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### K.I.N. AUTHOR COLLECTIVE

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# Manaakitanga and the academy

## ABSTRACT

*Critical to all aspects of academic life, academic hospitality is said to be key to creating healthy learning communities. Yet, for many outsiders, strangers and newcomers, academia can be a sight of asserting territory and superiority. Students and academics are trained to function within an institutionalized setting where success is measured through the rigid rigour of scientific enquiry and rewarded on an individual basis. The solitary journey that is heralded by the academic institution fails to recognize the fundamental need for belonging, community and kinship, leaving limited space within the academy in which to practice manaakitanga or hospitality. We argue that the Māori concept of manaakitanga not only captures the virtuous elements of hospitality, namely generosity, openness and hospitableness, that can often be excluded in hospitality literature but also serves as a mechanism for resistance in a context that serves to fragment and divide. In this article, we draw on our personal and collective experiences to describe ways in which Indigenous worldviews and perspectives are commonly met with hostility in academia. We detail our response to such inhospitality through the formation of ‘Knowledge in Indigenous Networks’ (K.I.N.), an Indigenous academic collective that is underpinned by manaakitanga. We conclude this article by identifying six sites for critical engagement with the notion of academic hospitality that will assist academic institutions to enact the value of manaakitanga.*

## KEYWORDS

manaakitanga  
Indigenous academics  
academic hospitality  
academic career  
Indigenous research  
reciprocity

## INTRODUCTION

We exist in institutions which are founded on the collective denial of our existence as Māori and which not only continue to assimilate us but more importantly perhaps actively compete with us and the world views we represent.

(Smith 1992: 5)

Academic hospitality is defined by Bennett (2000: 23) as 'the extension of self in order to welcome the other by sharing and receiving intellectual resources and insights'. This hospitality must extend beyond bland congeniality and accommodation to engagement in meaningful conversations (Bennett 2000; Phipps and Barnett 2007). Academic hospitality, says Bennett (2000), is essential to the success of the academy. However, due to a culture of 'insistent individualism' (Bennett 2000: 29) and elitism that promotes self-serving behaviour, as opposed to the common good and collective wellbeing, academic institutions are often sites of asserting territory and superiority (Lugosi 2014). In this article, we draw on personal and collective experiences of the authors to account for the ways in which Indigenous worldviews and perspectives are commonly met with hostility in academia.

This article describes the inhospitable context of tertiary education in Aotearoa-New Zealand from the perspective of five Indigenous researchers, Abigail McClutchie, Amber Nicholson, Dara Kelly, Kiri Dell and Nimbus Staniland, and how we have responded through forming an Indigenous academic collective. Known as 'Knowledge in Indigenous Networks' (K.I.N.), our relationships are underpinned by the Māori value of *manaakitanga*, a term often glossed over in translations as hospitality. Drawing from a multitude of Indigenous identities, our wider network consists of early career academics and postgraduate students located in Aotearoa, Canada and the United States. In June 2015, K.I.N. launched a blog as a place to share Indigenous thoughts, perspectives and scholarship (K.I.N. n.d.). These conversations have been distributed through our various online networks. This article is an extension of these conversations, in which we elaborate on some of our personal experiences as documented in our blog.

We begin this article drawing on literature around academic hospitality, which is then juxtaposed with our personal experiences of the inhospitality of academia. Then we introduce the Māori concept of *manaakitanga* that was enacted by K.I.N. as a response to our experiences of academic (in)hospitality. We end by offering strategies for academic institutions and Indigenous advocates to support and enact *manaakitanga*.

## ACADEMIC (IN)HOSPITALITY

Education today trains professionals, but it does not produce people.

(Deloria 1999: 138)

Critical to all aspects of academic life, academic hospitality is said to be key to creating healthy learning communities (Bennett 2000; Phipps and Barnett 2007). Hospitality is a social exchange involving mutual interaction and reciprocity, which governs all human interactions including ethics, communication, sense-making and relationships (Cockburn-Wooten and Brewis 2014;

Westmoreland 2008). While Phipps and Barnett (2007: 239) claim that traditional notions of academic hospitality are coming 'under threat', we argue that far from being welcoming and generous to outsiders, strangers and newcomers, the academy has never been very hospitable for many 'others'. Academic culture is often built upon insistent individualism and elitism, which can manifest in self-interested mindsets that herald individual endeavours, hierarchy and independence over community and collective undertakings (Bennett 2000). Supported by academic traditions of celebrating intellectual independence and rewarding individual rather than team and collective success, Bennett (2000: 31) argues that paradoxically, such self-protective behaviour results in 'impoverishing the self rather than enriching it'.

