

WEBINAR • DECOLONISING PEDAGOGY • MONASH UNIVERSITY

Decolonisation and public management in Aotearoa

A working definition, and six reasons it matters

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A welcome invitation

Tonight, I want to offer a working definition of decolonisation and then explain why it matters, at least to public management and public policy in Aotearoa.

DEB TE KAWA

THE PAPER

Policy education in Australia and New Zealand: Towards a decolonized pedagogy

Michael Mintrom and Deirdre O'Neill, *Journal of Asian Public Policy* (2023)



What is decolonisation?

THE CONVENTIONAL MEANING

An event

The political upheavals that ended the European colonial empires, and the establishment of nearly a hundred new nation-states across Africa, Asia and the Pacific in the third quarter of the twentieth century.

MY WORKING HYPOTHESIS

A process

In public management terms, a process of ensuring the institutions are of the place they seek to stand.

This definition places the power relationship at the centre of public management. It draws on the work of the Waitangi Tribunal and the courts in examining the Māori and Crown relationship.



Whakapapa, whenua and whānau

Whakapapa

Examine public institutions for their whakapapa.

Whenua

Ensure institutions sit comfortably on this whenua.

Whānau

Ensure institutions create equitable access and outcomes for tangata whenua, however they decide to organise themselves.

It is a working definition and a draft framework. I invite you to try it out and see if it works.

Decolonising is not indigenising

KĀWANATANGA

Decolonising its own institutions

The Crown's task is to examine its institutions for their whakapapa, their fit with this whenua, and whether they create equitable access and outcomes for tangata whenua.

This is work kāwanatanga can and should do.

RANGATIRATANGA

Determining indigenous approaches

How tangata whenua organise themselves, and what indigenous public management looks like, is for tangata whenua to determine.

It is not for kāwanatanga to design, define or determine.

The state can decolonise its own institutions. It cannot determine indigenous approaches on behalf of tangata whenua.

Kinship, rangatiratanga, iwi

REASON 1

Kinship, not contract

The settlers brought a contractual constitutional culture. Māori viewed Te Tiriti as an agreement to kinship, and the rangatira who signed never ceded sovereignty. Our institutional landscape is full of arrangements that promise autonomy and sink without a trace.

REASON 2

Demands have grown

Demands for rangatiratanga have grown, not diminished. Policies to assimilate Māori have been unsuccessful. If policy advice is to be practical, it needs working theories and concepts for these matters.

REASON 3

The tribes are more influential

Iwi are significant economic and political actors and social service providers. On 30 June 2021 the Māori ethnic population was 875,300, or 17.1 per cent of the national population: younger, and still growing.

COVID-19

COVID confirmed how unfit the public service was in serving Māori and whānau needs, and how well placed Māori and iwi providers were.

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What happened

Our health system could get some vaccinated, but not all. Those it did not reach were, more often than not, Māori, Pasifika, or people living rurally.

Why it matters

A decolonised state theory might help the state be much more efficient and effective. One-size-fits-all provision is expensive and quite limited, and often falls short of those in most need.

The health reforms

Twenty DHBs disestablished and replaced with new institutional arrangements:

A policy Ministry

A Ministry for equity of access
and outcomes for disabled
people

An agency focused solely on
public health

Health New Zealand: a single
delivery agent

Hauora Māori Advisory

Māori Health Authority

Iwi/Māori Partnership Boards

*The last three form a virtuous circle of
accountability.*

I am not sure whether this is the emergence of indigenous public management. Still, I am sure it is an attempt to decolonise our health system.

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The arrangements as they stood at the time of the webinar. The health workforce numbered 253,000 people.

The settler state, assumed away

Most of the public management literature talks about colonisation and decolonisation as a thing of the past. Much of it assumes away the settler or imperial state. That diminishes the domain.

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Why this matters

Without an examination of the settler state, we are inhibited from exploring new models.



Begin the work

1

How and when we teach

2

The deliberate use of indigenous academics, authors and research

3

The use of indigenous methods

4

Academics visiting lands that are not theirs: interrogate carefully, do not infringe, and acknowledge on whose lands they stand

Reference

Mintrom, M., & O'Neill, D. (2023). Policy education in Australia and New Zealand: Towards a decolonized pedagogy. *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 16(1), 35–52.

DECOLONISATION AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IN AOTEAROA

Tēnā tātou katoa

Āpiti hono tātai hono, rātou te hunga mate kia rātou. Tātou te hunga ora kia tātou.

Deborah M Te Kawa
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