

Events, Tourism and Hospitality Management at Leeds Beckett University Research Seminar Series
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Indigenous events and leisure: What can we learn?

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Pepeha

Tēnā koutou katoa

Ko Kōtirana te whakapaparanga mai

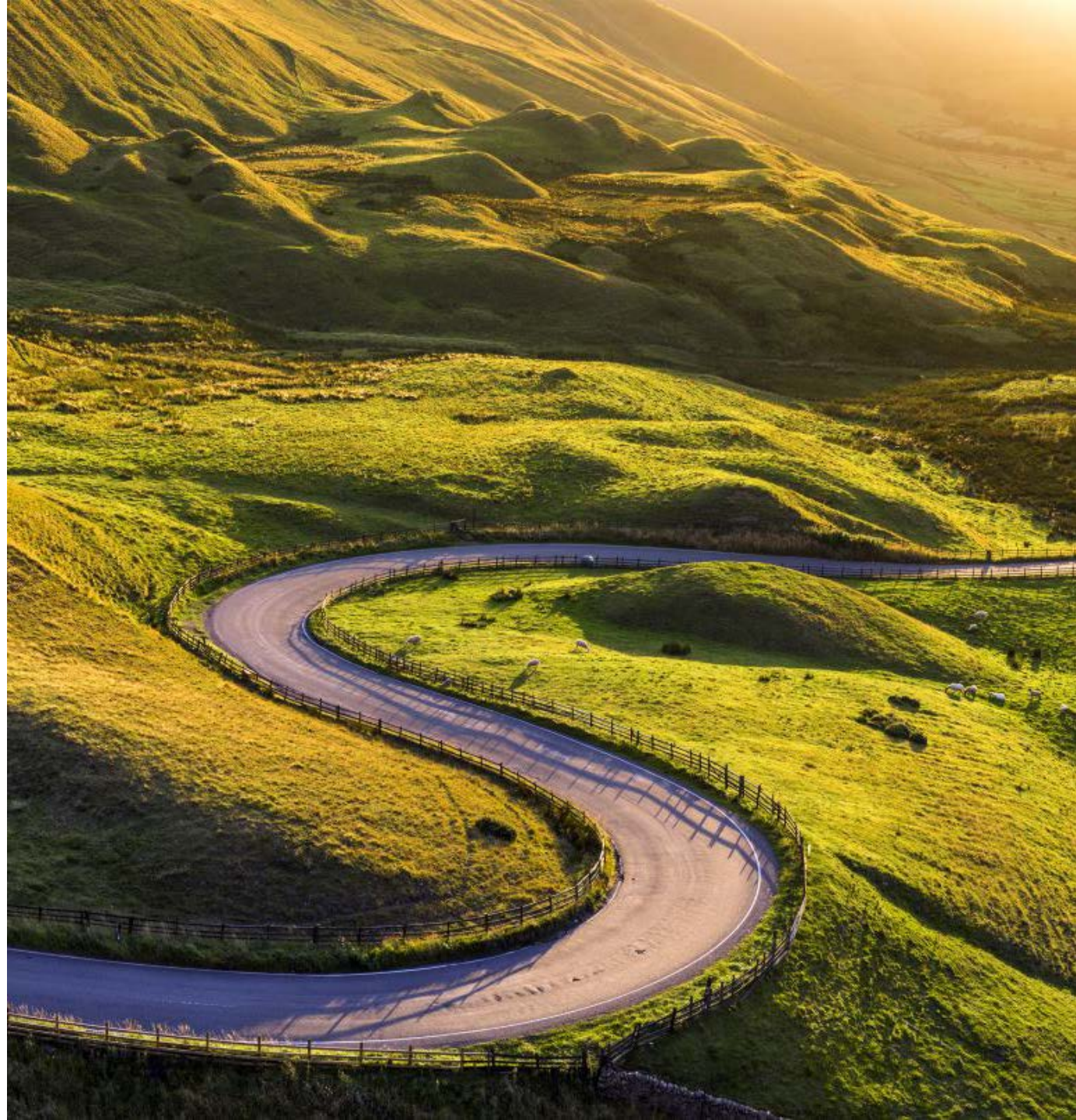
Engari

Ko Paewhenua te whenua tupu

Ko Ōtepoti te kāinga

Kei Waikirikiri au e noho ana

Ko Trudie Walters ahau

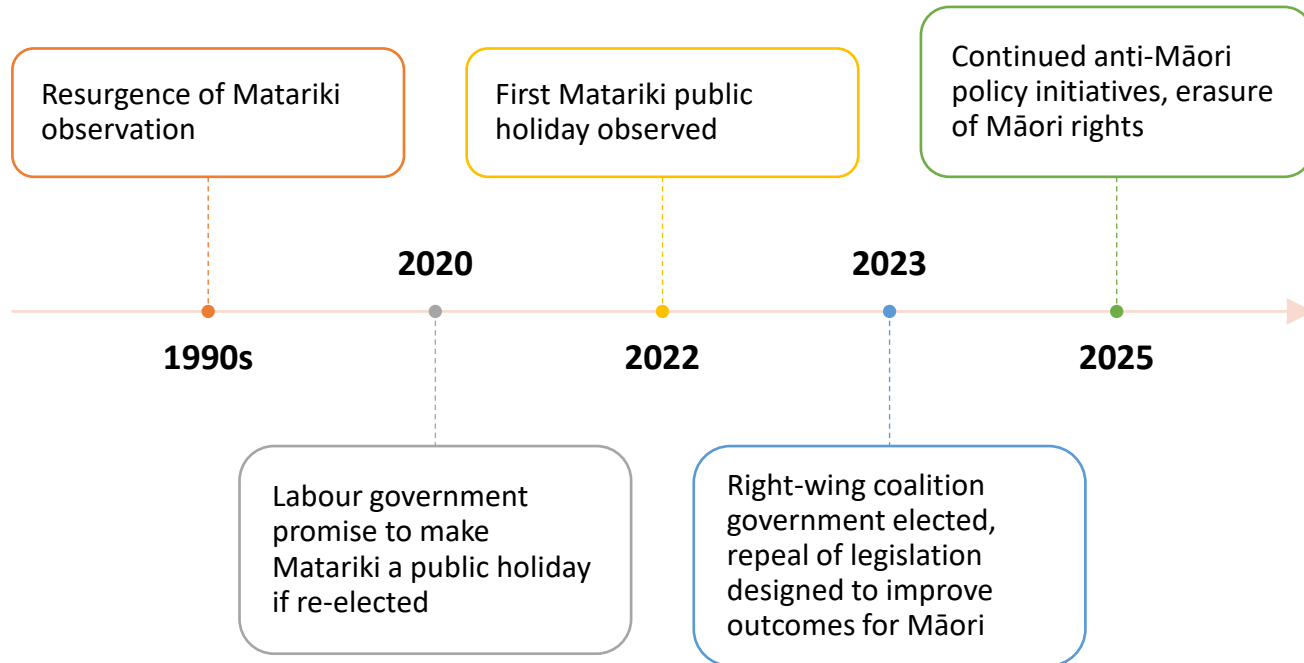




The context



A brief history...





The research

Data collection

- 31 mainstream (i.e. non-Māori) newspapers from across country
- Date range:
 - January 2020 – just prior to public holiday intention announcement
 - September 2024 – one year after change of government
- 1066 articles in total

Data analysis - kaupapa Māori framework

Te Ao Māori: the Māori world	A complex space highlighting the cultural, historical and modern experiences of Māori (White 2016), providing a unique perspective that embodies identity, values and language
Tino rangatiratanga: self-determination, governance and autonomy	Is about power and control resting within Māori cultural understandings (Walker, Eketone and Gibbs 2006)
Whanaungatanga: relationships and connection	Highlights the importance of relational processes central to collective understanding (Walker, Eketone and Gibbs 2006)
Te reo: Māori language	Provides a clarity of expression to the histories, values and beliefs of Māori people, and is considered vital (White 2016)

phases of analysis was inductive, and all of revolutionary futures were recorded. The second phase provided a more nuanced analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Finally in this iterative process, the material in each of the themes was assessed for internal consistency and coherence.

Limitations

This is an exploratory case study and, as such, carries some limitations. The nature of the event meant that limited windows of opportunity were available to interact with attendees during breaks between activities and performances. This meant that just 17 in-the-moment interviews with event attendees were able to be carried out. However, this does not diminish the validity of the information gained through those interviews as data saturation was reached.