The evidence of inhospitality towards women in academia is extensive (Afiouni 2014; Cama et al. 2016; Harris et al. 2013). Gender disparities in academic careers demonstrate how women progress slower through the hierarchy and receive lower salaries (Monroe and Chiu 2010; Umbach 2007); have less access to resources, including funding, research support and sabbaticals (Smith et al. 2016); and tend to be more engaged in academic activities that are less valued than their male counterparts, such as teaching and administration (Cama et al. 2016; Monroe and Chiu 2010; Umbach 2007).

The inhospitable experiences of Indigenous academics have received comparatively less attention in the literature and are often minimized or subsumed into broader racial and ethnic categories (James 2012; Mohamed and Beagan 2019). Umbrella terms such as 'faculty of color' (Turner et al. 2008), 'racialized faculty' (Henry et al. 2012; James 2012) or 'minority faculty' (Bhopal 2015; Walters et al. 2019) try to encompass and aggregate a range of diverse identities, which ultimately dismisses the diversity of their experiences. Indigenous Peoples differ in key ways from other minority groups, and as such cannot be subsumed into broader equity and diversity policy and agenda (McAllister et al. 2019). Ultimately, universities are institutions founded on legacies of colonialism and often are constructed on Indigenous lands without permission or acknowledgement of Indigenous custodians (Mercier et al. 2011). Education itself has been a destructive tool in the global systematic separation of Indigenous Peoples from their histories, identities and ways of being and knowing. The Indigenous experience of land alienation and colonial violence challenges the assumption of universities being neutral places of learning (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018).

Since the 1980s, Indigenous scholars have advocated for inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in the academy and identified 'gatekeeping' barriers within the publication process (Pihama et al. 2002; Smith 2006a; Smith et al. 2019). Tensions over academic gatekeeping highlight concerns about the dominant ontologies, pedagogies and methodologies that render Indigenous research as invisible or irrelevant. The demand for Indigenous scholars to produce generalizable findings to global audiences, justified and contrasted against normative frameworks, reinforces the hegemony of Eurocentric agendas (Ruwhiu 2014). The publication process acts as a 'brown glass ceiling' (Ofe-Grant 2018) that compromises the quality of Indigenous scholarship through removing the Indigenous voice from outputs. Nonetheless, publication remains central in the training and framing of research impact throughout graduate education (Maesse 2018) and is further cemented in academic careers through such processes as the Aotearoa-New Zealand tertiary education funding process, Performance-Based Research Fund (Waitere et al. 2011).

In Aotearoa-New Zealand, tertiary institutions are modelled on British universities and, as such, are sites for inhospitable experiences for Māori, with little regard for Māori pedagogy, history or discourse (Mercier et al. 2011). Despite Treaty of Waitangi obligations to ensure manaakitanga is enacted within our universities, the perpetuation of a Eurocentric education system serves and maintains the ‘the interests of a mono-cultural elite’ (Bishop et al. 2009: 738). Research has highlighted how Māori student leaders report negative experiences in the university including stereotyping, microaggressions and everyday acts of oppression and racism (McClutchie 2020). Other research points to the differential experiences of Māori academics in comparison to their non-Māori colleagues (Hall and Sutherland 2018; Staniland et al. 2019a). Hall and Sutherland (2018) outline these differences as lower confidence levels, greater community accountability, greater family responsibilities, inter-disciplinary peer groups, lack of recognition of research impact and greater teaching and service levels. Of key significance is the difficulty of maintaining cultural integrity, whilst simultaneously feeling pressured to assimilate into the university environment, often leading to a sense of isolation and loneliness. The implications of such inhospitable environments can be seen in the continued underrepresentation of Māori as staff and students in Aotearoa-New Zealand universities, despite increasing educational attainment (McAllister et al. 2019).

