

# Kent Academic Repository

## Full text document (pdf)

### Citation for published version

Simon, Hemopereki (2022) Hoes Te Waka ki Uta: Critical Kaupapa Mori Research andMormon Studies Moving Forward. *New Sociology: Journal of Critical Praxis*, 3 (1). pp. 1-14. ISSN 2563-3686.

### DOI

<https://doi.org/10.25071/2563-3694.97>

### Link to record in KAR

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/96030/>

### Document Version

Publisher pdf

#### Copyright & reuse

Content in the Kent Academic Repository is made available for research purposes. Unless otherwise stated all content is protected by copyright and in the absence of an open licence (eg Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher, author or other copyright holder.

#### Versions of research

The version in the Kent Academic Repository may differ from the final published version.

Users are advised to check <http://kar.kent.ac.uk> for the status of the paper. **Users should always cite the published version of record.**

#### Enquiries

For any further enquiries regarding the licence status of this document, please contact:

[researchsupport@kent.ac.uk](mailto:researchsupport@kent.ac.uk)

If you believe this document infringes copyright then please contact the KAR admin team with the take-down information provided at <http://kar.kent.ac.uk/contact.html>

---

# Hoea Te Waka ki Uta: Critical Kaupapa Māori Research and Mormon Studies Moving Forward

**Hemopereki Simon**

## **Abstract**

The following is a reflective commentary on the place of Critical Indigenous Studies, with a focus on Kaupapa Māori Research, within Mormon Studies. Specifically, the piece explores the following questions: What does Kaupapa Māori Research look like when engaging in Mormon Studies? What positionality needs to be taken by Kaupapa Māori researchers and Critical Indigenous scholars when engaging in Mormon Studies? What are the main areas Critical Indigenous scholars and Kaupapa Māori scholars should engage when tackling issues around Mormonism? These questions are important in light of the growing importance of the cultural renaissance in Te Ao Māori and the rise of Kaupapa Māori Research.

## **Keywords**

global Mormon studies; critical religion studies; Indigenous studies; sociology of religion

## Introduction

In recent years, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS Church) has faced increasing challenges around their exclusionary and inequitable practices. Much of these challenges were popularized by critical think pieces posted on websites, such as Mormon Think,<sup>1</sup> podcast and vlog sites, like Mormon Stories,<sup>2</sup> the numerous YouTube videos that feature Sandra Tanner, and the creation of Mormon Wikileaks (Chandler, 2016), all of which coincided with a falling number of active church members (Levin, 2016; Canham, 2019; Larson, 2019; Mormon Stories, 2021). On top of this is the ever-looming truth found within the CES<sup>3</sup> letter (Runnells, 2013),<sup>4</sup> as well as the advent of publications like *Decolonizing Mormonism: Approaching a Postcolonial Zion*,<sup>5</sup> and *Essays in American Indian & Mormon History* (Colvin & Brooks, 2018; Hafen & Rensink, 2019).

As a result, an increasing awareness of problems in the church, both historical and contemporary, have been made obvious and subsequent calls to acknowledge diversity, a growing interest in fighting patriarchy in the Mormon feminist movement (Finnigan & Ross, 2013, 2014; Johnson-Bell, 2013; Brooks, 2014; Brooks et al., 2015), and more people advocating for change around queer and trans issues, have emerged (Petrey 2011, 2020; Dehlin et al., 2014; Sumerau et al., 2014; Cragun et al., 2015; Cook,

2017; Bridges et al., 2020; Gustav-Wrathall, 2020; Lefevor, 2020; Mohrman, 2020; Swedin, 2020; Young, 2020; Griffin, 2021; Chakravart, et al., 2021)

With this current socio-political climate in mind, below I provide a reflective commentary on the place of Critical Indigenous Studies, with an emphasis on Kaupapa Māori Research, in Mormon Studies. Giving substantive focus to Māori perspectives on Indigenous research, I describe the need for an intervention into Mormon Studies as an academic discipline around Indigenous issues. Specifically, I begin to answer the following questions: What does Kaupapa Māori Research look like when engaging in Mormon Studies? What positionality needs to be taken by Kaupapa Māori researchers and Critical Indigenous scholars when engaging in Mormon Studies? What are the main areas that Critical Indigenous scholars and Kaupapa Māori scholars should be engaging in when tackling issues around Mormonism?

To address these questions, I outline a positionality on researching Mormonism from my own experiences as a Critical Kaupapa Māori scholar from a non-Mormon background. My past projects have explored Indigenous data sovereignty, whakapapa, and Mormonism and the appropriation of haka<sup>6</sup> by Mormon missionaries overseas and on YouTube. Since it is a given that much of the readership may not be from the fourth world and/or familiar with Critical Indigenous Studies and/or familiar with Global Mormon

<sup>1</sup> Mormon Think, <http://www.mormonthink.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> Mormon Stories, <https://www.mormonstories.org/>.

<sup>3</sup> CES stands for "Church Educational System".

