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**Te Tatau o te Pō:**  
**Perceptions and Experiences of Palliative Care  
and Hospice - A Māori Perspective**

A thesis

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a

Master of Arts

In

Psychology

□ at Massey University, Manawatū Campus,  
New Zealand.

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**2013**



# DEDICATION

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I tāpaea tēnei tuhinga whakapae hai whakamaharatanga ki ōku tīpuna  
ko **Julian ‘Arthur’ Brooking** raua ko **Hinetewhiu Brooking**,  
kua wehe a raua i tēnei ao, engari kua whakapiri tonu.

I dedicate this thesis to my amazing grandparents,  
**Julian ‘Arthur’ Brooking** and **Hinetewhiu Brooking** (nee Ngarimu),  
who have left the physical world but remain close.

Kati ra e hika te takoto i raro ra  
he ue ake ra ka he to manawa  
ka titiro ki uta ra ki Hikurangi maunga  
Ko te puke tena i whakatauki ai a Porourangi e  
Ka rukuruku a Te Rangitawaea i ona rinena e

Ka mamae hoki ra te tini o te tangata  
Ka mamae hoki ra ki a tama na tu  
Ka takitahi koa nga kaihautu o te waka o Porourangi  
Ka arearea koa, puanga i tona rua

Taku hiahia e i  
Kia ora tonu koe hei karanga i o iwi  
Ka tutu o rongo ki nga mana katoa  
Ko tama i te mania  
ko tama i te paheke  
Kua ngaro koe e hika ki te po aue  
Ko nga iwi katoa e aue mai ra  
Ka nui taku aroha, i na!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I takea mai i te moteatea tahito a Ngāti Porou. Na Arnold Reedy ngā kupu i huri i te matenga o Apirana Ngata. An ancient Ngāti Porou moteatea. Words altered by Arnold Reedy upon the death of Apirana Ngata.



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I te taha o tōku matua  
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Ko Rangitoto, ko Pirongia ngā maunga  
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Ko Taanehopuwai te papa kainga  
Ko Motiti te marae  
Ko Ngāti Apakura, ko Kinohaku ngā hapū  
Ko Ngāti Maniapoto te iwi  
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Ko Awatere, ko Hotohoto ngā awa  
Ko Awatere, ko Whareponga ngā marae  
Ko Te Whānau a Te Aotāihi, ko Te Aitanga a Mate ngā hapū  
Ko Ngāti Porou te iwi  
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Ko Diane Koti tāku ingoa  
Tihei mauri ora.

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To my participants, words cannot express my eternal gratitude for allowing me to undergo this experience with you and your whānau. I hope I do your stories justice.

Finally, to Brian thank you for supporting and putting up with me, being me.

# ABSTRACT

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Palliative care and hospice service demand in New Zealand is predicted to increase, due to New Zealand's growing and ageing population. The Māori population is youthful, and ageing at a faster rate than non-Māori. Māori currently under utilise palliative care and hospice services, compared to non-Māori, but given the growing population, they will potentially be high future users of these services. Consequently, palliative care and hospice services, facilities, and health professionals must ensure they are competent to meet the needs of Māori. This project investigates Māori experiences and perceptions of palliative care and hospice services. Three Māori palliative care patients and four whānau members, were recruited. A kaupapa Māori (Māori cultural ideologies) approach underpins this research project, and uses pūrākau (Māori narratives) to illustrate the participants' discussions. In-depth interviews were conducted, transcribed, and thematically analysed, exploring how they navigated their journey through palliative care and hospice services. Particular interest lies in their personal experiences and perceptions of whether palliative care and hospice meets their Māori cultural needs, and identifying any influential barriers or benefits. The findings were presented under five primary themes: 'Something is wrong', 'Knowledge and understanding', 'Hospice', 'Te ao hurihuri: Changing times', and 'Te tatau o te pō: The door of the night'. The interpretation of the results highlighted the diversity between the participants' expectations, perceptions, and experiences of palliative care and hospice. Through interviewing these Māori patients and their whānau, their intimate pūrākau have established a foundation for further investigation of palliative care and hospice services for Māori. This research will not only contribute to the limited literature existing on Māori and palliation, but it will also provide a voice for those interviewed.



# PREFACE

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Tukua te wairua kia rere ki ngā taumata  
Hai ārahi i ā tātou mahi  
Me tā tātou whai i ngā tikanga a rātou mā  
Kia mau kia ita  
Kia kore ai e ngaro  
Kia pupuri  
Kia whakamaua  
Kia tina! tina! hui e! tāiki e!

