs and customs (Sinclair, 1986). During the 1970s and 1980s the forgotten Treaty was resurrected largely through the efforts of a new urban Māori intelligentsia. The efforts of counter-nationalists focused on reinstating the Treaty and redressing unresolved historic land claims (Awatere, 1984; Kelsey, 1984; Walker, 1990).

The shift to biculturalism was underpinned by such counter-nationalist efforts through the strategic re-essentialisation of Māori as primordial, authentic and unchanged over time. Māori, like Pākehā, were locked into a dichotomous binary relationship which still holds today. How Māori identity is represented today still has strong links to the highly politicised shift in New Zealand nationalism during the 1980s (Moeke-Maxwell, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2008).

By 2051 Māori are likely to increase in number to 22% of the population (or, approximately, one million people); at which point nearly half of New Zealanders will be non-Pākehā. Māori ethnic composition will continue to respond to global vacillation and inter-cultural contact. As health professionals we need to prepare ourselves to respond sensitively to the needs of ethnically diverse Māori reflecting unique histories and subjectivities of New Zealand's indigenous population (Durie, 1995, 1997, 1999; Meredith, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c).

People of Māori descent who find themselves subjectivised with more than one ethnicity and/or ambivalent racial corporeality (Māori/Pākehā/Other) fall outside dominant academic representations and popular media portrayals of what it is to be Māori today. Bi/multiracial hybrids straddle more than one cultural landscape. Being multiply located means they have at least two sets of eyes. They experience things that people who are located solely within either Māori, Pākehā or Other cultural landscapes do not get to experience. Their stories contain information about neo-colonial forms of racism which, for example, seek to mark and place them in certain ways, and perhaps even reward or punish them. The culturally fractured divide is produced when there is too much rigidity around essentialist laden identities. An individual with dual or multiple ethnic whakapapa (genealogy) may find that their subjective identity exceeds or problematises an essentialist ideology about what it means to be Māori in the 21st century.

Māori with diverse ethnicity may adapt to nationalist and counter-nationalist ideals of a homogenous community by disavowing parts of the self. A homogenous community is a community that cannot see or embrace difference. They may begin to experience that parts of "self" are disavowed by the need of both national and counter-nationalism to reproduce the idea of an imagined (homogenous) community (Anderson, 1991), a community that cannot see or embrace difference.

For people who identify with more than one cultural worldview (for which read values, beliefs, customs), issues around identity may be quite different from people who identify with only one worldview. If not consciously understood by the individual and their whanau, the presence of more than one ethnicity may be confusing and anxiety-producing. Opening up a space for people to explore their ethnicity in a safe non-judgemental environment is likely to be liberating. Helping people to contest ill-fitting symbolic cultural representations has the potential to be socially transformative.

When working with Māori clients who wish to explore their cultural identity, inviting the participant to explore how they *experience* themselves as Māori may prove to be liberating. Taking into account gender, race, class, sexuality etc., a space can consciously be opened up to work more closely with ethnically diverse Māori in a way that enables them to discuss their sense of being different to other whanau members, or Māori who may appear to be more authentic (tuturu).

Identity issues for Māori who live with more than one genealogy and cultural history are complex and can increase the risks of anxiety, depression and a sense of alienation from family and society. Māori who have more than one ethnic identity often find it hard to find the words to name feelings that accompany living on the cultural margins. Providing people with support to make meaning from their discursive interpellations can prove emancipating.

Exploring ethnicity is important if clients are to gain a deeper understanding of negotiating the nuances, disjunctures and diaspora that accompanies cultural hybridity (Bhabha, 1990, 1994) and life on the cultural borderlands. I suggest that the mana of clients will be enhanced by affirming and normalising their unique sense of cultural identity. This may involve strengthening specific ethnicities that they identify are relevant to them. If the client wishes, for example, to strengthen their Māori identity, and if the clinician is not Māori or is unable to support this process, it would be helpful to refer them to an appropriate Māori health care provider.