### ***Sharing our experiences***

The following section outlines our experiences of academic inhospitality that are drawn from personal and collective stories of K.I.N. In preparation for this article, we were all tasked with writing our foremost academic struggles and our understandings of how K.I.N. assisted us in navigating these issues. This form of autoethnography gave us freedom to reflect on our own understanding of manaakitanga and hospitality within the university. Yet, in the reading of each other’s experiences, we found collective synergies. The issues we have chosen to highlight were, in part, addressed, alleviated or shared through our K.I.N. membership.

Whilst not exhaustive, these stories are illustrative of Indigenous struggles within the academy and demonstrate gaps in the overarching system of tertiary education – and indeed modern society – that attempt to divorce professional expertise from personal growth (Deloria 1999). Students and academics are trained to function within an institutionalized setting where success is measured through the rigid rigour of scientific enquiry. The unity of being a socially integrated and wholehearted person is relegated into a subfield of professional development (Deloria 1999). The solitary journey that is heralded by the academic institution fails to recognize the fundamental human need for belonging, community and kinship. This leaves a limited space within the academy in which to practice hospitality.

### *Automatic outsiders*

In general, there is a vulnerability that characterizes the experience of pursuing a doctorate degree by virtue of our openness as ‘novices’. But for Indigenous academics, our standing as novices may reflect different areas of ‘knowing’ and ‘not knowing’ from our non-Indigenous colleagues. Although I had been experimenting with the tools of research for some years, I felt that among my peer network of other business doctorates, I was an outsider. I felt this in conversations about our

research ideas, and often basic questions about identifying the ‘gap’ in research required rehashing the historical and heavy context of the colonial experience. I felt that what I needed to explain was why the absence of Indigenous knowledge existed, whereas when they explained their research, they focused on nuanced gaps in extant theory and organizational context. I grew to dread the question, ‘what’s your research about?’ and tried countless ways to frame and re-frame my summary to simplify or skip this conversation altogether. As the years went by, this feeling of disconnect from my peers grew stronger and that was the distancing factor that eventually prevented me from attending Ph.D. social events.

### *Triggering intergenerational trauma*

I experienced trauma when conducting my Ph.D. research. Indigenous Ph.D.’s often investigate their own lives – which by default is traumatic. Ironically, I was researching the trauma of my communities from within an institution and system that colonized those very same communities. Ph.D. research into Indigenous contexts often finds the student becoming conscientized about their own reality, the journey giving meaning and explanation to their own painful experiences. It can be an enlightening process but a painful journey. Trauma triggered in the Ph.D. process should be acknowledged and catered for by the institution.

### *Fragmented identities*

My doctorate brought me for the first time into the Māori-centric research space. Although I continued my work from previous research, turning my focus to Māori required new knowledge and skills and an element of responsibility and obligation that I was yet to fully comprehend. I found this simultaneously exciting and frightening. With both Māori and Pākehā whakapapa, I thought I was confident in my ethnicity and identity. However, the research process caused a self-reflection that revealed to me how my self-confidence and identity had been impacted by exposure to different issues and perspectives about Māori in society, through education, media and prejudicial remarks from people close to me over my life. Surreptitiously, these two aspects of my identity had separated, with my Māori identity becoming seemingly less relevant, perhaps even repressed, the further I had progressed through my journey in education. The university, as a hegemonic space of monoculturalism, perpetuated my struggle. My journey through the doctorate became one of seeking understanding, of finding connection and a search for meaning.

### *Displacement*

As Ph.D. students, we have been physically moved several times in the space of our studies. At times we have been very lucky to hold a dedicated space of our own, mostly due to the pastoral care of certain

senior academics. But even in fortunate times there is always a sense of transience to our stay, wondering when and where we will be tomorrow. Manaakitanga is felt spatially through welcoming of people to your home base. Yet, as students, we are constantly reminded that we are guests – please don't make yourself too comfortable. One particular experience led to the unceremonious order for all part-time Ph.D. students to vacate their assigned desks. Space constraints meant more efficiency was needed to manage the growing student population. This resulted in three K.I.N. members being displaced, a decision that felt as if we were being penalized for not being committed enough to the institution – despite the research showing that Indigenous students are likely to be older with more whānau and community obligations, and therefore more work-life imbalance (Hall and Sutherland 2013; McAllister et al. 2019). Already academic outsiders, dealing with our individual and collective trauma, we now had nowhere to stand academically.

