



TE HUNGA RANGAHAU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

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Te Tohu Pae Tawhiti

Mere Skerrett
Victoria University

Dr Mere Skerrett has wide iwi affiliations including Ngāi Tahu, Tainui, Te Arawa, Ngāti Rakiāmoa, Ngāti Ruahikihiki, Ngāti Māhuta, Ngāti Unu, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Pūkiao, Ngāti Te Rangiuuora, and Ngāti Pūkeko. Mere is Associate Professor in Education at Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington. She is a researcher and teacher of many years' experience in the arena of te reo me ona tikanga Māori. The key strands of her teaching and research are: te reo Māori immersion and bicultural language acquisition, Indigenous education, and Mātauranga Māori in Early Childhood settings. Mere has researched and published extensively in these areas, drawing attention to the impacts of colonialism and colonisation on Māori efforts to sustain te reo me ōna tikanga. She has worked tirelessly for language revitalisation and has consistently applied her scholarship to shaping the education of beginning teachers. Beyond Aotearoa New Zealand, Mere has contributed to international Indigenous landscapes. For example, within the international early childhood education community, Mere took on a leadership role in the Reconceptualising Early Childhood Education (RECE) conferences. She was instrumental in founding an Indigenous Caucus within RECE and is the Indigenous representative on the steering committee. In 2022 she was selected to chair the RECE steering committee. Mere is a regular keynote speaker at international conferences and has published extensively in high-ranking journals and prestigious presses. She has made a significant contribution to a growing body of work by Indigenous theoreticians world-wide who are developing conceptual frameworks for applying tribal knowledge in educational settings. Mere works in English and te reo Māori. She recently graduated as the top female graduate (te kirikawa) from Te Panekiretanga o te Reo, the Institute of Excellence in Māori Language, which provides the most advanced Māori language academic course for adult students across Aotearoa New Zealand. In addition to her research and scholarly activities, Mere also does a great deal of community-based teaching, outreach and research where she engages directly with whānau, hapu and iwi. She was active in kohunga reo in the early years of its establishment and she currently serves as the Te Waipounamu Māori Women's Welfare League Area Representative. Mere is currently involved in an oral history research project focussed on the Māori women involved in Ngā Wāhine Toko i te Ora, Rāpaki Branch. Mere has been recognised by her Tainui people with a doctoral and networking award, and she won the Te Pā Harakeke Award of commitment to Kāi Tahu whānau and leadership in te reo Māori. Mere is a long-standing supporter of NZARE, regularly contributing her scholarship via presentations to NZARE conferences, and as a member of the board of NZJES. She has also served many years on NZARE Council, including terms as co-president and president. Mere is a passionate campaigner for Māori claims for justice, recognition and social change. She brings Indigenous expertise to bear on Indigenous educational contexts and real-world problems. Her work is highly regarded by her peers in Aotearoa and overseas and she is a worthy recipient of Te Tohu Pae Tawhiti Award, 2022.