Allow one's spirit to exercise its potential.  
To guide us in our work as well as in our pursuit of our ancestral traditions.  
Take hold and preserve it.  
Ensure it is never lost.  
Hold fast, secure it.  
Draw together! Affirm!<sup>2</sup>

I have been contemplating this research for some years. I experienced a number of events that led me to this point. I do not believe in coincidences, so I truly believe these experiences were meant to be, to guide me through this journey.

My grandmother had been unwell, and I was told by other whānau members to meet at her home. Once there, I found out she was sicker than I expected, which was not unusual, as she did not like to burden us with her troubles, no matter how severe. Over a couple of days, we watched her get progressively worse. Eventually, we were told to gather our whānau together to say our farewells, as she was close to death. Over the next couple of days, I greeted most of her children and her grandchildren, who had travelled from all over New Zealand and the world to be with her in her final days.

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<sup>2</sup> Karakia (prayer).

She was experiencing a lot of pain; I noticed a lot more activity around her home and discussions between my mother, my aunty, and uncles. Then I noticed an unfamiliar person. He came into her home, into her bedroom, examined my Nan, and then administered some medication. During this time, I was wondering what was happening. After this person left, I asked what was happening, and I was told that he was a nurse from the local hospice. I asked what is hospice, but cannot remember the answer given. A couple more days passed, with the hospice nurse making regular visits, and with my Nan slipping in and out of consciousness. Her last morning, in a moment of consciousness, she said she was ready. But we were still waiting on my uncle to return from overseas, and on reflection, so was she. The hospice nurse was doing his routine check, when I asked him how long he thought she had. He said something along the line of, "it's hard to tell, it could be a couple of days". For some reason, I knew this would be her last day.

Later on that day, I received a phone call from my uncle, informing me that he had been delayed, and he wanted me to read Nan a message. So I did as he asked. She died that night.

That was my first encounter with palliative care and hospice. On reflection, I still didn't know or understand anything about either, other than a nurse visited and a short time later my Nan died. I didn't think anymore about it until two months later when I applied for an administration job at the hospice that cared for my Nan, I got the job. From this, my awareness and understanding of what palliative care and hospice are grew, and has been an area of interest ever since.

I have included the following extract about Hine-nui-te-pō for two purposes, firstly, as an example of a pūrākau, the method used in this research project to collate the data. Secondly, it illustrates the beginnings of human immortality, of death. From a te ao Māori (Māori worldview) perspective, the reality of and why death looms near for the participants of this study, originates from the following event.

# HINE-NUI-TE-PŌ



He ai atu tā te tangata, he huna mai tā Hine-nui-te pō.  
Man begets, but the goddess of death destroys  
(Brougham, Reed, & Kāretu, 1999, p.32).

The picture and the following extract were taken from the book *Wahine toa: Women of Māori myth*. Robyn Kahukiwa painted the picture depicted above with the following extract written by Patricia Grace.

## **The pūrākau of Hine-nui-te-pō.**

*It was because of shame that I left the world of light for the dark world and promised to await my children and their descendants to welcome them here in Rarohenga (the underworld). Now the time is near.*

*Now, at last, this Māui comes towards me, coming in the hope that he will conquer me, and that the children of hard-won light will never know death.*

*When I have defeated Māui, I will thereafter welcome my descendants in death.*

*But I do not cause death, and did not ordain it. Human death was ordained when human life was ordained. And we - my father-husband Tāne; Taranga who gave special birth to Māui; Makea-tutara, speaker of the tohi rites; Māui-pōtiki, and I, Hine-nui-te-Pō, are merely the instruments, the practicalities, and the sequence of death. See Māui now. In the world of light he has achieved all he can achieve. He comes now to challenge me in the world of no light, seeking to achieve what cannot be achieved. To defeat death he will need to gain living entry to my womb, and living exit, but this he cannot do. Now he stands at the edge of light, exuberant, changing from one disguise to another while the little birds watch, excited and trembling. My vagina, where he must enter, is set with teeth of obsidian, and is a gateway through which only those who have already achieved death may freely pass. He will attempt to enter in life, hoping that I am asleep, but he will be cut in two, meeting his death. Only then can he be made welcome (Māui is depicted as the lizard).*

*Come Māui-tikitiki-a-Taranga. Your bird companions chuckle and flutter at the strange sight of you, but they are not your undoing. There is one purpose only for these obsidian teeth. In this your last journey, you will give your final gift to those of earth, the gift not of immortality, but of homecoming, following death. Come survivor of seas, lengthener of day, obtainer of fire, fisher of land, keeper of the magical jawbone of Muriranga-whenua.*

