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Tikanga, Kaumātua and Place



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Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland, New Zealand

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Tikanga, Kaumātua and Place

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wānanga at Ruakākā Beach. Photo courtesy of
Marama Muru-Lanning.

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Joanne Chapman has a PhD in evolutionary biology from the University of Oxford, UK, and has completed postdoctoral research in Sweden (Linnaeus University, Kalmar) and the United States (University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas). She is a senior scientist at PHF Science, where she works on varied projects including wastewater epidemiology, surveillance of respiratory viruses in air samples and developing new molecular detection methods for environmental pathogens of human health concern. She has co-authored recent publications on Aotearoa’s wastewater epidemiology programme in *The Pacific Journal of Health, Communications Medicine, The Lancet Global Health* and *Water Research*.

Ngahuia Dixon (Ngāi Te Rangi, Ngāpōtiki, Ngāti Ranginui) is a kaumātua researcher who has held teaching and lecturing positions at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato|University of Waikato and Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Her well-received PhD concerned deeper aspects of tikanga relating to Māori understandings of waterways and oceans as well as the waterways of the human body or embodied waters.

Jade Farley (Pākehā) completed her PhD in 2024 on women’s use of “magic” in relation to critical and feminist perspectives on mental health at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland. Her research interests include critical and decolonial mental health, esoteric/spiritual knowledges, and gender and sexual interactions.

Nina Finigan is a curator based at Tāmaki Paenga Hira|Auckland War Memorial Museum. Among many things, she is interested in the “embodied archive”: framing archives as spaces where bodies interact, senses mingle and coalesce and history is three-dimensional. Concerns of representation, gender and power weave through her collecting and research, while her exhibition work, including *Are We There Yet* and *Love & Loss*, centres archival collections as sites of both information and material culture. She has published extensively and is on the editorial board of *Papahou*, Auckland Museum’s peer-reviewed journal. Nina is also a featured expert on Television New Zealand’s *National Treasures*.

Brent Gilpin has a PhD in plant biotechnology from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and has completed postdoctoral research in Denmark (human genetics) and New Zealand (pea genetics and biocontrol of insects). He is a senior science leader

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Maria Hepi is a senior social scientist in the social systems team at PHF Science in Aotearoa New Zealand, with over 20 years' experience as a bicultural researcher. A Pākehā researcher, she works in bicultural contexts guided by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and in partnership with Māori. Her research focuses on complex public and environmental health challenges. She uses participatory, systems-based and kaupapa Māori-aligned approaches, and has recently contributed to research on wastewater-based epidemiology, health inequities and primary care, and tobacco control. Her work emphasises equity and culturally relevant science that supports iwi/Māori and communities.

Mere Kepa, Luana Pirihi, Patrick L. Hilton, Pania Moulton: Indigenous peoples' collaboration is a radical cure. The leading Indigenous Māori discussion in Takahiwai and Ruakākā is now focused on working with the sea, not against it. This kind of radical thinking requires a voluntary partnership to giving land back to the sea. The collaborative philosophy demands consensus, not compulsion, and is the key to local sustainability. Luana, Patrick, Pania and Mere don't have the authority to dictate anything. We do all our projects, such as our pest strategy, opposing industrial mining of the seabed, promoting the return of the land confiscated from the Indigenous people, and giving the land back to the sea, on a voluntary basis. Critically, the process of securing an agreement with industrialists, developers and elected representatives is lengthy—the final solutions are longer lasting because the radical cure is a nature-based coastal adaption voluntary partnership.

Gerald Lanning is a consultant (previously a partner) in Simpson Grierson's Planning and Environment team. He has over 25 years' experience as a specialist environmental lawyer and has recently submitted his PhD thesis (with Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland), investigating what it means to provide for future generations when making environmental law decisions. He is the author of the chapter addressing tikanga Māori and te Tiriti o Waitangi in Salmon and Grinlinton's edited volume *Environmental Law in New Zealand* (Thomson Reuters New Zealand, 2025) and a researcher on Māori-community-based research projects.

Hilary Lapsley, PhD, is a research psychologist and an honorary academic in the Faculty of Arts and Education at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland.

Ngairie Lasika-Muru is the senior advisor of Te Mānukanuka o Hoturoa Marae at Auckland International Airport. She is responsible for events and manaakitanga at the marae and facilitates relationships between Māori and Auckland International Airport. She is on the board of trustees for Te Puea Memorial Marae as well as for STRIVE Community Trust and the Aroha Abide Charity Trust, an organisation helping churches obtain funding to assist community housing. She is a kaumātua kuia of Te Kei o Te Waka o Tainui.