These stories highlight that universities are complex institutions where structures, systems, procedures and underpinning values impose and maintain societal imbalances. Inhospitable environments create stress and isolation and affect confidence levels (Airini et al. 2010; Hall and Sutherland 2018). Conversely, research has demonstrated how for Māori students, success can be achieved through culturally safe and empowering environments that engender warmth, familiarity and belonging (Airini et al. 2010). According to Bennett (2000: 34), hospitality 'helps constitute healthy communities in which members support one another in the advancement of learning'. In order for the academy to reflect hospitality for Indigenous scholars and Indigenous knowledges, key shifts must occur to align more closely with Indigenous notions of hospitality, which in Aotearoa constitutes manaakitanga.

## **MANAAKITANGA**

Manaakitanga is part of an interlocking spiral of cardinal ethics and values that inform Māori ways of being and a foundational cultural practice (Hēnare 2016; Rout et al. 2019). As a responsibility shared by the collective, manaakitanga means the whole person is valued beyond their productive output and people feel accepted and secure (Mika 2014; Rout et al. 2019). Often glossed as hospitality, manaakitanga reaches deeper levels of human interaction, encapsulating kindness, generosity, care and spiritual connections. Enacting manaakitanga is 'to care for a person's wellbeing in a holistic sense that is physically, mentally and spiritually' (Bristowe 2017: 181). As an 'ethic of care and support, reverence for humanity' (Hēnare 2001: 213–14), the overarching principle of manaakitanga is to nurture and protect others. This core value engenders reciprocal obligations of generosity and care that may take place over many generations, ensuring meaningful and long-lasting relationships between parties (Bristowe 2017; Mead 2003; Mika 2014; Spiller et al. 2011; Wikitera 2019).

Further interpretations of manaaki can be seen in the two etymological breakdowns of the word manaaki: mana-aki and mana-ā-kī. Mana is a vital force of Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) and the root word of manaakitanga) (Hēnare 1988). Various interpretations of mana have been offered, most centred around power, authority and influence (cf. Hēnare 2001; Marsden 2003; Tate 2012). Here, we give the definition of Dell (2017: 89) who sees mana

as ‘a potent human state with the profound ability to impact upon, affect and transform the life of others’; it is both dynamic and transformational. Not something to be claimed by oneself, mana is recognized and endorsed by others.

*mana + aki = encouraging potential*

The term ‘aki’ or ‘akiaki’ is a verb that means ‘to urge, encourage, coerce’ (Ryan 2008: 31). Mana used in conjunction with aki – manaaki – encourages people to uplift the mana of others. The act of enhancing another’s mana in turn nourishes one’s own mana (Dell et al. 2018; Spiller et al. 2011).

*mana + ā + kī = directing potential*

The term ‘kī’ means towards; mana-ā-kī means directing mana towards a person. This reflects an ability to show care for visitors, which is verbally communicated to them after an event, or simply put ‘respect earned from the recognition of others’ (Martin 2010: 126). Mana-ā-kī indicates movement towards something, suggesting ‘mana is here’ (in the place indicated where something has occurred).

Manaaki, mana-aki and mana-ā-kī all denote a social and cultural obligation to offer care and generous hospitality to your guests. The generosity and care for others enhances the mana of both the guests and the hosts, and creates an expectation of reciprocation at a future date (Dell et al. 2018; Mika 2014).

### **Knowledge in Indigenous Networks**

K.I.N. is a grassroots response to the academic environments that often fail to acknowledge the whole person. In 2014, an organically formed collective of postgraduate students from two Aotearoa-based institutions met to discuss the challenges of postgraduate study from Indigenous perspectives. Formalized as K.I.N., we now represent a global network of students and scholars, working across a number of academic institutions, who draw from a wealth of Indigenous identities, philosophies and approaches in our research designs: Māori from Aotearoa-New Zealand; Samoan; Tongan; Kiowa of the United States; Qechua of the Peruvian Andes; and Coast Salish and Métis of Canada. This diversity challenged our ability to name ourselves, and as we could not reconcile using any one of our languages to represent the others, English was our default option (albeit reluctantly). The acronym K.I.N. signifies our relationship as Indigenous Peoples navigating academic spaces in our attempts to contribute to knowledge sharing and creation. Our specific research topics are closely tied to our cultural identities to which only a broad and contested term like Indigenous seemed to fit and would account for the diversity within our group.