<sup>4</sup> For purposes of brevity, full context of the relationship between Te Ao Māori and Mormonism is not provided here. For more on context, please see Peter Lineham, "Tanner Lecture: The Mormon Message in the Context of Maori Culture." *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 62-93; Marjorie Newton, "Maori and Mormon" (Salt Lake City, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2014); Marjorie Newton, "Tiki and Temple: The Mormon Mission in New Zealand, 1854-1958" (Salt Lake City, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2012); Kelly Moana Klink, "Breaking the Barrier: Maori religious and spiritual entanglements at Aotea" (Master's Thesis, The University of Waikato, 2019); Ian Barber "Lands of Contrast: Latter-day Saint Societies in New Zealand/Aotearoa and Australia" in *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Mormonism*, eds. R. Gordon

Shepherd, A. Gary Shepherd and Ryan T. Cragun (Cham: Palgrave, 2020), 455-474.

<sup>5</sup> It must be noted that, despite being chosen by the author himself, he still thinks that the title of this publication is technically incorrect and may be considered misleading by some. It would have been far more appropriate, but more complicated, to call the commentary something like Postcolonial Mormonism, for the notion of achieving a decolonised religious institution seems antithetical to the concept of decolonisation.

<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this paper, Te Reo Māori is the Indigenous language of New Zealand. It will not be treated as a foreign language and italicised as is normal practice within academic writing. Translations will be provided in the glossary. Where quotations are used with translations provided, in all cases where it is necessary to convey Māori cultural understandings, Te Reo Māori (Māori language) words will be privileged over English.

Studies, the purpose of this reflection is to synchronise these generally distinct fields into a common understanding of the problem. This will be accompanied with an explanation of the nature and literature outlining Kaupapa Māori Research writ large. To conclude, I will provide a suggested list of areas that Critical Indigenous Studies scholars should focus on when undertaking research on Mormonism.

## **A Kaupapa Māori researcher's intervention and positionality**

Due to the nature of the material and the research that I write about, it would be easy for Mormons to conclude erroneously that I am what the Church calls 'anti-Mormon'. When I presented a paper at a conference on Religion and Ethics in Tokyo in 2019 as part of my research project on Indigenous data sovereignty, whakapapa, and Mormonism, I told the audience that I was about to present something that was not very 'faith affirming', to which a Mormon professor replied: "If I need to affirm my faith there is church on Sundays; we come to conferences to learn about ideas". The anti-Mormon perception of my research and the like may also be amplified by the lack of Critical Indigenous engagement with subjects relating to Mormonism, and while I am not anti-Mormon per se, I do approach Mormonism as an Indigenist. Indeed, I will always approach Christianity, Mormon Studies, and Mormonism with the idea that my people have a right to cultural integrity. That said, I openly realise that I cannot, and should not, try to dictate to someone what their religious beliefs should be, nor is that my goal. Belief is a very personal thing, as it should be.

However, when your beliefs - religious theology, doctrine, or practice - seeks to alter or comment on my culture without good engagement with my people, including those who are non-Mormon, I have a right and a responsibility to ngā uri whakatupu: to reply and to question you, your teachings, and your practices. My right and need to do so is only further amplified by the fact that I am a critical Kaupapa Māori scholar. That I am such a scholar

is important for two reasons, as suggested by Tania Ka'ai and Manuka Henare:

- 1) Indigenous Researchers are there to be change agents for our communities. We are the key to explaining our point of view to the religious and the scholars of religion.
- 2) Māori religion is not found in a set of sacred books or dogma; the culture is the religion. History points to Māori people and their religion being constantly open to evaluation and questioning to seek that which is tika, the right way.

(Henare, 1998; Ka'ai, 2008)

Unlike Orthodox Mormonism and Mormon Studies, Te Ao Māori considers it ethical or tika to engage in debate and to question, so that the collective may find an acceptable way forward that has depth and is true or correct to the collective. This path towards being ethical should also include the other ethical standard in Te Ao Māori being pono or truthfulness that has depth. Furthermore, traditionally, in Te Ao Māori, our cultural decision making was done for the overall benefit of the collective. Everything was consensus driven.

It is with these ideas in mind that I approach Christianity and Mormonism as a subject of Critical Indigenous inquiry. A key finding of mine, in examining Mormon scholarly texts and materials from researchers in the field, is that there is a lack of highly critical culturally affirming tuturu work. I can only conclude that their active status as members of the Church and the ever-present threat of excommunication is a hindrance to the production of much needed work that would create more dialogue and understanding among the Mormon community. We, as Critical Indigenous Studies scholars, must put the 'political' and power of our voices back into our research on religious topics (Smith et al., 2012, p. 10). The greater presence of researchers, like myself, in Mormon and/or Religious Studies provides more credibility to the field – particularly in emerging aspects of the field being

Global Mormon Studies (Refer to Inouye, 2014) and Lamanite Studies (Refer to Herdandez, 2021).

### Kaupapa Māori Research

Henry and Pene (2001) state that: “Māori intellectuals, in resistance to the colonial heritage and hegemony of New Zealand’s colonial past, are at the forefront of developing the kaupapa Māori paradigm” (p. 234). There are many definitions of Kaupapa Māori Research and the theory that underpins it. One definition states: “Kaupapa Māori, as a concept and philosophy, is the ‘conceptualisation of Māori knowledge’ that has been developed through oral tradition. Kaupapa Māori is esoteric and tuturu Māori. It is knowledge that validates a Māori world view and is not only Māori owned but also Māori controlled” (Nepe, 1991, p. 15). Webber (2008) describes it as the desire for the research to be by Māori, whereby Māori use Māori cultural perspectives and provide a strategy for the empowerment and the self-determination of the participants involved. The philosophy of Kaupapa Māori is considered, in its most basic form, to be the philosophy and practice of being Māori (Eketone, 2008). Thus, the position of the language, culture, knowledge, and values are accepted in their own right (Bishop, 1996, p. 12; see also Smith, 1992). Hoskins & Jones (2017) comment that with Kaupapa Māori, “...Māori are involved in research and debate. A significant [amount of] literature, mostly in education, has outlined the principles of Kaupapa Māori as methodological and theoretical guides to research and practice” (p. ix). I explore this fundamental research in what follows.