Being open to supporting Māori clients to explore their identity safely in a non re-essentialising and re-colonising environment is crucial. There are real material consequences for having either white or brown racial signification. Brown Māori bodies, in symbolically designated white/Pākehā spaces, or white bodies in symbolically designated brown/indigenous spaces, may provoke an "uncanny" anxiety in the nation's psyche which produces neo colonial forms of racism towards the newly excluded Other. In turn, new configurations of contestation and resistance are formed as clients resist the call to be subjectivised and relegated either to "brown" or to "white" landscapes.

Mental health clinicians should be aware of the challenges facing tangata whaiora (Moeke-Maxwell et.al, 2008) and the specific forms of neo-colonial racism that exist for Māori who straddle these cultural borderlands. My doctoral research indicated that

miscegenation (discrimination of people with mixed race), informed by colourism, is alive and well in New Zealand (Moeke-Maxwell, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2008). Colour marks people in particular ways; these ideological markings are ascribed specific values which forms the basis for privileging one group of people over another.

Several years ago I developed the following questions to help clinicians work with Māori who identify with complex ethnicity issues (Moeke-Maxwell, 2008). When working with Māori clients who wish to explore their cultural ethnicity, it might be useful first of all to consider our own cultural identity and our assumptions about what constitutes Māori identity (Ramsden, 2005). For example, do we fall into the trap of thinking a client is *Māori* because they signify phenotypically as brown, or is not Māori because they signify phenotypically as white? Do we have a host of criteria that stereotypically accompany marked and unmarked Māori bodies?

In closing, I offer the following questions to guide us to work with ethnically diverse Māori. The first set of questions asks us to consider how the client makes sense of their identity (whakapapa/genealogy, cultural ethnicity and physical appearance):

- How does the client self-identify; as a member of whanau/hapu/iwi or aligned with spiritual, physical, emotional, cognitive, family and or social dimensions?
- Does the client have more than one set of whakapapa or genealogy (Māori, Pākehā, other), and/or more than one cultural ethnicity? (Note that these may be competing cultural histories, and experiences.)
- Is the client's ethnic identification influenced by their phenotypes and, if so, how?
- What is the client's family's narrative about their ethnic identity and how might this align with or differ from the client's story?
- What does the client think and feel about their body, for example, are they proud, ashamed or confused?

Another set of questions reflects on living with more than one ethnicity:

- Straddling and mediating two or more ethnic cultural realities and lifestyles is not always easy. How does the client "perform" their ethnic plurality?
- Do they experience any problems caused by continually vacillating cross-culturally?
- How does the client manage or mediate any difficulties or tensions that arise because they are juggling more than one ethnicity?
- Is there a unifying narrative which enables the client to be resilient?

Queerness and Hybridity — Jeremy Younger

This morning I want to talk about the interrelationship between, on the one hand, an understanding of myself as queer, with my experience of being "colonised" within the dominant and colonising "normal", straight world; and, on the other hand, my experience as a settler coming to New Zealand, and being the coloniser, as are all settlers.

As both a queer and a settler, it is a life in a half-empowered limbo. In both I am caught with an inherent awareness of "there" and "here": the space of "intermediary knowledge"

(Geertz, 1973) or Gadamer's (1997) idea of the "fusion of horizons", which I shall come back to later.

I spoke yesterday, in my paper "Facing into the Queer Embrace" (Younger, 2012), about the writings of Homi Bhabha, the post structural, post-colonial academic at Harvard University. He gives us a way to language what happens in relationship, especially, but not only, postcolonial relationships. He talks of the structures of control and uses three key interrelated concepts: hybridity, mimicry, and ambivalence. Here, I focus on the first of these: hybridity.

Hybridity speaks of the way identity, any identity — cultural, sexual, perhaps even psychotherapeutic — is always constructed in an ambivalent space, which contradicts any notion of "purity". When you and I, as queer and straight, as settler and indigenous person, or as therapist and patient come into relationship we create this hybrid, this ambivalent space. From whichever side we view it — your side or mine — we experience it as lacking, as impure. We then have two choices; either we can stay resolutely on the one side or the other, clutching the myth of cultural, racial, sexual, therapeutic purity, or we can do the risky thing and move into the hybrid space, messy though it is, and experience it and celebrate it. The hybrid space is the only space in which we can make relationship.

