CHAPTER SIX -

TAINUI GRADUATES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

> Traditionally, Tainui have not fared well within the Paakeha education system. Yet…Tainui has tremendous human talent awaiting release (Centre for Maori Studies and Research 1986:1).

Introduction

Before introducing the voices of the Tainui graduates, it is important that a number of issues are set out. The first issue is that these graduates come from a tribal setting, thus do not necessarily share a universal 'Maori' experience, and as such their history and aspirations for advancement are quite distinct. In Chapter Three, I described hooks' (1992) anger at how some black women related a uniform experience, unwilling to acknowledge the diversity that existed within their own community. Similarly, Smith (1995) expresses disdain at government policy that assumes Maori homogeneity, despite the tribal, hapu and whanau structures that exist within Maori society. This research is explicitly located from within a tribal perspective (my own and that of the participants), based on tribal members' recollections and opinions. The research, therefore, presents the lived experiences of the cultural, political and social perspectives of those interviewed (the graduates), located within, and influenced by a tribal paradigm, one created by a unique relationship to the coexisting forces that affected and that continue to affect New Zealand.

A second issue is that as an insider researcher, I am consciously aware of Tsianina Lomawaima's (2000:7) observations about the impact of research on tribal communities, especially "the kinds of risks to interpersonal relationships within communities that may result from publication of data without adequate 'masking' of participants." Similarly, I had concerns about the "economies of truth" that I found

when analysing the data shared by the research participants (Te Hennepe 1993:197). As Te Hennepe (1993:197) aptly describes:

> All phases of the research encounter, then, are governed by economies of truth. Each is a creation in its own right that only partially reflects what was encountered in the lived experiences of…our discussions,…my subsequent examination of the transcriptions, and my writing of a text based on my interpretation of the first two phases.

From this perspective the presentation of the graduates' voices, which I see as a focal part of the research, must be tempered with Te Hennepe's words of caution. Therefore, they are not the only voices from which experiences can be measured, critically analysed and learned from. Nor do their voices represent a harmonious chorus within the research. To that extent, I have also taken on board McPhillips' (1992) suggestion in not seeing the graduates' responses as the 'definitive truth', or from speaking within the "construction of a monolithic experience" (hooks 1992:44). The graduates' narratives have not been constructed and presented to compete with or against others' experiences. Rather, I encourage that they be seen as identities shaped by their own lived cultural, political and social experiences.

This chapter, therefore, sets out the responses to interviews I conducted with nine Tainui – affiliated members (the graduates) who received educational scholarships from the Tainui Maori Trust Board and who graduated from the University of Waikato between the years 1992 and 1997. An overview of the selection process and an outline of the interview structure are provided, as is a general overview of the graduates (age, gender, school of study and degree programme). A general picture is painted of their family background and prior educational experiences, which effectively sets the scene for the remainder of the chapter. This chapter will focus primarily on the graduates' responses to the key themes identified in the interview schedule: the University of Waikato, the Tainui Maori Trust Board, and finally, the graduates' thoughts on their experiences at university and what issues and factors impacted on them that helped them to succeed.

Identifying and Selecting

The methodological journey undertaken to find participants for the research involved a complex process of identification, confirmation, crosschecking and reconfirmation. Between the years 1992 and 1997 around 45 Tainui students who received scholarships from the Tainui Maori Trust Board graduated from the University of Waikato. I say 'around' because the University of Waikato does not record iwi specific information, and therefore the process used to ascertain these figures has been a manual one rather than simply searching the University database. For this thesis, 'Tainui graduate' is defined as one whose whakapapa was validated at the time their applications for financial assistance were received and accepted.[1]

The manual process consisted of gathering together the annual reports of the Tainui Maori Trust Board as well as the Graduation booklets for the University of Waikato, between the years of 1992 and 1997, as these years were the parameters for my study.[2] There were two main challenges arising from this initial approach. The first challenge was just the time consuming effort of having to go through each annual report and each Graduation booklet to find matches between the scholarship recipient and the graduate. The second, and more difficult challenge, was in the actual matching process. What I found, especially in the annual reports were names of scholarship recipients which changed from year to year, but were in fact the same person, making me query my searches time and again to be sure I had the same person. In some instances I matched the wrong people, and in others, I identified two separate people when in fact they turned out to be the same person. I found this

---

[1] Over the years that the Tainui Maori Trust Board scholarships have been in operation, a number of changes have been made to the eligibility criteria. The settlement of the Raupatu claim in 1995 saw the whole "beneficiary roll" or tribal register of the Board's revamped, with the eligibility criteria being tightened. As a result of this process, some people who were eligible found themselves no longer so. A more detailed explanation of the issue of whakapapa was examined in Chapter Five.