Graham Smith, considered the father of Kaupapa Māori research, states that Kaupapa Māori as a philosophy is four-fold in that it is:

- i. Related to 'being Māori'.
- ii. Connected to Māori philosophy and principles (see Stewart, 2020).

- iii. Something that takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori and the importance of Māori language and culture.
- iv. Concerned with the struggles for autonomy over our own cultural well-being.

(as cited in Te Awekotuku, 2009)

Reid (1998) comments that Kaupapa Māori challenges a universal approach that cannot address Māori needs or give full recognition of Māori culture and value systems. This is reflected in a letter to Tā Apirana Ngata, in which Tā Te Rangihira Buck states: “...kua mutu te wa mo Te Peehi ma...kua riro ma taua, ma te Maori, taua korero...[sic]”.<sup>7</sup> Te Awekotuku (2008) contends that the statement by Buck reflects the philosophy of Kaupapa Māori Research. In a more contemporary context, Rangimarie Mahuika states:

We live in a time, when many people who traditionally have occupied the role of the 'researched' are in increasing numbers becoming 'researchers'. As their minority voices are beginning to be heard they speak of various similar experiences of marginalisation, cultural inferiority, and immobilising oppression (Mahuika, 2008, p. 1).

Te Awekotuku (1991) reinforces this by affirming that Kaupapa Māori Research is a form of research that moves “to avoid the cultural imperialism of past research and researchers, [that] research itself should be responsive to expressed Māori needs; needs expressed from within the community and not needs perceived by those outside it” (p. 14). Hence, in the sciences, Kaupapa Māori Research seeks to realign power and authority between dominant western science and knowledge and alternative knowledges, such as mātauranga from Te Ao Māori.<sup>8</sup> Scholars of

<sup>7</sup> Ta Te Rangihira Buck’s letter to Ta Apirana Ngata, February 1931. Ngāhuia Te Awekotuku translates this as: “The time for [Eldson] Best and co is over, we as Māori must take responsibility for researching our world

ourselves...It is up to us to straighten up what has been written by Pākehā pioneers”.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on mātauranga (Māori) refer to Hikuroa, Daniel. “Mātauranga Māori—the ūkaipō of

the field recognize that culture, language, and sense of being are scrutinised and validated through the use of 'sound' social science methods in the research process. Therefore, the practice of research within Māori communities is to move against dominant colonial and settler colonial relations of power and authority.

In historical terms, the Māori political economy was antithetical to 19th-century British culture, which was imposed by the systematic introduction of British rule. Māori social, cultural, and spiritual institutions were eroded, alongside the expropriation of land and resources, the diminution of language and cultural artefacts, and the assimilation of Māori into western society (Henry & Pene, 2001, p. 235). Rigney comments that: "The British 'system' resulted in the elimination and extermination of indigenous social systems, knowledge, traditions, and cultural sciences" (as cited in Foley, 2003, p. 44; see also Simon, 2016, 2020).

Kaupapa Māori Research, by its very nature, fosters research that meets the needs of Māori, as there is potential for a shift in the power held within knowledge production from the researcher to the researched. Such shifting takes place with an aspirational goal of tika and pono.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the ultimate goal of Kaupapa Māori Research is the empowerment of Māori, to "assert our cultural beliefs and practices, our way of knowing and being and our right to both live and maintain them" (Mahuika, 2008, p. 1). Arohia Durie (1998) describes this as 'mana' in that research should make a positive contribution to Māori needs, aims, and aspirations.

Bevan-Brown (1998) writes that there are ten

facets to the ideology of Kaupapa Māori that must be adhered to when undertaking Kaupapa Māori Research. They are:

1. Māori research must be conducted within a Māori cultural framework.
2. Māori research must be conducted by people who have the necessary cultural, reo, subject, and research expertise required.
3. Māori research should be focused on areas of importance and concern to Māori people.
4. Māori research should result in some positive outcome for Māori.
5. Māori research should involve the people being researched as active participants at all stages of the research process.
6. Māori research should empower those being researched.
7. Māori research should be controlled by Māori.
8. People involved in conducting Māori research should be accountable to the Māori community.
9. Māori research should be of high quality.
10. The methods, measures, and procedures used in Māori research must take full cognizance of Māori culture and preferences.<sup>10</sup>

(Smith, 2012, p. 16)

Both Pihama (2014) and Chilisa (2012) further this list by adding that there are six key values that

---

knowledge in New Zealand." *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand* 47, no. 1 (2017): 5-10; Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal. "Politics and knowledge: kaupapa Maori and matauranga Maori." *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 47, no. 2 (2012): 30-37; Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Te Kahautu Maxwell, Haupai Puke, and Pou Temara. "Indigenous knowledge, methodology and mayhem: What is the role of methodology in producing Indigenous insights? A discussion from mātauranga Māori 4, no.3 (2016): 131-156; Hōne Sadler, "Mātauranga Māori (Māori Epistemology)." *International Journal of the Humanities* 4, no. 10 (2007): 33-46; Debbie Broughton and K. McBreen, "Mātauranga Māori, tino rangatiratanga and

the future of New Zealand science." *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand* 45, no. 2 (2015): 83-88.

