1950-1990 was chosen as a significant era of health service change, and specifically aimed to capture the era of development of Kaupapa Māori mental health services (Māori service models) from a Māori nurse’s perspective, and from those that trained and worked in psychiatric hospitals of that time.

‘Thirteen interviews were conducted in English and six in Te Reo Māori. Interviews were held in varying localities across New Zealand drawing from a prepared interview guide. In total, over twenty-six hours of video interviews were collected in English, and five hours of recording in Te Reo Māori.

‘Project outputs have included a number of conference presentations in New Zealand, including the Seventh Healing Our Spirit Worldwide in November 2015. As a result of this conference, we were asked to submit an article based on our presentation of “Tuia Te Ao Marama” to the Journal of Indigenous Wellbeing: Te Mauri – Pimatasiwīn.

‘The article is titled “Tuia Te Ao Marama: lessons for transformative indigenous mental health services”. It presents a snapshot of a Māori mental health nursing workforce and the methods they used in practice to meet the mental health needs of Māori. The findings are useful, as building the Māori nursing and health workforce in New Zealand remains a key priority to address Māori health inequities. The article offers some insights to what is required to inform the development, education and ongoing practice and development of a Māori mental health nursing workforce, whilst considering how mental health services for both Māori users and the Māori workforce can be better cared for.

‘The first stage of “Tuia Te Ao Marama” is now complete with the development of an online web-based resource for the oral history material. The next stage involves gathering more interviews, and the team also has aspirations to write a book, producing a documentary and utilising the data to provide a history and theory about Māori mental health nursing in New Zealand. There is still further work to do; like the title “Tuia Te Ao Marama” (bringing the Māori nurses stories together to bring light into our world) suggests, we must continue to thread together this new knowledge and understanding from our past to help inform the future.

‘We are grateful to all the Māori mental health nurses who have participated in the project so far, and also acknowledge the support we have received from Te Ao Māramatanga for the ongoing support to Māori Caucus; Taina McGregor of the National Library of New Zealand who provided inspiration in oral history method and mentorship throughout the project; NOHANZ (National Oral History Association of New Zealand) for best practice oral history guidance; Edwin Popham for website design and support; HB Productions for film and video expertise; Lotteries; Te Puni Kokiri and the Ministry of Health for faith in this project and for funding “Tuia Te Ao Marama” and “Te Rau Matatini” for Māori health workforce excellence.’

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INTERNATIONAL

DISRUPTED HISTORIES, RECOVERED PASTS

Lindsey Dodd from the University of Huddersfield introduces a new international project, ‘Disrupted Histories, Recovered Pasts’, which is being funded jointly by the AHRC ‘Care for the Future’ research strand and the French Laboratoire d’Excellence’s ‘Passés dans le Présent’.

“Disrupted Histories, Recovered Pasts” is a cross-case, cross-disciplinary collaboration that aims to explore the disruptive power of oral histories of post-conflict and post-colonial lives. In such contexts, identity can become fragile as various forces vie for influence. The need to build ‘usable pasts’ means that unfolding futures become fraught with competing versions of history, within which power relations shape how certain voices and stories are silenced and others privileged.

‘Five international case studies are planned. Principal investigator Sian Sullivan (Bath Spa University) says: “We seek to open the way for the telling of different
and multiple stories which may reflect, refract and revise more standard renditions of the past.”

“The first case study, led by Sian, compares oral histories, sound recordings and the ‘historical record’ regarding land clearances and culture nature relationships in post-colonial and post-apartheid west Namibia. Building on research conducted through AHRC project ‘Future Pasts’ (www.futurepasts.net), Sian will juxtapose oral histories recorded in Khoekhoegowab amongst Damara / Nūkhoen people in west Namibia with a range of written and recorded archival sources housed at the Namibia Resource Centre of the Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB) in Basel, as well as the National Archives in Namibia. She focuses on childhood memories of displacement recorded with adults during the return to sites that were previously home for them.

‘In the second case, Michèle Baussant (Laboratoire d’Ethnologie et de Sociologie Comparative, Centre de Recherche Français de Jérusalem, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) will use interviews recorded with diasporic Egyptian Jews in France, Israel and the United States to reconstruct daily life in colonial Egypt disrupted by three moments of exodus: 1948, 1956 and then in a continuing stream until 1967. The aim of Michèle’s research is to recover heterogeneous experiences, histories and practices to better understand how representations of Oriental, and more specifically Egyptian, Jews’ pasts are formed, spread and evolve.

‘Lindsey Dodd will consider memories of wartime child displacement in France during the Second World War. Her project reuses existing oral histories relevant to children’s wartime lives, illuminating narrator insights which disrupt, revise and retract dominant discourses of guilt and blame, and interviewers’ strategies which uphold them. Lindsey will also record a series of new oral histories dealing with wartime child displacement and family separation.

‘Olivette Otele (Bath Spa University) leads the fourth case study, which uses oral history to understand the experience of exile in contemporary Europe. Olivette is collecting oral histories of migrants and refugees from sub-Saharan Africa who left their homeland in the wake of conflict, and also those of people arriving from allegedly conflict-free zones. She is interested in exploring how public discourse in the host country shapes the ways these communities perceive themselves and tell their stories.

‘Finally, Irène Dos Santos (ISP, Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense) will analyse Portuguese migrant subjectivities in Angola. The increase in Portuguese migration to its former African colony since 2002 has brought the ‘colonial issue’ to the fore in Portugal. Irène will record oral histories of childhood displacement within this post-colonial context, and use family archives transported from Portugal. In recovering experiences of displacement, she will challenge the mythologised narratives of the Portuguese colonial past.’

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International Work is edited by Siobhan Warrington who welcomes all contributions by email to siobhan@oraltestimony.org

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