K.I.N. was primarily tasked with enhancing each other’s ability to research and become researchers; however, the fundamental purpose of the group, we realized, is to offer a culturally safe space in which to support our whole selves – manaaki-i-te-tangata. This includes emotional, spiritual, relational and academic support as a means to develop our thinking and scholarship in decolonized ways. Our network emerged in response to making sense of the academic administration processes and systems; concerns for cultural, emotional and spiritual safety; and a desire to think differently – to explore and to bring Indigenous perspectives to academic knowledge and imagine new possibilities. Indigenous peers provide immense support in navigating

the academy, and shared experiences and a sense of belonging and purpose can create greater collegiality than shared disciplines (Staniland et al. 2019b). K.I.N. provides regular professional gatherings, which include public webinars with senior Indigenous academics, video conferencing technologies due to our geographical and personal circumstances, and informal communication channels through social media groups where we debate literature, news and events, ask for advice and share achievements. Our group also creates practical spaces of cultural ways of working such as writing retreats and shared desks.

The creation of the K.I.N. blog in 2015 emerged from our discussions in-person on the 'outside' issues of our communities that often occupied our minds. Bringing these topics to our K.I.N. discussions and blogs allowed us to release some of the thought energy that took us away from our research and share ideas about how to deal with these issues. K.I.N. carved a space to express concerns not always directly related to our research but impacting our research progress. The blog allows us to connect and reconnect with past and future Indigenous colleagues. We invited guest contributors to write and publish blogs and disseminate their blog entries among their social media networks. This approach expanded the K.I.N. network rapidly, and by February 2020, the K.I.N. blog has published 168 posts. The following are personal reflections and experiences of K.I.N. and what it has meant to us within the academic setting.

### *Resisting imposed hierarchies*

Academia and a Ph.D. is mostly a solitary journey. 90 per cent of the time you are by yourself: reading, writing and thinking. The other 10 per cent is relationships, yet this is just as important. Getting through your Ph.D. is tough, facilitated by forming quality relationships that are of two kinds – horizontal and vertical relationships.

Vertical relationships represent the hierarchal, institutional relationships and systems that the academic world is built on. It takes an extreme amount of skill and discipline to be an academic, rewarded via a system of titles. Hierarchical titles represent that a person has accumulated a certain level of skill at acquiring knowledge. As Ph.D.'s we need vertical relationships of professors, lecturers, supervisors, academic mentors and student learning advisors. They represent formal relationships and provide access to the technical and practical knowledge that the discipline of academia requires. Their importance is well recognized in academic institutions by the incredible amount of resources that go into creating and supporting vertical relationships.

However, the negative symptoms of hierarchy and vertical relationships can cause a kind of reverse vertigo – the sensation of spinning and feeling dizzy by looking up. Some days it can seem like a bloody long and impossible way up that ladder. And this is why horizontal relationships are so important. Horizontal relationships represent the nurturing and encouraging relationships that support our emotional and spiritual wellbeing. Horizontal relationships flatten things out. They help you to feel supported, connected and bring you back down to earth from any anxiety high. It is these types of relationships that are not so well institutionally recognized.

K.I.N. is a network of horizontal relationships. As Ph.D. students with Indigenous backgrounds and upbringings, we have a heightened sense

of awareness and a need for horizontal relationships. In a world of vertical, hierarchal highs, K.I.N. makes the world flat.