<sup>9</sup> The key ideas of tika and pono are the basis of Māori ethics and ethical standards. I argue that when Mormon Studies scholars write on Māori or Indigenous subject matter, they should take these concepts into account.

<sup>10</sup> Translation: "If it is work that is related to Māori people and if they believe that the research project is a Māori orientated topic, they should write in a Kaupapa Māori framework. There are ten principles for researchers before us (that require consideration) for Māori projects. They are written below in English" (03/01/14, author).

underpin Kaupapa Māori Research. They are:<sup>11</sup>

1. Tino Rangatiratanga (the autonomy principle): Research should be controlled by the indigenous group being studied in that power relations should be addressed.<sup>12</sup>
2. Taonga Tuku Iho<sup>13</sup> (cultural aspirations principle): Research should uplift the development and continuation of indigenous cultures. This should include challenging epistemological racism.
3. Ako (culturally preferred pedagogies): Ensuring you utilise Māori ways and concepts of learning.<sup>14</sup> An obligation to make research relatable to indigenous peoples.
4. Kia piki ake ngā raruraru i te kainga (alleviation of socioeconomic and home difficulties principles): If there is a social problem, research should be utilised to address these problems. Research should have some practical and/or tangible outcome.
5. Whānau (extended family structure

principle): Researchers are adopted by a whānau or community [of interest] and a power-sharing model where the community takes greater charge over the research from its conception to its outcomes.<sup>15</sup> All those with interest in the research should be able to participate.

6. Kaupapa (collective vision, philosophical principle):<sup>16</sup> Be clear on your purpose, what are you doing with this research, and why are you doing it.

The most important of these principles regarding the interface between Kaupapa Māori Research and Mormon Studies is that of Tino Rangatiratanga, or the idea that research should empower Indigenous groups to be self-determining and in control of decision making. Whānau in this case uplifts the notion of belonging to a group and the well-being of that collective, here underpinned by whakapapa; it also carries with it the notion of accountability to the collective or whānau. Taonga Tuku Iho and Kaupapa are also interrelated in that whakapapa is considered a taonga tuku iho and that our cultural development moving forward requires mātauranga like this and should be protected and

<sup>11</sup> For examples and full explanations of these within Māori education refer to Smith, G. H. (2003, December). Kaupapa Maori theory: Theorizing indigenous transformation of education and schooling. In *Kaupapa Maori Symposium, Auckland, New Zealand* (8-11).

<sup>12</sup> To explore this concept further refer to Smith, L. T. (2015). *Kaupapa Māori research-some kaupapa Māori principles*. University of Waikato (46-52).

<sup>13</sup> To explore concept further: Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, "Purakau from the inside-out: regenerating stories for cultural sustainability." in *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*, ed. Jo-Ann Archibald, Jenny Lee-Morgan 1968, Jason De Santolo, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (London: Zed Books, 2019).

<sup>14</sup> To explore this concept further refer to Shane Edwards, "Ako Wānanga: The art, science and spiritual endeavour of teaching and learning in a wānanga: A localised approach." *International Journal of Pedagogical Innovations* 1, no. 2 (2013): 69-73; Arapera Royal Tangaere, "Collaboration and Te Kohanga Reo." *Childrenz Issues: Journal of the Children's Issues Centre* 10, no. 2 (2006): 35-37; Rose Pere, "Ako." Concepts and learning in the Māori tradition

Hamilton: University of Waikato. (1982); Leonie Pihama, Donna Campbell and Hineitimoana Greensill. (2019). Whānau storytelling as indigenous pedagogy: Tiakina te pā harakeke. *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*, 137; C. Aguayo and A. D. Sciascia. "He Whare Ako, He Whare Hangarau-A House of Learning, a House of Technologies: Interweaving Kaupapa Māori Values of Ako With Mobile Learning Theory and Practice." In *TERNZ 2015. Tertiary Education Research in New Zealand (TERNZ)*, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> To explore this concept further see Linda Tuhiwai Smith, "Kaupapa Māori research-some kaupapa Māori principles." (2015): 46-52.

<sup>16</sup> To explore this concept further see Leonie Pihama, "Kaupapa Māori Theory: Key Theoretical Principles" (Kaupapa Rangahau Workshop Series, Waikato Tainui Research and Development College, Hopuhopu, Ngā Pae o Te Maramatanga, Te Kōtahi Research Institute, 30 July 2014, 2014); Bagele Chilisa, *Indigenous Research Methodologies* (Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE Publications, 2012).

learnt. In this case, what is learnt, and how, is key, particularly when engaging in the teachings of the LDS Church.

Throughout the process of reading and compiling my research projects on Mormonism, it has become apparent that Mormon Studies as a discipline fails to be reflective of Indigenous populations and the increasing politicization of Indigeneity worldwide since the 1960s. This failure has provided for the development of Critical Indigenous Studies and, more recently, the creation of Global Mormon Studies. The rise of apologetics, and the continuation of white scholars—particularly apologists—writing on Indigenous topics without accountability, have infused non-Indigenous agendas, which do not consider Indigenous methods or ways of thinking and knowing, into the field, in addition to fostering research procedures that do not recognize Indigenous culture and preferences. In effect, the principles proposed by Bevan-Brown (1998) do not really feature prominently, if at all, in Mormon Studies when engaging Indigenous subject matter.

