

ROYAL, Te Ahukaramū Charles
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In his paper Dr Charles Royal (Te Ahukaramū) will reflect upon his experience of being a researcher in traditional Māori knowledge, mātauranga Māori. Since 1986, Charles has been studying particularly the knowledge systems of his own iwi and has written and presented ideas on mātauranga Māori in a variety of forums. In 2005, Charles will commence a new research project entitled 'Te Kaimānga: Towards a New Vision for Mātauranga Māori' and so he will present an overview of the goals and outcomes of this project. This project will conclude in 2007.

Exploring Indigenous Knowledge

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Following this, he will discuss ideas pertaining to an epistemology of indigeneity which arises from both a deep reflection upon the key themes within mātauranga Māori as well as a desire to create a response to the worldwide issue of improving the relationship between human societies and cultures, and the natural world environments in which we dwell. Charles suggests that it is a feature of the human condition to be in conscious and unconscious correspondence with the environments in which we dwell. However, a key feature of a formal indigenous culture is that it is deliberate and conscious to the expression of the forms of the natural environment into the outward activities of the culture.

Charles's presentation will discuss concepts of knowledge and knowing that can be found within mātauranga Māori. He will describe the journey from *mātauranga* (codified and explicit knowledge) through to *tohu*, a term used for an experience in which the natural world seems to speak directly into human consciousness – a concept upon which a view of indigeneity can be constructed. In journeying from mātauranga to tohu, Charles will touch upon other concepts of knowledge and knowing including kai (knowledge as food), mohiotanga (embodied knowing), māramatanga (illumination, understanding), whakaahua (coming to form) and wānanga (a conscious energy).

Finally, Charles will pose a number of questions concerning the possible application of indigenous knowledge in our contemporary circumstances. What might it offer for society and culture today?