But language spoken in the hybrid space is inevitably the language of mimicry, which very easily becomes mockery, which undermines authority, and occurs when any relational discourse encourages the less powerful subject, be it the queer, the indigenous person, or the patient, to "mimic" the assumptions and values of the more powerful, the normal, the straight, the coloniser, the therapist, which results in inauthentic blurred copies of him or herself and "authorised versions of otherness" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 88).

Look for a moment at Robinson Crusoe in Daniel Defoe's 18th century novel. Shipwrecked on the desert island he rescues the native man Friday, teaches him to speak English, teaches him the words of God, and above all, what he believes to be the basics of humanity: in other words, rescues him out of utter darkness into an overwhelming, whitening light. As a result, however, Robinson Crusoe is, paradoxically, more isolated than ever, since the words he hears (from Friday) are his own words mimicked back. It looks like relationship but Crusoe is blinded by his narcissism; Friday does not exist; Friday is a lie, an illusion created by a mad, masterly imagination.

We, as therapists, know that communication is a process which is never perfectly achieved, that there is always this mimicry, a slippage or gap between what is being said and what is being heard; that ever so easily we try to get control by getting the other to be like us — and we always fail. In any case, we are ambivalent about what we desire; and complicity and resistance exist in a fluctuating relationship.

It's a scary place to stand.

The argument can be made that, because of this slippage in the discourse of relationship, the straight person can never represent or speak on behalf of the queer person, or the coloniser represent or speak on behalf of the colonised. The politically correct view is that, as Saïd (1978/2000) said:

> Representation, or more particularly the *act* of representing (and hence reducing) others, almost always involves violence of some sort to the *subject* of the

> representation … The action or process of representing implies control, it implies accumulation, it implies confinement, it implies a certain kind of estrangement or disorientation on the part of the one representing. (p. 41)

This essentialist, received wisdom suggests that any representation by the dominant culture (straight or coloniser) renders the non-dominant culture (queer or colonised) as irredeemably and pathetically vulnerable.

If the world of sensual and intellectual experience can be carved up into hermetically sealed no-go areas, determined by birth, skin colour, gender, sexuality and so on, then each of these zones can only be occupied by inhabitants with natural and exclusive rights.

Can I then only represent late middle aged, white gay males living in Grey Lynn in Auckland? To whom does plight and predicament belong? Does it only belong to the afflicted? I am not Jewish; may I not speak out against the Holocaust? I am not Japanese; may I not grapple with Hiroshima?

Of course it's true that whenever I speak about what is other than myself, I will reveal more about me than about the realities of what I'm talking about — that, is, more about the self than the other — but is this to say that I speak abusively when I do so? If that is so, the relationship of the "self" to the "other" is frozen into a scenario where the former always dominates the latter. We co-habit the same space but we are not allowed to talk about each other.

Should we not challenge this binary model which refuses the "other" any agency? When "self" and "other" are fixed by this construct, the other is always silenced, determined and acted upon. I want to suggest that this position is as oppressive as its antecedent, and, moreover, it suggests a kind of essentialist purity that is just not possible in our lived experience in New Zealand today. Who is pure enough? How will we tell? What if we are too grubby and contaminated? Are we to be silenced?

To arrive at a true relational position in New Zealand will mean that the dialogue will be stretched, extended and possibly even be seen to be abused in the process, torn out of its intended limits. Misconceived or other-conceived juxtapositions will mock our initial intentions. As we seek symbols of the self, the self will be symbolically torn and distorted in the exchange.

It is inevitable that a true relational dynamic must admit and risk different theories of knowledge and that, in so doing, we shall have to acknowledge some that imply the falsity of our own inherited assumptions. In other words, we are bound to betray our own ethnic and cultural inheritance in an attempt to open ourselves to the reality of others. The only option, and it is a rather scary one, is to give up truth and its security of (and for) the self, the very values for which a theory of knowledge was developed in the first place, and accept that all such matters are simply what Foucault (1982) called games of truth and of falsity.