The problem for the traditional Mormon Studies in the academy is that with the increasing politicization and engagement of Indigenous peoples, there is a need to engage with diverse viewpoints about Mormonism or Mormonisms. Regarding Mormonism in Aotearoa New Zealand, there has not been a strong tradition, like in the United States, of studying Mormonism in its host context. Additionally, there is even less research from non-Mormon scholars in Aotearoa New Zealand and there is no real tradition of Kaupapa Māori research in Mormon Studies; this is where the cultural integrity of Te Ao Māori is privileged. Mormon texts on ‘Gospel Culture’ and its issues describe a need to engage in the ‘culture of the world’ (Decoo, 2013, p. 9; see also Pritt, 2015; Colvin, 2017, 2020; Hernandez, 2021). However, with this there is a developing recognition or movement in Mormon Studies towards what is called ‘Global Mormonism’ or ‘Global Mormon Studies’<sup>17</sup> that recognises the

diversity that exists among Mormons and an increasing challenge to the Mormon status quo, particularly around questions of Indigeneity, patriarchy, and queer and trans issues.

## Future research

Based on the lack of engagement in Mormon Studies with Critical Indigenous Studies, and, in particular, Critical Kaupapa Māori Research, we as a collective of Indigenous scholars must focus our attention on what I believe are the key or most pressing matters when it comes to Mormonism and Indigeneity, which are:

- 1) The relationship of Mormonism and other restorative traditions to settler colonialism (see Aikau, 2012; Tenney, 2018; Boxer, 2019; Murphy, 2020).
- 2) The appropriateness of prescribing a religio-colonial identity upon Indigenous groups or people (i.e., assuming Indigenous people are Lamanites) (see Murphy, 2003; Southerton, 2004; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 2014).
- 3) Calling patriarchy and all its manifestations into account.
- 4) Challenging the idea of the supremacy of the nuclear family.
- 5) Questioning the position of whiteness within Mormon culture, doctrine, actions, and teachings, including racism.
- 6) Moving to maintain the cultural integrity of our own cultures.
- 7) Advocating for cultural engagement with the Church, particularly around taonga the Church may hold or exploit.
- 8) Moving the Church and its members to accept the spiritual nature of the Book of Mormon (i.e., that the Book of Mormon is not actually factual).

<sup>17</sup> Refer to the Global Mormon Studies Association



- 9) Preventing the further destruction of Indigenous cultural heritage sites as a worldwide archaeological project of the Church and its members to validate the Book of Mormon as historically accurate<sup>18</sup> (see Murphy & Baca, 2016).
- 10) Questioning the applicability of 'Gospel Culture' to diverse people (see Colvin, 2017)
- 11) Promote healthy sexual attitudes and relationships and decolonising takatāpui, two spirit, and queer and trans issues (see Neilson, 2016; Rangiwai, 2018).
- 12) Exploring the relevance of the Gospel Topic Essay and/or the CES letter to the indigenous experience.<sup>19</sup>

My hope is that by undertaking such works from a Critical Indigenous Studies viewpoint, the Church and its members with Indigenous ties will start to engage in much overdue dialogue about the place of Indigeneity within and outside of the Church. Hopefully, this will result in understanding and respect and generate questions about the hegemony and the settler colonial nature of the Church. Underpinning this is a whakataukī, "Ko te kai a rangatira he korero". This proverb explains that the food of chiefs is discussion. It is through dialogue, reflection, and critical discussion that I hope we can arrive at new understandings and a place of empowerment and enhanced spirituality for Indigenous peoples.

Tēnā Koutou katoa.

---

<sup>18</sup> For more context on this validation of the Book of Mormon through, at first, grave robbing and then, afterward, archaeology and Book of Mormon tourism, refer to the story of Zelph: Kenneth W. Godfrey "the Zelph story." *Brigham Young University*

*Studies* 29, no. 2 (1989): 31-56.

<sup>19</sup> For context on these refer to for the CES letter: <https://cesletter.org/> and for the Gospel Topics Essays: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/essays?lang=eng>.

