



Guest Editorial

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Guest Editorial, February 2021

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Most people would agree that 2020 was a disruptive year in ways we would not have anticipated. There have been threats to the wellbeing of our environments, impacts of climate change that are reminders of inextricable connection of people and the environment, the devastation of COVID-19 that promises a shift in the way of living as we know it, and the critical awareness-raising that Black Lives Matter. This issue of Te Mauri-Pimatisiwin provides an informative collection of eight articles that highlights the value of Indigenous knowledge and wisdom for the present and future Indigenous peoples globally. Importantly, this issue provides a valuable anthology that emphasises the importance of Indigenous knowledge. Some articles draw upon the wisdom of ancestors and elders, while other articles address contemporary issues affecting Indigenous peoples. These articles range from traditional childrearing practices, reconciliation, disrupting the embodiment of colonisation, racism, and Indigenous-driven health capability measures. One article reinforces the scientific processes involved in the generation of Indigenous knowledge through systematic observation over time, much of it standing the test of time.

Pihama and colleagues provide a valuable compilation of ancestral messages embedded in Hawaiian *‘ōlelu no‘eau* and Māori *whakataukē* (ancestral proverbial sayings), that reinforce the foundations for collective child-rearing. It is a useful collection of traditional knowledge related to child-rearing that the authors unpack the meaning of. This article brings ancestors’ wisdom from Hawai‘i and *Aotearoa* (New Zealand) and their insights into how they viewed the world. It is also a source of guidance for promoting children’s wellbeing and developing strong identities. As these authors indicate, *he iti te kupu, he nui te kōrero* (these messages may be few, but they are deep and insightful).

Hansen’s article draws on the Northern Cree Elders’ wisdom about moving toward reconciliation. Pivotal to reconciliation is knowing and understanding the truth of Indigenous and colonial pasts, and social justice that differentiates Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. This process of decolonisation highlights the importance of Indigenous stories in this process and their transmission across generations. Hansen also stresses the need to decolonise colonial research that has been harmful. Undoubtedly, understanding the process of colonisation is crucial to challenging the status quo and for exposing inequalities, injustices, and racial discrimination that keeps Indigenous peoples at the margins of society.

Mitchell, Hardlotte, and McLeod’s research is wi-

-th Woodlands Cree and Denesuline peoples of northern Saskatchewan. They state, “when you destroy the earth from which our cultures are rooted, you destroy who we are as First Nations people”. Indigenous peoples have long-term physical, emotional, and spiritual relationships with the land and natural world. Relationships between Indigenous peoples and the earth, an interconnectedness that these authors claim is holistic and rooted in personal and collective experiential knowledge, transmitted in Indigenous knowledge forms. These authors highlight the scientific process involved in deriving Indigenous knowledge, which is based on observation of natural events over time and translated into traditional knowledge forms such as stories, metaphors, and practical teaching.

Télez Cabrera presents a health capability set to assess public health interventions in a Purépeche community in Mexico. The health capability set is inclusive of health (physical, mental, and social), health agency, material conditions, and community support. This article provides valuable measures that focus on Indigenous capabilities that are inclusive of health agency.

Marley critically explores history as a social determinant of diabetes for an American Indian nation in Arizona. Historical events, policies, and unequal distribution of resources negatively impact Indigenous people’s opportunities to flourish and enjoy good health. Marley interviewed 28 key informants in rural Arizona about their constructions and understandings of diabetes and how disruptions in place, lifestyle, history, and trauma relate to diabetes. By understanding these factors, Marley claims, enables re-establishing cultural buffers and Indigenous knowledge. Also argued is the need for the inclusion of colonisation in government policies as an upstream social determinant of health.

Roman provides Indigenous male views of researching racism. Roman explains racism is the core of colonisation. He also criticises the absence of Black people in research on racism, whose experiences are different from those who are not Black. Understanding the social life of Indigenous men is through culturally appropriate storytelling to uncover their subjective

experiences. Roman’s article brings together the importance of the stories of Indigenous peoples to contribute to a better understanding of racism and its effects on Indigenous people.

McGuire-Adams draws on Anishinaabeg stories to highlight how Indigenous people reconnecting with ancestral stories disrupt embodiment of settler colonialism. This article provides another piece of evidence derived from interviews with Elders in Naicatchewenin in Canada. McGuire-Adams stresses the vital role of Indigenous women’s role in correcting deficit narratives. Elders show how ancestral stories have embedded messages of hope and strength that signals how healing can occur to disrupt the settler colonialism that contributes to Indigenous experiences of historical trauma, ill health, and substance abuse.

McLachlan and colleagues present a systematic narrative literature review, which utilised thematic analysis to identify themes in the literature followed by a subject matter expert wānanga (involving 40 experienced Māori psychologists and psychology students). As a result, *Whiti Te Rā*, a visual presentation of six themes to guide Māori practitioners and *whai ora Māori* (Māori clients) in pursuit of wellbeing was developed. The six themes represent cultural dimensions of wellbeing: Māori language, connection with the environment, spiritual beliefs and practices, Māori art forms, relational values, and intergenerational relationships. McLachlan and colleagues take readers beyond a simplistic understanding of Māori models of health that they state are either underutilised or misused. *Whiti Te Rā* presents an interactive and dynamic process for Māori practitioners and *whai ora Māori* to mutually explore cultural wellbeing pathways.

While these articles are diverse, collectively, they make unique contributions to the body of Indigenous knowledge. I commend the authors for sharing their important work and research. I hope you find something within this issue that captures your interest and is enlightening. Keep well and safe during these precarious times.

Ngā mihi mahana,
Denise Wilson