Reclaiming the past to inform the future: Contemporary views of Māori sexuality

**Authors:** Aspin C and Hutchings J

**Summary:** This paper explores how Māori sexuality was experienced in the pre-European era. Reference sources included historical accounts including oral histories, archival material and depictions of Māori sexuality from art forms such as carvings. This was supplemented by more recent information from the Māori Sexuality Project. The authors describe a view of Māori sexuality which is markedly different from the Western colonialist view, as promoted by many Christian churches. They suggest that traditionally Māori embraced sexual diversity and difference and discuss the implications of these findings in relation to the sexual rights and health of Māori.

**Comment:** This paper is particularly interesting. Not only do the authors weave mātauranga tuku iho about Māori and sexuality with contemporary information, they do so within a kaupapa Māori framework. The paper describes the ways in which our knowledge/history and behaviour can be imposed upon and controlled by particular bodies, but also how we can resist such oppression.

**Reference:** Culture, Health and Sexuality 2007; 9(4):415-427
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content–content=a779853956–db=all

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**Independent commentary by Dr Matire Harwood**

Dr Matire Harwood (Ngapuhi) has worked in Hauora Māori, primary health and rehabilitation settings as clinician and researcher since graduating from Auckland Medical School in 1994. She also holds positions on a number of boards, committees and advisory groups including the Health Research Council. Matire lives in Auckland with her whānau including partner Haunui and two young children Te Rangiura and Waimarie.

Research Review publications are intended for New Zealand health professionals.

**Disclaimer:** This publication is not intended as a replacement for regular medical education but to assist in the process. The reviews are a summarised interpretation of the published study and reflect the opinion of the writer rather than those of the research group or scientific journal. It is suggested readers review the full trial data before forming a final conclusion on its merits.

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**He Pa Harakeke: Māori Health Workforce Profile**

*(Published August 2007)*

*He Pa Harakeke: Māori Health Workforce Profile* presents the most recent statistical information on Māori in the regulated health workforce. The profile also includes career profiles from the Ministry of Health, Te Rau Matatini and Careers Services.

It can be downloaded from www.maorihealth.govt.nz or can be ordered in hard copy (email: moh@wickliffe.co.nz or call (04) 496 2277 quoting HP4399).

For more information, please go to http://www.maorihealth.govt.nz/