## References

- Aikau, H. K. (2012). *A chosen people, a promised land: Mormonism and race in Hawai'i*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Aguayo, C., & Sciascia, A. D. (2015, November). *He Whare Ako, He Whare Hangarau-A House of Learning, a House of Technologies: Interweaving Kaupapa Māori Values of Ako With Mobile Learning Theory and Practice*. [Conference Presentation]. TERNZ 2015 Conference, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Barber, I. G. (2020). Lands of Contrast: Latter-day Saint Societies in New Zealand/Aotearoa and Australia. In R.G. Shepherd, A. G. Shepherd, & R.T. Cragun (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Mormonism* (pp. 455-474). Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Bevan-Brown, J. (1998, July). By Māori, for Māori, About Māori - Is This Enough? [Conference Presentation] Te Oru Rangahau: Māori Research and Development Conference, Palmerston North
- Bishop, R. (1996). *Whakawhanaungatanga: Collaborative research stories*. New Zealand: Dunmore Press
- Bridges, J., Tyler Lefevor, G., Schow, R.L., Rosik, C. H. (2020). Identity affirmation and mental health among sexual minorities: A raised-Mormon sample. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 16(3), 293-311.
- Brooks, J. (2014). Mormon Feminism: The Next Forty Years. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 47(4), 1-18.
- Brooks, J., Steenblik, R. H., & Wheelwright, H. (Eds.). (2015). *Mormon feminism: Essential writings*. United States of America: Oxford University Press.
- Broughton, D., & McBreen, K. (2015). Mātauranga Māori, tino rangatiratanga and the future of New Zealand science. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 45(2), 83-88.
- Canham, M. (2019, August 5). The LDS Church adds a new step for members using QuitMormon.com to resign, complains of fraud. *Salt Lake Tribune*. <https://www.sltrib.com/religion/2019/08/04/lds-church-adds-new-step/>
- Chandler, M. (2016, December 20). Former church member launches 'Mormon Wikileaks' for anonymous sharing of documents and videos. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/12/20/mormon-wikileaks-launched-by-former-church-member/>
- Chakravarty, D., Heaton, T. B., Bradshaw, W. S., Galliher, R. V., & Dehlin, J. P. (2021). The Relationship of Religiosity and Sexuality in Non-heterosexual Mormon Women: A Mixed Methods Study. *Sexuality & Culture*, 1-19.
- Chilisa, B. (2012). *Indigenous research methodologies*. United States of America: Sage.
- Colvin, G., & Brooks, J. (2018). *Decolonizing Mormonism: approaching a postcolonial Zion*. Utah: The University of Utah Press.
- Colvin, G. (2020). The Mobility of Race: An Indigenous Feminist View From Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Mormon Studies Review*, 7, 35-42.
- Colvin, G. (2017). There's No Such Thing as a Gospel Culture. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 50(4), 57-70.
- Cook, B. (2017). What Do We Know of God's Will for His LGBT Children?: An Examination of the LDS Church's Position on Homosexuality. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 50(2), 1-54.
- Cragun, R. T., Williams, E., & Sumerau, J. E. (2015). From sodomy to sympathy: LDS elites' discursive construction of homosexuality over time. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 54(2), 291-310.
- Decoo, W. (2013). In search of mormon identity: mormon culture, Gospel Culture, and an american worldwide church. *International Journal of Mormon Studies*, 6, 1-53.
- Dehlin, J. P., Galliher, R. V., Bradshaw, W. S., & Crowell, K. A. (2014). Psychosocial correlates of religious approaches to same-sex attraction: A Mormon perspective. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*, 18(3), 284-311.
- Durie, A. (1998, July). *Me tipu ake te pono:*

- Māori research, ethicality and development* [Conference Presentation]. Proceedings of Te Oru Rangahau Māori Research and Development Conference, Palmerston North, New Zealand.
- Edwards, S. (2013). Ako Wānanga: The art, science and spiritual endeavour of teaching and learning in a wānanga: A localised approach. *International Journal of Pedagogical Innovations*, 1(2), 69-73.
- Eketone, A. (2008). Theoretical underpinnings of Kaupapa Maori directed practice. *MAI review*. 1 (1).  
<http://www.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/viewArticle/98/106>.
- Finnigan, J., & Ross, N. (2013). "I'm a Mormon Feminist": How Social Media Revitalized and Enlarged a Movement. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*, 9 (1), 1-25.
- Griffin, A. (2021). Queer Mormon Histories and the Politics of a Usable Past." *Dialogue* 54(1), 1–16.
- Godfrey, K. W. (1989). The zelph story. *Brigham Young University Studies* 29(2), 31-56.
- Gustav-Wrathall, J. D. (2020). Mormon LGBTQ organizing and organizations. In A. Hoyt, T. Petrey (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Mormonism and Gender* (pp. 221-238). New York: Routledge.
- Hafen, P. J., & Rensink, B. W. (2019). *Essays on American Indian and Mormon History*. Utah: University of Utah Press.
- Henare, M. (1998, July 18). *Te tangata, te taonga, te hau: Māori concepts of property* [Conference Paper]. Property and the Constitution, Wellington for the Laws and Institutions in a Bicultural Society Research Project Conference, Hamilton, New Zealand.
- Henry, E., & Pene, H. (2001). Kaupapa Maori: Locating indigenous ontology, epistemology and methodology in the academy. *Organization*, 8(2), 234-242, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508401082009>.
- Hernandez, D. (2021). A Divine Rebellion: Indigenous Sacraments among Global "Lamanites". *Religions*, 12(4), 280, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12040280>
- Hikuroa, D. (2017). Mātauranga Māori—the ūkaipō of knowledge in New Zealand. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 47(1), 5-10.
- Inouye, M. (2014). The Oak and the Banyan: The "Glocalization" of Mormon Studies. *Mormon Studies Review*, 1, 70-79.
- Johnson-Bell, J. (2013). OxyMormon: Feminism Ain't Got No Place on the Pulpit... Or Does It?. *LUX: A Journal of Transdisciplinary Writing and Research from Claremont Graduate University*, 2(1), 17.
- Ka'ai, T. (2008). Te Ha Whakawairua, Whakatinana i te Mātauranga Māori i Te Whare Wānanga: The validation of Indigenous knowledge within the university academy. *Te Kaharoa*, 1(1).
- Klink, K. M. (2019). *Breaking the Barrier: Maori religious and spiritual entanglements at Aotea* (Master's Thesis, The University of Waikato).
- Larson, L. (2019, July 1). The mormon church vs. the internet. *The Verge*.  
<https://www.theverge.com/2019/7/1/18759587/mormon-church-quitmormon-exmormon-jesus-christ-internet-seo-lds>
- Lee-Morgan, J. (2019). Pūrākau from the inside-out: regenerating stories for cultural sustainability. In J. Archibald, J. Lee-Morgan, J. De Santolo & L. Smith (eds.) *Decolonizing research: Indigenous Storywork as methodology*, (pp. 151-166), Bloomsbury.
- Lefevor, G. T., Sorrell, S. A., Kappers, G., Plunk, A., Schow, R. L., Rosik, C. H., & Beckstead, A. L. (2020). Same-sex attracted, not LGBQ: The associations of sexual identity labeling on religiousness, sexuality, and health among Mormons. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 67(7), 940-964.
- Levin, S. (2016, August 15). 'I'm not a Mormon': fresh 'mass resignation' over anti-LGBT beliefs. *The Gaurdian*.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/15/mormon-church-lgbt-mass-resignation-protest-utah>
- Lineham, P. (1991). Tanner Lecture: The Mormon Message in the Context of Maori Culture. *Journal of Mormon History*, 17, 62-93.
- Mahuika, R. (2008). Kaupapa Māori theory is