[2] The annual reports that I used for Tainui were from 1993, a report dated 1993 but which included the 1994 scholarship recipient information, and the 1995, 1996 and 1997 annual reports. Annual reports had not been produced before then, although the 1993 annual report pulled together a comprehensive list of past education scholarship recipients, from which the information for earlier recipients who graduated before 1995 was taken.

peculiarity perhaps compounded by the fact that some graduates chose to refer to themselves in Maori for the Board scholarships, while in the University information they were identified with their names taken from official documents, which were usually Pakeha names.

Another issue around the identification of graduates included the changing of subtle information between the years they received scholarships. For example, in one year a graduate may have been from one hapu (tribal sub-group), but the next year the hapu affiliation had changed to that of another. Did that mean that there were two people of the same name who had different affiliations, or did it mean that these were completely different individuals? Another example of this also arose in the identification of degree programmes. On the whole, most of the degree programmes referred to by the graduate when receiving a scholarship were correct, however, in some instances, confusion did arise during course changes and the like. While it could be argued that this scenario could have been easily overcome, the point here is that the complete lack of synchronisation between the two systems, and even just in the Board system allowed for such peculiarities to emerge. The insistence of institutions to see Maori as homogenous hinders attempts by Maori/tribal organisations, and Maori/tribal researchers, to monitor the progress of their members in education contexts such as these. This is turn frustrates Maori/tribal efforts to seek tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) and reinforces the power imbalances that exist between Maori and the dominant other.

Having identified the graduates, I then attempted to sort through the data I had in order to select the graduates to interview. I had decided not to interview all of them, because I initially wanted to try and get a diverse group of people to interview. That is, I wanted to have as even a gender split as possible, a good range in the ages and, I wanted to ensure I had good representation across the schools of study. I also wanted to make sure I had a variety in the courses of study taken as well as the different levels of study completed. Realising my wish list was rather optimistic, I tried as hard

as I could to achieve this goal. Several constraints to this approach hampered the process.

Of the whole list of graduates, there were more women than men and many were enrolled in the School of Education for either Diplomas or Bachelor of Education degrees. Due to the relatively small number of graduates, it was difficult to get a widespread representation of the degree programmes without actually compromising the confidentiality of the graduates interviewed. Despite the relatively small numbers of Tainui graduates enrolled in the Schools of Science and Technology, Management Studies and Computing and Mathematical Science, I specifically selected students from these schools of study in order to accommodate my wish to have representation across campus without compromising, as mentioned, their privacy. There were sufficient numbers between the 1992-1997 timeframe that allowed this objective to be achieved. However, such data does point to problems of Maori being relatively over represented in some areas of study and under represented in others, as discussed in Chapter One, and highlighted by the Ministry of Education (1997a), and Te Puni Kokiri (2000). A second consideration is that this sample is not really a traditional representative sample, which would be based on numbers being proportionately representational. Instead, I chose to represent students from across the campus, which means that the data from this study is reflective and representative of my selection criteria.

Having refined the list of the graduates to about 20 who represented the range of subjects and were relatively even in gender mix, I approached those I knew (12) and sent letters to those I did not, although all prospective interviewees were approached in writing. The information letter outlined the study, requested them to agree to participate in the study, and how information was to be collected, used and protected. Irwin (1994) argues that many social science research approaches are in fact not suited to Maori people. Describing her approach as the "first rituals of encounter", Irwin (1994:36) believes that, in her case anyway, written contact could not be made

as it would have appeared that her "chosen *turangawaewae* was the world of academia and research." I have acknowledged (in Chapter Three) my position as insider researcher, where this position is both within the world of academia (being an employee and a student), and the world of Maori, and more specifically, the Waikato tribe (as a tribal member and a tribal researcher). From my perspective, despite Maori being described as an oral culture, I felt that written contact was an appropriate way to initiate (and negotiate) my entry into the participants' lives. I chose this approach because I knew some of the prospective interviewees and I did not wish to impose on them and have them feel obligated to participate because of our relationship. I did not want to impinge on the goodness of their natures, making them feel obligated that they had to participate in the study. In other words, I was conscious of the power relationship in my position as a researcher and I did not want to be seen to be taking advantage of our personal relationships.