Lynn Lewis-Bevan has a PhD in zoology from the University of Oxford, UK, and is research coordinator at the Waikato-Tainui College for Research and Development and an honorary research fellow in anthropology at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland. She is a biological anthropologist whose research focuses on how environmental factors influence primate behaviour, using direct observation and geospatial analysis. Since joining WTCRD in 2025 she has embraced social anthropology and is committed to kaupapa Māori methodology.

Maea Marshall is a kaumātua kuia and chair of Te Taiao o Kāwhia Moana. She has engaged in research projects through professional work and participation in wānanga, contributing to studies on history, tikanga and whakapapa. She led the establishment of Te Rūnanga o Mahuta and has participated in work with Te Puni Kōkiri and the COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Kāwhia. She holds whānau as paramount and aims to leave a lasting legacy that provides future generations with clear tikanga to sustain and protect whenua, inspiring whānau to continue their journey. She has whakapapa to Tainui waka, Waikato iwi, Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Hikairo, Ngāti Māhanga and others.

Keri Mills is a Pākehā oral historian. Her research focuses on the history of Indigenous/settler relationships and the history of conservation, particularly in Aotearoa. She has worked in academia and the public service since graduating from the Australian National University with a PhD in history in 2013. Her research focuses on Treaty relationships in Aotearoa and the history of conservation, and how these histories can inform present-day politics and policies.

Marama Muru-Lanning is a professor in anthropology at the Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland and the chair of the Waikato-Tainui College for Research and Development. Her teaching and research is dedicated to Māori communities and prioritises tikanga, equity and interdependence. As an environmental anthropologist she focuses on the cultural specificity of tangata whenua groups and their unique sense of place and belonging in Aotearoa. Her professional expertise includes building research relationships with Māori communities, especially with coastal and river groups, and also ecological consciousness, food security, kai sovereignty, kaumātua gardening, kai gathering and food politics. She is from Tūrangawaewae Marae with whakapapa that connects her to Waikato, Ngāti Maniapoto and Ngāti Whātua.

Dolly Paul: Ko Waikato Tainui ahau, ko Te Puea tōkū marae, ko Dolly Paul tōkū ingoa. I am kaumātua kuia of Te Puea Memorial Marae; Te Kupenga Hauora Māori at the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland; Te Mana Ārai o Aotearoa|New Zealand Customs; and Te Kei o Te Waka o Tainui, maintaining the relationship between Te Kei o Te Waka o Tainui and Auckland International Airport. Tēnā koutou katoa.

Sally Mangatawhiri Reid is from the Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand, and is of Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāti Maniapoto descent. She is the kaiwhakahaere rauemi (operations manager) at the Waikato-Tainui College for Research and

Development and is actively involved in college-based research initiatives and applied community research projects. She has had an extensive career in the New Zealand Defence Force and holds a bachelor's degree from Massey University, majoring in defence studies. She has commenced postgraduate studies.

Francesca Towers (Pākehā) recently completed a master of arts in biological anthropology at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland. Their thesis focused on pandemics and mortuary behaviours in the context of tangata whenua Māori and COVID-19 in Aotearoa, and they received the Blaze O'Connor Prize in anthropology for this work. This is Francesca's first publication, drawn from their master's research.

Latafale Allyssa Verner-Pula (she/her) is a proud tama'ita'i Sāmoa (Sāmoan woman), occupying a range of spaces. Currently a PhD student in Pacific studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland, Allyssa is an award-winning podcaster, emerging researcher and community advocate. Based in Manurewa, South Auckland, Allyssa is passionate about serving, empowering and telling the stories of Pacific communities in Aotearoa, through storytelling, scholarship and media.

Read Wheeler is an Auckland-based researcher who recently completed his doctoral thesis, "The Albertlanders: The Making and Remaking of a New Zealand Provincial Immigration Scheme", at Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa|Massey University. His past research has focused on community identity in the Kaipara region of Northland, New Zealand, as well as the historiography of the Moriori people of Rēkohu Wharekauri (the Chatham Islands). He has presented research in panels at the New Zealand Historical Association Biennial Conference twice and is currently researching the religious identity of communities in the Kaipara region.

Matariki Williams (Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Hauiti, Taranaki, Ngāti Whakaue, Te Aitihaunui-a-Pāpārangi) is an independent curator, researcher and writer. Matariki is the host of the Māori art and history podcast *Pūtātara: Revolutions in Māori Art*. In 2024–2025, Matariki held the Oroya Day fellowship in New Zealand art history at Te Herenga Waka|Victoria University of Wellington and is currently teaching Te Tohu Tiaki Taonga at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Previous roles include senior historian, mātauranga Māori at the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, and senior curator, mātauranga Māori at Te Papa. She lives with her whānau in Whakatāne.