### *Enhanced scholarship through connection and care*

In my experience of blogging with K.I.N., I used it as an opportunity to break out of the isolation and confusion of being in my head too much. There were aspects of non-academic life that were hard to separate from my Ph.D. research, and I needed a space to work that out both in person in our K.I.N. meetings, but also within our online community. I took my first step to bridge the sadness that emerged in my research interviews with a greater sense of sadness and loss about Indigenous economies in an entry called 'Grieving the Coast Salish Economy' (Kelly 2016). That entry was a turning point in my research because it felt like I discovered something dark and heavy that I did not want to carry alone. The K.I.N. group and blog helped me reach out beyond the insular world of the business school to talk through the traumatic experience of my community. In the end, I found a way to make grief visible in the research not as an incidental finding, but as evidence that our economies were systems of care in and of themselves. It also made me realize I might have missed this finding if I had not used Indigenous methodology. My scholarship was enhanced by having the opportunity to connect with K.I.N. in the uncomfortable process of research discovery. The K.I.N. network fosters a system of care, a great deal of understanding for each other's challenges and provided a space for us to discuss things that can seem trivial (for example, that we might not discuss with our supervisors), but can have significant impact on our productivity and ability to keep moving forward in our research.

### *K.I.N. as pou, guiding posts*

In spite of the academic rhetoric of isolation, we are standing together as a collective, and it works. We gather together, and thus stand apart, under the (somewhat contentious) label of Indigenous scholars (Huatahi 2015). Our worldviews are somewhat foreign – unconventional even – to many of our institutional cohort. We find relevance in each other, in our discussions, in our research, regardless of the array of topics. As Indigenous, there is an added layer to our research: we feel the pull to represent the Indigenous voice, to create tangible change, to save the world. But truth be told, most of the time we are just trying to keep our head above water (Dell 2015). Despite good intentions, good advice and a well-executed plan, when others fail to see the plight of the Indigenous peoples and fail to recognize our voice, we internalize this rejection and wonder what WE did wrong (Cocker-Hopkins 2015). It can feel like the world is on our shoulders, and that weight can hold us down. K.I.N. are the pou that keep us afloat, reminding each of us why we do research (Staniland 2015).

But what makes us different? What sets us apart from other groups and from the 'institution' that I am ranting about? We argue that it is the collective will and synergy that our group has. We don't battle against

the intellectual capability of each other – we know we are all smart. We don't compete for power – no one wants it anyway. All that really does seem to matter is how willing we all are to be vulnerable, to discuss our insecurities, our haunting *kēhua* (ghosts) (Nicholson 2015). More than academic support (as many Ph.D. groups provide), K.I.N. creates a holding space of mental, emotional and spiritual support. In spite of the academic rhetoric of isolation, we are standing together as a collective.

## **WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?**

The testimonies demonstrate how K.I.N. collectively responded in caring and supportive ways to our experiences of inhospitable environments. While this has been an effective response, we question whether this responsibility should fall to Indigenous academics? We thus challenge universities with the following questions: in the face of hostility, who is responsible for providing inclusive hospitality to Indigenous students and scholars who may be similarly marginalized 'others'? When should the responsibility for academic hospitality be led by the institution and when is it more appropriate for Indigenous Peoples to take the lead? We identify six sites for critical engagement with the notion of academic hospitality: insistent individualism, conflicting paradigms, understanding how trauma can permeate educational experiences, creating hospitable spaces within the academy, recognizing diverse Indigenous realities and nurturing holistic personhood in research environments. We provide some broad suggestions guided by the value of *manaakitanga* that may help academic institutions to work through such questions.

### ***Insistent individualism***

Insistent individualism challenges the collectivist paradigms of Indigenous cultures, often creating hostility. Derived from dominant paradigms that assume resources are scarce and therefore insufficient to satisfy everyone's needs and wants (Dell et al. 2018), insistent individualism thus encourages competition and perpetuates superiority and unchecked privilege. Collaboration, although promoted as a synergistic meeting of collective intelligence, is often a means to protect and advance individual interests, where outputs are an aggregate of individual efforts (Bennett 2000).

### *Institutional responsibility*

Academia needs to actively seek to uncover and undo biases of individualism within systems that marginalize collective ways of being. Our collective experience shows that acknowledgement of academic excellence is not something to be individually accumulated and highly protected but is something to be distributed throughout the university. Bennett (2000) expresses that a hospitable covenantal community involves open and honest critical interaction that is communal and public, not secretive and competitive. Indigenous paradigms can offer new ways of the thinking about collective reward systems.