*Death is yours, your chosen, death is yours. Your deeds will be spoken of in the world of light, but you will never be seen there again. I will wait at this side of death for those who follow; because I am the mother who welcomes and cares for those children whose earthly life has ended (Kahukiwa & Grace, 1984).*

From this encounter between Hine-nui-te-pō and Māui a saying has emerged:

*Mehemea i puta a Māui i tua, kua kore te tangata e mate, kua ora tonu te Māori me te Pākehā.*

*If only Māui had passed through (the body of the goddess of death), then man would never have died, and Māori and Pākehā would both have live-forever (Brougham, Reed, & Kāretu, 1999, p.32).*

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## GLOSSARY

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Ako Māori	Culturally preferred pedagogy
Aroha ki te tangata	Respect for people
Hā a koro ma, a kui ma	Breath of life from forbearers
Hapū	Kinship group, clan, sub-tribe - section of a large kinship group.
Hau-mate	Vital essence is dying or deceased
Hine-nui-te-pō	("Great woman of night") is a goddess of night and death and the ruler of the underworld.
Hui	To gather, meet, assemble.
Iwi	Extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people.
Kaitakawaenga	Māori liaison
Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face to face, in person, in the flesh.
Karakia	To recite ritual chants, say grace, pray, recite a prayer, chant.
Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata	Uplifting the dignity of the participants
Kaumātua	Adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman, old man.
Kaupapa	Topic, purpose
Kaupapa	Collective philosophy
Kawa	Etiquette, rules
Kia piki ake i ngā	Socioeconomic

raruraru o te kainga	mediation
Koha	Gift giving
Kōrero	Speak, talk
Kōrero tawhito	Old or ancient talk or stories
Koro/koroua	Male elder
Kuia	Female elder
Māhaki	To be humble
Makea-tutara	Makea-tutara is the father of Māui
Mana	Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma.
Mana ake	Unique identity of individuals and family
Manaaki ki te tangata	Being generous and hospitable
Māori	Indigenous people of New Zealand
Māoritanga	Māori culture, practices and beliefs.
Marae	Courtyard - the open area in front of the wharehui (meeting house), where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the marae.
Mātauranga	Education, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill.
Māui	Well-known Polynesian character of narratives. He performed a number of amazing feats. Also known as Māui-tikitiki-a-

	Taranga, Māui-tikitiki-o-Taranga and Māui-pōtiki.
Mauri	Life principle, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions.
Moko	Short for mokopuna. Grandchild or grandchildren.
Mōteatea,	Lament, traditional chant, sung poetry,
Muri-ranga-whenua	Grandmother of Māui.
Pākehā	New Zealander of European decent.
Pākeke	Adults or the elderly.
Papatūānuku	Earth mother and wife of Ranginui. All living things originate from them.
Pono	Be true, right, valid, and honest.
Pūrākau	Myth, ancient legend, story.
Rarohenga	Underworld - the place where the spirits of the dead go.
Rongoā	Remedy, medicine, drug, cure, medication, treatment, solution (to a problem), tonic
Taha hinengaro	Mind, thought, intellect, consciousness, and awareness dimension.
Taha Māori	Māori side or dimension.
Taha tinana	Physical dimension.
Taha wairua	Spirit, soul, quintessence - spirit of a person, which exists beyond death.

	Wairua dimension.
Taha whānau	Family dimension.
Tāne	Man, male.
Tangihana	Funeral.
Taonga tuku iho	Cultural aspirations
Taranga	Mother of Māui.
Tauheke	Deteriorate
Te ao hurihuri	The changing world.
Te ao Māori	The Māori world.
Te reo Māori	Māori language
Te tatau o te pō	The door of the night
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The original Māori-language version of, the Treaty of Waitangi,
Te whare tapa wha	The four-sided house, Māori model of health by Sir Mason Durie.
Te wheke	The octopus, Māori model of health by Rose Pere.
Tikanga	Customs and protocols
Tikanga Māori	Māori customs
Tino rangatiratanga	Self-determination, sovereignty,
Tohi	To perform ceremonies
Tūpāpaku	Corpse, deceased
Tūrangawaewae	Domicile, place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa.
Tūroro	Patients
Ūkaipō	Origin, real home.
Urupa	Burial ground, cemetery,

	graveyard.
Wahine toa	Brave or warrior woman.
Waiata	Song.
Waiora	Total well-being of the individual and family
Whakataukī	Proverb.
Whakawhanaungatanga	Relationships, kinship
Whānau	Extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people.
Whatumanawa	The open and healthy expression of emotion
Whenua	Land.