The dominant culture has to be prepared to transform itself. This is the real cultural challenge and in my opinion the only option facing us in New Zealand if we do not want to denigrate who we are and how we can articulate our unique position in the world. What a long way we have to go, when European design, heterosexual adverts, Western

intellectuals and Coronation Street are all in their own way so highly privileged here.

What I'm suggesting certainly will disturb the rather elegant streamlined binaries of the influential theorists and the lovers of cultural purity. I would suggest that it is this essentialist terrain that makes it difficult for us in New Zealand to locate ourselves.

So, let us jettison rigid binaries. Let's start with jettisoning the idea of two sexes and two cultures, described as opposites or alternatives. Let's start talking of paradoxes and spectrums, not contradictions and mutual exclusions. "The unconscious," as Freud (1913/1955) reminded us, "speaks more than one dialect" (p. 177).

I spoke at the beginning of Gadamer's (1997) phrase, the "fusion of horizons". I believe it's a helpful metaphor. It's easy to think of the horizon as a boundary — that is its deceit, but with a horizon, we can, with a little effort, see beyond it. It points towards something more. Although a horizon marks the limit of sight at any moment, it is not an insurmountable limit. Simply walking a short distance, or going to the top floor of a building can help us see beyond our previous horizon. At a particular point or time horizons might appear as a limit, but they are always also gateways to something beyond.

I want to suggest that this is where the development of our cultural relationships must go: to risk seeing further and therefore welcoming what's over the horizon. This is about more not less, about difference not identity, about opening up not closing down; it's not about saying that's all there is but knowing that there is always more. To reduce a discussion of cultural difference or sexual orientation to coloniser/colonised, queer/normal, Māori/Pākehā, black/white, disempowered/powerful, or gay/straight is to perpetuate flawed assumptions of things for ever fixed in stone.

In closing I am reminded of Sartre's (1969) reworking of Hegel in his work on existentialism, *Being and Nothingness*: "I am possessed by the Other; the Other's look fashions my body in its nakedness, causes it to be born, sculptures it, produces it as it is, sees it as I shall never see it. The Other holds a secret — the secret of what I am" (p. 364).

Discussion — Jo Stuthridge

The comments and edited snapshots of dialogue below represent my subjective perspective on the discussion rather than an attempt at a bird's eye view. My intent is to contribute to a dialogue between diverse subjects, not to pretend to be objective.

The panellists appeared to take different paths to arrive at some key points of consensus. All four speakers agreed that culture defines us as other/Other. Further, there was some agreement that culture constrains the way we relate to ourselves as subjects. Tess warned that rigid bicultural representations can be excluding for those with ethnically diverse whakapapa, potentially leading to alienation within the self. Donna identified herself as a "hybrid white American" and gave an example of a client who had become an outsider to himself.

There was no talk of assimilationist ideals like the old call to act as "one people". Instead each speaker embraced an ideal of diversity from a place of respect for the other's irrevocable difference. Wiremu offered a cautionary tale about the dangers of monoculturalism, reminding us that the demise of pluralism breeds killer bees in the biological realm and pathological identities like the KillaBeez gang in the social realm.

Tess and Jeremy both challenged the binary assumptions implicit in the bicultural Māori–Pākehā divide. Jeremy asked us to "jettison rigid binaries" and look beyond concepts of coloniser and colonised, or gay and straight. He challenged us to relinquish the myth of cultural, racial and sexual purity and "do the risky thing" by stepping into the "messy space of hybridity". Notions of hybridity and diversity emerged as a way forward acoss cultural divides.

The apparent consensus left the rest of us with a raft of knotty questions that provoked some interesting dialogue. I found myself immediately wondering if this new call for hybridity might pose an old risk: the denial of a power imbalance between Māori and Pākehā. This thought prompted my first question for Donna.