### ***Conflicting paradigms***

Through our collectively diverse experiences, we highlight a shared barrier – that expectations of Indigenous scholars to produce innovative and transformative knowledge that makes a genuine contribution are measured and

validated against non-Indigenous academic measures and frameworks for success. Limited or no cultural recognition in curricula or pedagogies leave Indigenous students feeling uncared for and unsafe in the learning environment (Glynn et al. 2010).

### *Institutional responsibility*

Institutions need to implement strategies to teach, promote and understand Indigenous paradigms. There needs to be a conscious and ongoing effort to develop, employ, recruit and retain Indigenous staff and students. This goes much further than targeted admission and recruitment programmes, and includes ongoing support of these programmes with genuine conversations. Too often resources are overly focused on recruitment efforts, with staff and students left to flounder within inhospitable systems once they have got there. Indigenous-centred curricula need to be created, guided and endorsed by Indigenous communities and support for Indigenous outlets is essential. It is often the case that additional layers of accountability within broader networks of family and community hold Indigenous academics to higher standards of quality in rigour and relevance in the articulation and dissemination of Indigenous knowledge than what is asked for publication purposes. The creation of *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Scholarship* was 'to establish our own [Indigenous] standards of excellence in scholarship' (Smith 2005: 4).

### **Understanding trauma**

Indigenous academics embody their research: our research is part of us. Colonialism, intergenerational trauma and encountering privilege held by dominant populations can be confronting. It should not be left as an Indigenous responsibility to make sense of in isolation.

### *Institutional responsibility*

Academia needs to acknowledge how its systems and structures contribute to the triggering and perpetuation of intergenerational trauma. There is a need for universities, supervisors and students themselves to recognize the traumatic effects that research can cause within Indigenous students. Often, for those who come into the university with historical and intergenerational trauma, they are left to find their own information, support and healing resources; in worst-case scenarios, re-traumatization is left unaddressed. Institutions need to provide access to culturally appropriate healing and therapeutic options for the Indigenous student.

### **Creating hospitable spaces**

Manaakitanga means providing a culturally safe and welcoming space for all. Research shows that Māori students want to bring their whole selves to the university without leaving whānau, community and culture at the gates (McClutchie 2020). When Māori students recognize themselves in spaces around the university, much like the cultural contexts at home and in their communities, these students are more likely to navigate the challenges of unfamiliar cultural norms with more confidence (Bevan-Brown 2005; McClutchie 2020).

*Institutional responsibility*

Institutions can set aside and create sociocultural spaces that allow Indigenous students to interact and engage in a culturally appropriate manner. Iosefo (2016) argues that Māori and Pacific students need physical spaces to help with belongingness in tertiary education. Symbolic sites of hospitality manifest in physical spaces including the reception desk, office layout and other communal areas (Cockburn-Wooten and Brewis 2014), alongside bilingual signage. Furthermore, there remains a gap for institutions to resource and support Indigenous networks and collectives whereby students can express and normalize their feelings of success.

**Diverse Indigenous realities**

Indigenous researchers are sometimes put in the uncomfortable position of being asked to speak for all Indigenous realities as one Indigenous experience is assumed to be the same as all Indigenous experiences. This becomes an uncomfortable place to dwell, both ontologically and personally. Invitations to speak then turn into tokenistic gestures that lack any sense of hospitality. Not all Māori academics are comfortable or competent with Māori language, knowledge, customs and protocol, despite their Māori heritage. This is not well understood by university leaders and decision makers (Staniland et al. 2019b) and can be linked to ‘imposter syndrome’ and feelings of unauthenticity that are experienced by Māori academics (Hall and Sutherland 2018).

*Institutional responsibility*

There needs to be acknowledgement that there is great diversity in Indigenous experiences and what works under equity policy is most often not appropriate for Indigenous groups. The connection between Indigenous Peoples and their homelands means that academic spaces offer unique locations for cultural revitalization and economic and social development.

**Nurturing holistic personhood**

Research shows that Māori begin academic careers later than the dominant population, with the average age of doctoral candidates being 49 (McAllister et al. 2019). This not only impacts career trajectories but means that Māori students are more likely to have greater family responsibilities and community accountability, and therefore, a greater work–life imbalance (Hall and Sutherland 2018). These multiple roles often encroach on academic lives; in the case of the K.I.N. collective, it meant a number of our members being enrolled part-time, and therefore deemed less than other committed students.