This was particularly so for the people I knew. I was mindful of Tsianina Lomawaima's (2000) cautions about relationships within tribal research, as well as being mindful of the fact that I would be maintaining some of these relationships well after the research finished. Therefore, I wanted to ensure that their decisions to participate were not influenced or pressured by our own personal relationships. Furthermore, I was conscious of my position as the researcher, and wanted to ensure that the decision to participate was based on the understanding that any information given to me would be treated with respect, and in an appropriate way. Thus, while the 'kanohi ki te kanohi' (face to face) approach is a preferred option for many kaupapa Maori researchers (Irwin 1994; Bishop 1996; Bishop & Glynn 1992, 1999a), I found that, in this case, it had the potential of creating a position of power over the research participants. Thus, I felt that a more impersonal, written 'distancing' approach provided by the letter enabled potential participants to consider for themselves, and in their own time, whether they wanted to become involved in the study without feeling that they had to justify their reasons if they chose not to participate. In fact, some of the people I did know and approached declined to participate. From these initial

stages, nine agreed to participate. Of the nine graduates, I had known five of them previously (through personal and professional associations).

The process I undertook to identify and choose possible participants for inclusion in the study was very specific and selective. I mentioned earlier the desire to interview graduates from a wide range of subjects, which meant that the group of graduates interviewed for this study couldn't be classed as representative of Maori university students, or even Tainui students, generally. Chapter One identified how most Maori students are over represented in areas such as social science, education and arts, and under represented in areas like science and management. Further, Maori students tend to be older than non-Maori. Part of the process for selecting possible participants meant that I had to sacrifice gaining a diverse range of ages amongst the graduates in order to gain a group of graduates that had participated in traditionally 'non-Maori' subjects, such as science and management. Therefore, the responses cannot be read as being representative of a general Maori experience, but rather as the voices of a small, but significant group of tribal members.

Interviewing

While making contact with the participants for the study, I had also been drafting an interview schedule. Berg (1995) has suggested that the process of drafting interview schedules should include three main components. These components briefly expect the researcher to be sure of their research objectives; develop an outline of the study, listing all the broad categories relevant to the study; and then developing a set of questions relevant to each of the chosen categories (Berg 1995:36). As I had never conducted interviews before, I was advised to test the questions, through 'mock' interviews, in order to become more familiar with the interview process itself, as well as ensuring the categories I had chosen were adequate for the research project itself.

The mock interviews were conducted amongst colleagues who, aside from their tribal affiliations, were graduates from the University of Waikato. While they could not answer the questions relating to the Tainui Maori Trust Board, their contributions in the other categories gave me enough confidence to proceed cautiously. What I learned from these initial experiences was valuable in the way I approached the interviews with the graduates. Nisbet & Entwistle (1970:42) warn "all amateur interviewers talk when they should listen." What I found during the mock interviews was that I indeed had a tendency to dominate the process – although I was assured from fellow colleagues that I was not the only one that suffered this predicament! As a consequence, I readjusted my interview schedule to ensure the flow of the questions was maintained and to keep some kind of sequence in the groups of questions that I had drafted. After this, I felt confident enough to proceed with the interviewing process.

Generally, the interviews ranged between one and two hours. Four of the interviews were tape-recorded, two were videotaped, and three were written accounts of the interview, where I wrote down the responses in as complete form as possible, ensuring that the answers were written verbatim. I also took notes during the interviews, mainly as prompts for myself to remember what I thought were important points. The reason why a range of equipment was used was purely to do with what equipment was available to me at the time. Before I began any interview, I discussed with the participants the type of equipment I would be using, and asked whether this was suitable or appropriate for them. All the graduates were comfortable with the equipment that I used, which, although not ideal for maintaining a consistent methodological approach to the research, appeared to be reasonable and not imposing upon the participants and allowed for an effective information gathering process.