Jo: Donna, you wrote an interesting critique (Orange, 2010) of Jessica Benjamin's (1995) notion of mutual recognition, suggesting that a demand for mutuality in an asymterical therapy relationship can risk repeating a client's injury from narcissistic parents. I guess it could be argued that the relationship between Māori and tauiwi also represents an asymetrical power imbalance, like child and parent or client and therapist. So, from your perspective, does the coloniser have any business seeking recognition as a separate subject from the colonised?

Donna: I think that's a very good and interesting way of framing that. The question is very much related to what Jeremy has just said actually: can the more powerful ever speak on behalf of the less powerful? Do I have any business demanding recognition from those who I have colonized or those who are in a relative position of less power, whether it is a child, or my patient? This is also the problem, in more abstract terms, of representation that Lévinas was always addressing. When I talk about "those people" and try to describe them or define them, you know "those" hysterics, "those" narcissistic people or "those" Hispanics, it's a very hegemonic power move. I would contrast this speaking about the other with what Lévinas (1981) called speaking or "saying to the Other" (p.146, my emphasis). This involves a dialogic attitude and that what we speak to the other is a word of welcome, a word of opening. It is a difference in attitude. I think I have this argument with Jessica Benjamin that is a difference in theory but it's really a difference in attitude, too. You shift away from demanding an equality of recognition from the other, to an attitude that welcomes the other.

Wiremu offered a local perspective to this question of mutuality, hybridity and power imbalances across cultural divides.

Jo: Can I put a simlar question to you, Wiremu? We have come some way past the Pākehā ideal of melting pot assimilation. We are confronting otherness to some extent. Are we ready for it? Is there a risk that movement towards hybridity poses some sort of denial of a power imbalance?

Wiremu: I think there's always a risk. It is a dangerous conversation for both parties concerned.

Later, in response to Seán Manning's suggestion that we need to tolerate "dialogue and chaos", or to "sit with and be with" difficult moments rather than moving to build new structures prematurely, Wiremu added:

Wiremu: [When you suggest] sitting with that or being in that place, my feeling is that it's easier for the dominant majority to be [in a chaotic] space while the minority sit on the margins. And perhaps it's useful for the other, the dominant majority to have at least an appreciation for the experience, the dichotomy or the imbalance of hanging out in that space.

Our conversation moved between lofty theoretical ideas and more down to earth pragmatic concerns. Jeremy had spoken with enthusiasm about Gadamer's (1997) concept of a "fusion of horizons", and Donna joined him in a moment of shared understanding:

Donna: The only way I can get my horizon enlarged is by asking you what it looks like from where you stand. It's a dialogical process to enlarge the horizon.

I asked Jeremy a question about what he thought a "fusion of horizons" might mean for NZAP organisational structures.

Jeremy: I don't have any straight answer [laughter], but I will give you a gay answer, and it's the answer I gave yesterday in my paper; that now that we have registration to hold the phallus of authority, that [previously] the NZAP had been holding for years accrediting everybody … now they [the Psychotherapists' registration Board] can do it. We can play, we can meet, we can stand on the beach, we can look at the horizon and we can make sand castles together because that sort of oppressive authority is somewhere else.

Others had very different associations to this playful image of building sandcastles on the beach including John O'Connor.

John: I think when you suggested, Jeremy, that we could export the phallus of authority to the registration Board I thought, well, that's a lovely idea, but I don't know that it is as simple as that. In fact the image of Māori and Pākehā on the beach is for me an extremely painful image: not one of sand castles, but one of enormous distress. And this ongoing conversation of who owns the beach…. If we think about ownership: who is the guardian of the beach, who is the guest on the beach, and who is the host on the beach? These [questions] take us into very painful territory, painful territory around power.

Wiremu: John, I think you name beautifully as you often do, the underlying processes that we are struggling with: the Shadow or what remains unnamed. I did have a response to the beach. I live on the beach on the north shore of Auckland and I often feel angry when I go down to the beach with my children. It's like you walk along Takapuna beach and there is no place there for "Other". It is the upper white middle class who have the privilege of living on the beach. We have to drive for half an hour to get there.

After Wiremu spoke there was a brief silence. His personal comment brought us close to the scary edges of the cultural divide. Tess also shared painful associations to the beach image.