Findings and discussion

The findings are presented in three sections reflecting key elements of “revolutionary futures”: determining new paths, making the future less fearful and allowing more positive outcomes. A conceptual framework for assessing the outcomes of events to creating “revolutionary futures” is then presented.

The findings

Determining new paths

A broad interpretation of “new paths” was adopted, and applied to the empirical material. First, the event allowed participants to do things that had not been possible before. In this way, the event functioned as a facilitator for disabled participants to assert previously unattainable identity to others (Johnstone, 2004), as these two examples illustrate:

[This event] has provided Carrie with the opportunity to exhibit her photos for the first time, and she has been blown away by the positive feedback. (Carrie, disabled photographer, notes from in-the-moment interview)

Niina is performing in a drama as the lead role for her group, really looking forward to it but is a bit nervous as it's her first time performing in front of a big audience. (Niina, disabled actor, notes from in-the-moment interview)

Te Ao Māori – the Māori worldview

- More detailed and nuanced coverage of the practices of Matariki:

Then there is the feeding of the stars, some of the food that was offered at the ceremony this year included pārerā (duck) and tuna (eel) represented by the stars Tupuārangi and Waitī (food from above the ground and food from rivers, streams and lakes respectively). Each whetū (star) has its own domain and role, with different food set aside for different stars. We offer the hau (essence) of the kai [food] to Matariki as a sign of gratitude for the fruits of the past year and hope for abundance in the coming year. (*Bush Telegraph*, 8 July 2024)



Te Ao Māori – the Māori worldview

- Matariki events have highlighted ongoing effort to gain recognition for Te Ao Māori, signalling progress and the ongoing journey towards a brighter future for Māori culture:

Matariki illuminates the strength of Māori to keep alive, to retain and to practise our ways of doing things, despite assimilation and racism. It highlights the determination to ensure Te Ao Māori is recognised. (*Stuff*, 14 July 2023)



Tino rangatiratanga – self-determination

- Highlights strength of Māori to keep alive, to retain, to practise own ways of doing, despite assimilation and racism of new government:

As the coalition Government wastes precious time and energy unwinding the progress of the previous decades, here at the helm of the waka [canoe], it is fair to say that ship has already sailed, and the flatulence of the Beehive [the seat of government] is merely wind in the sails of a community on an unstoppable journey of rediscovering its authentic self. What may not be obvious is that events like Te Huinga Whetū [a cultural competition held at Matariki] are not just moments in time; they leave an indelible mark on communities like ours and generate more momentum for revitalisation. (*Nelson Mail*, 28 June 2024)



Whanaungatanga – relationship, community

- Sense of belonging, collective understanding, extending Māori values to wider community – but noting existence of some racial tension:

We live in a time where adults debate the politics of Māori and Pākehā [non-Māori] and Te Tiriti o Waitangi sometimes angrily. We also know that our history has not always treated Māori, Pasifika, Asian, Muslim, and other immigrant communities very well. The Matariki holiday allows us to step away from that for one day to celebrate the common heritage and progress of all peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand. (Manawatu Standard, 23 July 2023)



Te reo Māori – the Māori language

- More frequent use
- Wider range of untranslated words
- Now some bilingual articles
- Some Matariki event programming also bilingual
- Some articles written only in Māori



The conclusion(s)

SO WHAT

Matariki being used by media to portray Māori worldview in authentic, nuanced way

- Narratives of Māori practices now more detailed, recognition of regional differences, more empowering approach that centres Māori knowledge
- Narratives reflecting often-subtle interplay between Māori resistance to socio-political pressures and resulting resilience of Māori culture and identity
- Most significantly, media now connecting issues facing contemporary Māori with colonisation, making them more visible



The provocation(s)

Questions I have been asked... and that I ask myself...

- How does a white person research Indigenous culture/issues?
- Should a white person research Indigenous culture/issues? Isn't it up to Indigenous people to be doing that?
- Is it appropriate to be mentioning things like colonisation/decolonisation in academia, and taking a stand? Isn't that too political?
- Can we/how can we decolonise leisure research?

A photograph of several hands holding a red heart, with text overlaid. The hands are cupped around the heart, and the background is a dark, textured surface. The text is white and centered.

The end!

Kia ora/thank you...any pātai/questions?