

NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

TE HUNGA RANGAHAU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

Te Tohu Pae Tawhiti Award 2005

Wally Penetito has whakapapa links to Tainui, Ngāti Haua, Ngāti Tamatera, and Ngāti Raukawa. He has been a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education Studies at Victoria University of Wellington since 1998, and is the Co-Director of He Pārekereke, The Institute for Research and Development in Māori and Pacific Education at Victoria University. Previously, from 1960 to 1983, Wally Penetito was a teacher, principal, and Māori Adviser to a range of schools within Aotearoa-New Zealand. From 1984 to 1997, Wally held senior positions in the Ministry of Education, The Education Review Office, and Wellington College of Education; and over the period 1997-1998, he was the Manager of the Education Strategy for Māori, a project jointly initiated by the Ministry of Education and Te Puni Kokiri. Wally Penetito's contribution to Māori education, and more generally to New Zealand education, has been considerable. He has brought to his work the ability to provide in-depth scholarly analysis of educational problems and issues, as well as the capacity to communicate—listen, speak and write—in a way that has enabled people from diverse backgrounds to engage with both new ideas and traditional beliefs, as well as work together towards a greater understanding of educational futures for our nation. He commands respect as an educational leader through his knowledge, his wisdom, his patience, his humour, his generosity, and his humility.



As Project Manager of the consultation process for the Education Strategy for Māori (1997-98), Wally Penetito undertook to meet Māori throughout Aotearoa in a series of hui that is now recognised internationally as a benchmark for participatory processes in research. In one month, 25 Māori groups from Kaitiāia to Invercargill met to consider how the education system could facilitate the removal of disparity between Māori and non-Māori. Key principles and procedures for consultation with communities were articulated and followed. The basis of the consultation was the belief that with the engagement of Māori and the responsiveness of the system, educational achievement would be enhanced. Wally's articulation of the research process, along with the rigour of its implementation, ensured that the Government received a comprehensive and clear picture of the educational aspirations of Māori. In his Doctoral thesis, *A Sociology of Māori Education: Beyond Mediating Structures*, Wally Penetito adopts Berger's notion of "mediating structures" to present an original analysis of how a variety of such structures impact on the lives of Māori and non-Māori, and influence the relationship between them. Through analyses of reports on Māori Education, Government consultation processes with Māori, the roles performed by institutional marae, and the development of Māori-medium schooling, Wally Penetito pieces together a powerful sociological analysis of Māori education—its past, present, and future. The thesis combines his passion for sociology and educational theory with his extensive experience as an educator, researcher, and communicator.

Wally Penetito's contribution to the research environment is outstanding. He works collaboratively with colleagues both in Aotearoa and internationally to pursue educational and social goals for indigenous peoples in the Pacific and beyond. Increasingly, he is being invited to be a keynote speaker at conferences and other fora. In his teaching and research roles at Victoria University, he provides a scholarly role model for colleagues and students to follow. In the period since joining the School of Education Studies, he has supervised 11 thesis students to completion. He has served on a wide range of University and external committees or working groups, providing leadership that has influenced both Māori and non-Māori alike. The high calibre of Wally Penetito's contribution to national and international research, his supervision and mentoring of students and colleagues, the quality of his teaching, and his capacity to work alongside communities and practitioners to bring about educational transformation, marks him as one of Aotearoa-New Zealand's leading educators of today. In due course, educationists will claim a significant historical place for Wally Penetito in our nation's progress to social, educational, and cultural inclusiveness. His work is by no means winding down; his ideas continue to evolve, and both challenge and shape our thinking.