Tess: I grew up with stories from my mother saying that the beach strip was confiscated by the Crown.

She spoke further about the loss of kai moana.

Panel members each acknowledged the personal fears and fantasies they entertained before this encounter. Jeremy and Wiremu spoke in touching ways of both the terror and attraction of facing otherness in this context.

Jeremy: I was sitting here with Wiremu at the other end of the table, thinking here we are … and we're together. You [Wiremu] do it from your heart in a way that is beautiful and scares the life out of me, and draws me in, in an amazing way. I do it with my nicely typed out, you know, carefully worded, honed down [speech], a sort of other world, and I wanted to somehow meet in that.

Our attempts to meet each other, despite deep fears of otherness, created tensions in the whole group. It felt like a "dangerous conversation", as Wiremu had noted. There were several moments where these tensions seemed to emerge as a brief silence or an opening in the dialogue. Suzanne Johnson spoke to one these moments:

Suzanne: For a moment it felt like a space opened and we didn't have to fill it and I thank you for that. I wonder what we do with it? My question is what do we do with the scare? Jeremy you named it: the scare of direct meeting. Eric Berne's (1972/1975) words come to mind [I paraphrase]: what do we do after we say hello? I don't know if there's an answer to this, but there's something about acknowledging that space of open meeting, standing on the beach looking at the horizons, this space of open meeting phenomenologically experienced as wairua-to-wairua, heart-to-heart … and then what?

Later, Josie Goulding picked up this theme.

Josie: I realise that something that often happens to me in this situation. I get into

> a sort of a panic of action, wanting to know what to do. And what I think I've experienced in this dialogue is a wonderful modelling of being able to bring ourselves to the question both on a personal level and on an intellectual level and a heart level. I think that what I experience so often, [for example] with the registration Board, is that we think we are in dialogue, but what we're actually doing is stating our positions. I think what I'm seeing [here today] is people being interested in actual dialogue where we are open to be changed by what we are hearing.

Reflections — Jo Stuthridge

I wonder if these moments of openness might provide a key to our attempts to negotiate otherness across the cultural divide? Both speakers above named a feeling of energy at these interstices rather than the deadening we usually associate with an impasse.

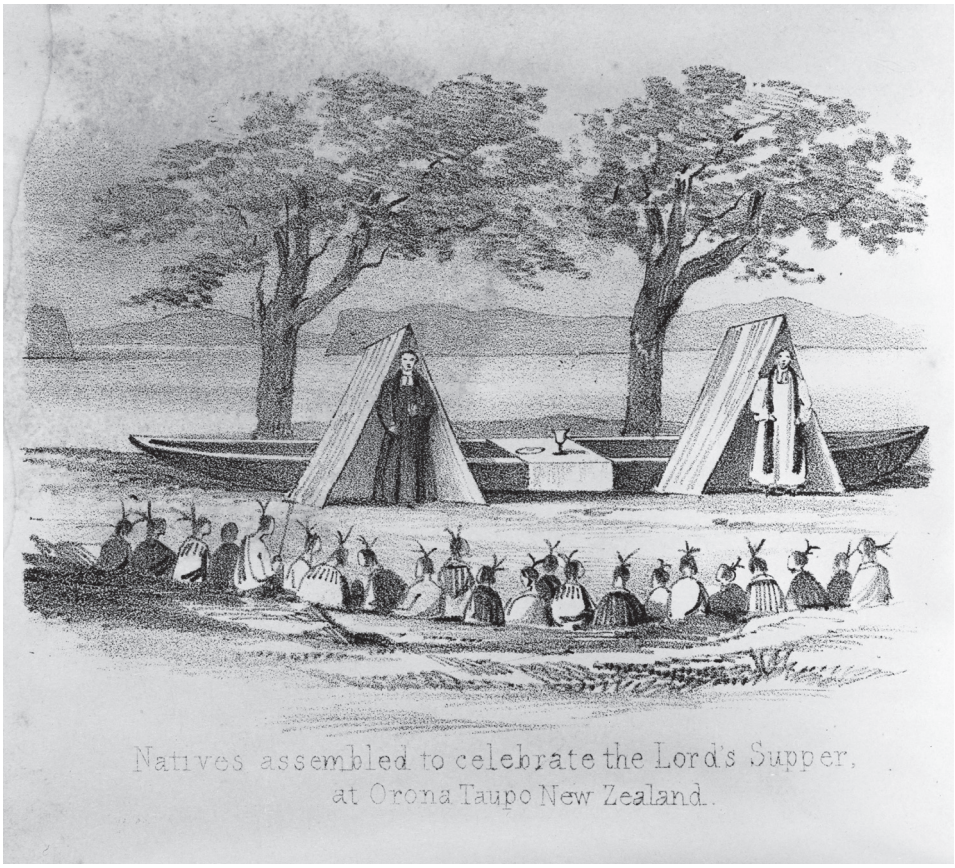
Perhaps these open spaces reflected an attempt to "open our tent flaps to the suffering other", to let the other go first in a gesture of hospitality, as Donna Orange (2012, p. 176) might put it. The spirit of grace and respect exemplified by the speakers lends weight to this idea. We could also think of these spaces in Winnicott's (1971) terms, as moments when a play space opens and meanings can be transmuted. Would it be idealistic to think of these silences as a movement toward intersubjectivity? Intersubjectivity, as defined by relational analysts such as Benjamin (1990) or Aron (1996) concerns the ability to see the other as a separate subject with feelings and thoughts that differ from our own, rather than perceiving the other as an object of internal fantasy.