*Institutional responsibility*

The restrictive academic system often forces us to choose between scholarship and humanness. The feeling of automatic outsiders within the academic system stems from a separation of person and scholar. There needs to be an acknowledgement of the multifaceted commitments of Indigenous scholars to their many levels of family and community reflected in academic job descriptions. In addition, academic hospitality includes pastoral care targeted at specific Indigenous needs, such as trauma, but, as our experiences show, extends far beyond that to enable Indigenous thriving as diverse whānau-centric scholars.

The many clubs and groups within the university setting are focused on scholarship within siloed fields. Where Indigenous worldviews emphasize the holistic nature and interconnection between all things, it is hard to feel welcome in groups that see research as disconnected. Our K.I.N. collective provides a forum for us to interact freely, unrestricted by our research fields. We share our whole selves and feel safe in doing so – and this is where and how we see our scholarship is enhanced. K.I.N. was formed in resistance to the isolation that is touted and perpetuated as a ‘normal’ experience in graduate education by the academic institution.

## CONCLUSION

In this article, we introduced the Indigenous Māori value of manaakitanga to show what is expected from an Indigenous worldview in order to provide hospitality. This enabled us to demonstrate how our academic experiences have not been hospitable. We have also outlined ways in which universities can enact its responsibilities towards Indigenous staff and students through practical applications of manaakitanga. In Aotearoa-New Zealand there is a Treaty obligation to ensure manaakitanga is enacted within our universities. Creating a culturally safe space for Indigenous Peoples should be a component of academic hospitality, which requires genuine openness and curiosity to consider different voices and perspectives (Bennett 2000). From an Indigenous worldview, being of service by contributing and enhancing the mana of our communities, of our colleagues and students, and of the institution is the most significant and influential part of being an academic. Yet, the insistent individualization of the academy favours division and compartmentalization. We forged K.I.N. as a way to collectively cultivate manaakitanga, a way to feel welcome within an inhospitable setting. It is an act of resilience and resistance against assimilation.

We acknowledge the complexity in categorizing Indigenous–settler relations in terms of host and guest. These are nuanced and shifting. At the point of colonization, white settlers arrived as strangers and Indigenous nations in the place of hosts (at times unwilling). However, over time despite Treaty obligations to partner, this relationship in wider Aotearoa-New Zealand society and reflected in the academic setting has been reversed. As students, K.I.N. members are seen as the guests of the university, and the hierarchical nature of academia serves as a constant reminder of this. As academic staff members and researchers within our communities, we are seen as part of the institution with an expectation from these communities of reciprocity rather than extraction. We argue that the challenge of negotiating host–guest identities in these contexts is an area that warrants further investigation.

Academic hospitality is about being generous and welcoming, and ultimately engaging in authentic conversation (Bennett 2000; Phipps and Barnett 2007). We engage in this conversation from the lens of Indigenous scholars who see academic hospitality as a stepping stone to manaaki-i-te-tangata, or valuing the whole self. Although our K.I.N. collective may not be able to be replicated by academic institutions themselves, there needs to be resources for spaces like K.I.N. to emerge and to flourish, as we can see our experiences are replicated in other Indigenous networks (Shotton et al. 2018). As Indigenous scholars, our motivation is to continue what our ancestors and academic mentors have begun. Embedded within the cultural milieu of K.I.N.

are the unspoken responsibilities of Indigenous scholars, to each other, to our communities, to the academy and to future generations. We are obligated to create space for those who will come after us.

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### CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

K.I.N. Author Collective is part of the larger 'Knowledge in Indigenous Networks' (K.I.N.) collective formed in 2014. Our global network consists of Indigenous researchers and postgraduate business students from Aotearoa-New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga, Canada, the United States and South America, thus drawing on a multitude of Indigenous identities and philosophies. The acronym K.I.N. signifies our relationship as Indigenous Peoples navigating academic spaces in our attempts to contribute to knowledge sharing and creation. You can find out more about K.I.N. at <https://indigenousknowledgenetwork.net/>.

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