The interview schedule contained four major groups of questions. The first group of questions covered the family background of the graduate and their reasons for attending university. The second group of questions focused on the University of

Waikato, their academic courses, their experiences and their knowledge of the programmes instituted by the University for Maori. This section also sought the opinion of the graduates' themselves as to the effectiveness, in their view, of the University toward attracting and maintaining Maori students through to graduation. The third group of questions focused on the Tainui Maori Trust Board and the scholarship application and selection process. The graduates were queried on their knowledge of the Tainui Education Strategy, other educational initiatives instituted by the Board, and their opinions on responsibilities of recipient to organisation, and organisation to recipient. Finally, the last group of questions focused around the notion of success, and whether the graduates' perceived themselves to be successful, academic achievers. The following section details more specifically the information that came out of these interviews.

Tainui Graduates from the University of Waikato 1992-1997

Profile of Research Participants

As mentioned, there were around 45 people who received scholarships from the Tainui Maori Trust Board and who graduated from the University of Waikato between 1992 and 1997. From this group, nine people agreed to participate in the study. These nine people represent a unique group. They are unique firstly because they have graduated, whereas Maori are more likely than non-Maori to not complete their courses (Ministry of Education 1998a). Secondly, they are unique because they represent a number of subject areas where Maori are traditionally under represented. Thus, while they are a relatively small group that is not representative of Maori university students and graduates, this group provides an opportunity to explore, through their eyes, how they managed to survive their higher education experience and what aspects may help not only other Maori university students, but also higher education institutions and tribal organisations graduate more Maori students.

Of the nine graduates who agreed to participate in the study, four were male and five were female. The ages of the graduates ranged from the early twenties (two), mid to late twenties (six) through to early fifties (one). While at university, most described themselves as single with no children (six), two had been in long-term relationships and had children (prior to entering university), and one of the graduates was married with children. Since leaving university, of the six single graduates, three were in relationships and had since had children and the other three were in relationships with no children. Of the six single graduates, three of the graduates met their partners who had also been studying. The other three met their partners outside of the university setting. The marital/relationship status of the other three graduates interviewed had not changed since leaving university.

Family

Four of the graduates came from families with six to ten children. Two graduates came from families with three children (the smallest family unit). Four of the graduates also had extended family members living with them during periods of their lives, mainly grandparents or elderly relatives, while one lived with siblings and their family. Two of the graduates were the oldest of the siblings. Two graduates were the youngest in their families. The other graduates were either second in the family (one) or about the middle of the family (four).

Socio-economic status

One of the questions asked of the graduates was a description or classification of their family's socio-economic status. This question raised one unusual response. This graduate described the family's socio-economic status in two ways. Firstly, the graduate explained the perceived socio-economic status within the context of the extended family. To this extent, the status was described as "upper class." When compared to "how everyone else sees it," the graduate said that the family were middle class. This graduate's description of the family's upper class socio-economic

status was justified in comparison to the large numbers in the extended family being either unemployed and/or receiving welfare support from the government:

> Most of our whanau would see us as being rich, because Mum and Dad both work. And compared to a lot of them, we are. Most of our whanau, our cousins and that, they're on benefits or not working, so we're really well-off compared to them.

Of the other graduates, three classed their family's socio-economic status as middle class. The other five described the socio-economic status of their family as being working class.

Parental/Family Academic Achievement and Attitudes to Education

One graduate was raised in a sole-parent family, the others in two-parent families. One graduate lived with an older sibling during high school years, which was in a different district to that of the rest of the family. All but one of the graduates described their fathers' occupations as being labour-intensive, while their mothers' occupations varied from voluntary work,[3] to professional employment. The higher status of the majority of the graduates' mothers' employment is reflected in their higher educational qualification achievements. None of the fathers of the graduates had been educated beyond high school, while four of the graduates' mothers had tertiary qualifications, in areas such as teaching and nursing. Three of the mothers had returned to higher education between the 1980s and 1990s, one had obtained a certificate, one a Bachelor and then a Masters degree, and the other was completing a Bachelors degree. Four of the graduates stated that their parents had the minimum requirements for secondary school education (such as School Certificate), while one of the graduates was unsure as to the highest educational qualification of the parents. The lowest educational qualification received by the parents of the graduates was finishing primary school. This parent (the father) left school aged 12.