Dialogue within a group, as in a therapy relationship, can be used to reinforce a position, as Josie noted, through splitting, projection and attempts to objectify the other. Rigid binaries within a person or group can lead to complementary forms of relating between "doer and done to" (Benjamin, 2004). In this defensive mode we use the other to externalise conflicts that cannot be contained within the self. Alternatively, we can use an encounter with otherness to reclaim the disowned parts of ourselves, increasing our capacity to tolerate internal conflict rather than enacting these dramas in the external world.

Perhaps the challenge for the group as a whole is, to use Bromberg's (1996/1998) metaphor, to "stand in the spaces", that is, to maintain awareness of differences within the group without foreclosing conflict and negotiation. Bromberg noted that rigid divisions within the mind create stability while sacrificing coherence, spontaneity and vitality. Rigid fractures isolate potentially incompatible self experiences, preventing tension and discordance within the self. Healing and growth take place when the individual learns to tolerate awareness of "otherness" within the self. Likewise, as we develop our ability to tolerate otherness within a group, without splitting, objectifying, alienating and managing the other, there is a potential to create a more vibrant, creative and coherent organisation. The rare moments of pause in this dialogue might present us with an opportunity to "stand in the spaces" and create a more fluid way of being with each other.

These theoretical ideals appeal to the optimist in me. However, I am mindful, like

others, that movement toward coherence within NZAP requires us to keep in mind massive disparities between Māori and tauiwi in terms of current contexts, emotional experiences and historical memories. The metaphors which coloured this group discussion; images of Māori and Pākehā on the beach, Gadamer's (1997) "fusion of horizons" and Lévinas's (1990) open tents brought to mind another picture.



Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington Reference Number PUBL-0180-1845-084

This image of tents, beaches and cultural divisions, which was first published anonymously in the *Ecclesiologist* (Cambridge Camden Society, 1845), serves as a sharp reminder of the power imbalances embedded in our shared colonial past. The open space between Māori and Pākehā in this picture is wrought by the gross domination of one culture by another.

As therapists we try to be mindful of the power differential created by an asymmetrical relationship with our clients. Likewise any attempt to meet across the cultural divide in Aotearoa must take account of the asymmetry created by the violence of our colonial past. As a Pākehā therapist I think my task is to open all the tent flaps to the other; to listen rather than preach, and to be ever mindful that I am a guest on these beaches, not a host. I remain hopeful that as an organisation we (NZAP) will continue to open up

these spaces within the group mind as we increase our ability to tolerate otherness, while staying aware of the power imbalances rooted in our cultural context.

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