- critical and anti-colonial. *MAI review*, 3(4), 1-16,  
<http://www.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/view/153/180>.
- Mohrman, K. (2020). Queer Mormons. In A. Hoyt & T. Petrey (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Mormonism and Gender* (pp. 525-538). New York: Routledge.
- Mormon Stories. (2021, August 19). *New Temples Veil Mormonism's Decline* [Video]. YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=422btQC4VEE>
- Murphy, T. W. (2003). *Imagining Lamanites: Native Americans and the Book of Mormon*. [unpublished doctoral dissertation] University of Washington.
- Murphy, T. W. (2020). Views from Turtle Island: Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Mormon Entanglements. In R.G. Shepherd, A.G. Shepherd & R.T. Cragun (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Mormonism* (pp. 751-779). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Newton, M. (2014). *Maori and Mormon*. Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books.
- Nielson, E. (2016). Inclusivity in the latter-days: Gay Mormons. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 19(7), 752-768.
- Nepe, T. M. (1991). *Te toi huarewa tipuna: Kaupapa Maori, an educational intervention system* [unpublished master's thesis, University of Auckland].
- Pere, R. (1982). *Ako: Concepts and learning in the Māori tradition*. (Research Report). University of Waikato
- Petrey, T. G. (2020). *Tabernacles of Clay: Sexuality and Gender in Modern Mormonism*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press.
- Petrey, T. G. (2011). Toward a Post-Heterosexual Mormon Theology. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 44(4), 107-143.
- Pihama, L. (2014, July). Kaupapa Māori Theory: Key Theoretical Principles. In *Kaupapa Rangahau Workshop Series*, Waikato Tainui Research and Development College, Hopuhopu, Ngā Pae o Te Maramatanga & Te Kōtahi Research Institute (5-16).  
[https://www.waikato.ac.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/339885/Kaupapa-Rangahau-A-Reader\\_2nd-Edition.pdf](https://www.waikato.ac.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/339885/Kaupapa-Rangahau-A-Reader_2nd-Edition.pdf)
- Pihama, L., Campbell, D., & Greensill, H. (2019). Whānau storytelling as indigenous pedagogy: tiakina te pa harakeke. In J. Archibald, J. Lee-Morgan, J. De Santolo & L. Smith (Eds.) *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*, (pp. 137-150). United Kingdom: ZED Books.
- Pritt, A. F. (2015). Religion and Violence Against Women: The LDS Church. In A.J. Johnson (Ed.) *Religion and Men's Violence Against Women* (pp. 263-281). New York: Springer.
- Rangiwai, B. (2018). Reflections on The Book of Mormon musical: Flirtations with Mormon theology. *Te Kaharoa*, 11(1), 283-318.
- Reid, P. (1998). The Impact That Maori Have Made on Health and Society in New Zealand. In P. Davis & K. Dew (Eds.) *Health and Society in Aotearoa New Zealand* (71 - 87). Location: Oxford University Press.
- Rigney, Lester-Iraninna. (2000). A First Perspective Indigenous Australian Participation in Science: Framing Indigenous Australian Intellectual Property. Keynote Address. *Second National Indigenous Researches Forum*, Adelaide, Aboriginal Research Institute, University of South Australia, 2000.
- Ross, N., & Finnigan, J. (2014). Mormon feminist perspectives on the Mormon digital awakening: A study of identity and personal narratives. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 47(4), 47-75.
- Royal, T. A. C. (2012). Politics and knowledge: Kaupapa Maori and matauranga Māori. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 47(2), 30-37.
- Runnells, J. (2013). CES Letter: My search for answers to my Mormon doubts. CES Letter Foundation. <https://read.cesletter.org/>
- Sadler, H. (2007). Mātauranga Māori (Māori Epistemology). *International Journal of the humanities*, 4(10), 33-46.  
 doi: <https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9508/CGP/v04i10/58246>
- Simon, Hemopereki. (2020). Ngā Whakaaro a Puhīwahine: A Political Philosophy and

- Theory from the Mōteatea of Puhīwahine. *Pacific Dynamics* 4(1), 61-82.  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.18124/08er-ys75>
- Simon, H. H. (2016). Te Arewahana Kei Roto i Te Rūma: An Indigenous Neo-Disputatio on Settler Society, Nullifying Te Tiriti, 'Natural Resources' and Our Collective Future in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Te Kaharoa*, 9(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.24135/tekaharoa.v9i1.6>
- Smith, L. T. (2015). Kaupapa Māori research-some kaupapa Māori principles, University of Waikato (46-52),  
<https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/12026/Kaupapa%20Maori%20Research.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=21>
- Smith, L. T., Maxwell, T. K., Puke, H., & Temara, P. (2016). Indigenous knowledge, methodology and mayhem: What is the role of methodology in producing Indigenous insights? A discussion from mātauranga Māori. *Knowledge Cultures* 4(3), 131-156.
- Smith, L. T. (1992). Te Rapunga i te Ao Marama: The search for the world of light. *The issue of research and Maori*, 1-12, University of Auckland (ed). Research Unit for Māori Education, 1992.
- Smith, W. (2012). *He whakapapa tōu, he tuakiri anō tōu: The importance of whakapapa to an urban Māori identity* [unpublished doctoral thesis] Auckland University of Technology.
- Southerton, S. G. (2004). *Losing a lost tribe: Native Americans, DNA, and the Mormon Church*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books.
- Stewart, G. (2020). *Maori philosophy: Indigenous thinking from Aotearoa*. United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Sumerau, J. E., & Cragun, R. T. (2014). "Why Would Our Heavenly Father Do that to Anyone?": Oppressive Othering through Sexual Classification Schemes in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. *Symbolic Interaction*, 37(3), 331-352.
- Swedin, E. G. (2020). Homosexuality and therapeutic culture in Mormonism. In A. Hoyt & T. Petrey (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Mormonism and Gender* (pp. 187-204). New York: Routledge.
- Tangaere, A. R. (2006). Collaboration and Te Kohanga Reo. *Childrenz Issues: Journal of the Children's Issues Centre*, 10(2), 35-37.
- Te Awēkotuku, N. (1991). *He tikanga whakaaro: Research ethics in the Maori community: A discussion paper*. Ministry of Māori Affairs.
- Te Awēkotuku, N. "Understanding Theory: Frameworks to Fit Your Project." Lecture, University of Waikato, Hamilton, April 2, 2009.
- Tenney, A. G. (2018). *White and Delightful: LDS Church Doctrine and Redemptive Hegemony in Hawai'i* [unpublished master's dissertation] The Ohio State University.
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (2014). *Gospel Topic Essays: Book of Mormon and DNA Studies*,  
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/book-of-mormon-and-dna-studies?lang=eng>.
- Young, N. J. (2020). Homosexuality and politics in Mormonism. In A. Hoyt & T. Petrey (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Mormonism and Gender* (pp. 205-220). New York: Routledge.

## Glossary

<b>Ako</b>	To learn, study, instruct, teach.
<b>Haka</b>	A generic term for a range of performances involving movement and chanting or song within Māori culture, used for a range of ceremonial purposes. Frequently mislabelled a ‘war dance’.
<b>Kaupapa</b>	Topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative.
<b>Kaupapa Māori</b>	Māori approach, Māori topic, Māori customary practice, Māori institution, Māori agenda, Māori principles, Māori ideology. A philosophical doctrine incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values of Māori society.
<b>Ngā Uri Whakatupu</b>	A Te Reo Māori expression to mean the coming generations or those to come behind you.
<b>Mātauranga</b>	Knowledge. Here, this is used to denote traditional knowledge. Also known as Mātauranga Māori.
<b>Pono</b>	True.
<b>Takatāpui</b>	Lesbian, gay, homosexual men and women; Close friend (of the same gender), intimate friend (of the same gender).

**Taonga** Precious treasure; in the case of the LDS Church, this also means Indigenous Knowledge and the performative aspects of it.

### Taonga Tuku Iho

Heirloom, something handed down, cultural property, heritage.

**Te Ao Māori** The Māori world.

**Te Reo Māori** The Māori language.

**Tika** Correct.

**Tino Rangatiratanga** Self-Determination

**Tuturu** True or authentic.

**Whakapapa** Generally translated as genealogy; however, the term means more than western understandings of this. It would better be described as the knowledge that defines my place, responsibilities, and being in Te Ao Māori.

**Whakataukī** Proverbial saying.

**Whānau** Extended family, family.

## **Acknowledgments**

This project was supported by the Mills College Research Justice at the Intersections Scholars Fellowship Program. The author would like to thank Dr. Byron Rangiwai, Sarah Newcomb, the University of Waikato Library, Taupō Public Libraries, the University of Otago Libraries, the journal editor, Jade Crimson Rose Da Costa, and the anonymous peer reviewers. Ngā mihi.

## **Author Biography**

Hemopereki Simon is currently a Research Justice at the Intersections Scholars Research Fellow at Mills College in the United States and is based on his ancestral land at Wharewaka. His iwi are Tūwharetoa, Te Arawa, Waikato-Tainui, Hauraki, Mataatua Whānui.