---

[3] By voluntary work, I mean people who are not working for pay but who are heavily involved in community activities. In these cases, I refer mainly to marae-based activities, which is most often unpaid, and can range from catering for functions to being the secretary of the marae committee.

The role of the mothers in the education of the graduates was interesting. One of the graduates summed up this role in the following way:

> Mum wears the boots in the family. Dad was really supportive of us, but it was Mum who really pushed. She has always been like that, into education, things academic, that sort of focus.

Four of the graduates were the first of their siblings to go to University. Those that were not were following in the footsteps of older siblings.

Despite the lack of parental education in some instances, the graduates felt that their parents were very supportive of their decision to enter tertiary education. The common theme from the parents of the graduates was a desire to see their children achieve where they hadn't, more for the fact that they did not want their children to struggle as they had during their own lives:

> Because Mum and Dad were from working class backgrounds and had no education, that was why I think they pushed us into going to varsity. They didn't force us or anything, but when we decided, they were all for it.

> Dad left school when he was really young. He didn't want that for us, so he was really supportive of us in any area. Me going to varsity was a big bonus.

Another interesting aspect of this support was shown in a financial manner. Over half (five) of the graduates interviewed, who came from what they described as working class backgrounds, said that their parents continued to support them while they were at university. This support included on the most part the provision of accommodation and food (for those living at home), to supplies of food and money from time to time (for those who were flatting or boarding):

> We would always go home for a decent feed. I was lucky, because Mum and Dad didn't live too far away from varsity, so even though I was flatting, I could still go home when I wanted. Sometimes if Mum was in

town, she would bring us some groceries, or bread, or stuff that we needed.

The other two graduates stated that their parents were not in a financial position to provide such support, and they did not want to further burden their parents in this way. In essence, these graduates tried to 'go it alone':

There were too many of us in our family for Mum and Dad to ever be able to help me. I would never have asked them to help me out.

Education Experiences Prior to University

Two of the graduates had been to private church-run boarding schools (of different religious denominations) while the other seven had all been educated at state schools. One of these seven attended a single-sex state school, while the other six attended co-educational state schools. These six described these state schools as their local high school. Seven of the graduates left school with high enough grades to guarantee direct entrance to university. The other two had conditions attached to their enrolment at university – one due to the length in time passed since leaving school and the other due to insufficient grades.

One of the graduates entered University after a period of working and raising a family, while the other eight graduates entered University after completing the 7th form. This is not a typical situation from which Maori students enter university, as the Ministry of Education (1998a:29) notes: "Maori school leavers are less likely than non-Maori to progress directly on to further education or training" and of those who do, they are "concentrated in different institution types and in different programmes, with a tendency for Maori to be enrolled at polytechnics and wananga and non-Maori to attend colleges of education and universities" (Ministry of Education 1998a:59).

On the whole, the graduates' descriptions of secondary school were fairly uneventful, although four felt that they had experienced some form of racism or negative attitude

that was believed to be racially inspired. One graduate described this experience as being "quite negative" and attributed its cause to a lack of commitment in anything Maori from the school Principal. During the course of this graduate's secondary schooling, the Principal changed and the graduate described a newer, more positive attitude to Maori as a result. The other graduates recalled similar experiences, although one admitted to being "not very interested" in school. The other five graduates felt that their experiences were either relatively uneventful or unremarkable.

In recounting their experiences, particularly when asked about who advised them on their future direction, only two recalled having careers advisers or guidance counsellors. The others either said that they couldn't remember (four) or were unsure if their school had dedicated (that is who weren't also teachers) careers advisers or guidance counsellors (three). One graduate commented:

> We had a really useless student counsellor … really negative towards the whole bunch of us in our year. Some did really well, some not so good, but they put some students down. It got so bad that, in the end, some of the whanau intervened.

Another commented:

> Our guidance counsellor was more sympathetic rather than being supportive. She didn't really do anything for us.

Six of the graduates either drew their support from other teachers in the school, or had teachers cajoling them through school and in searching for further education opportunities. Interestingly, these graduates did not rely solely on the Maori staff members as their support mechanisms:

> I got interested in doing science because of my teacher at school. He made it sound really choice, and he sort of got me thinking that I might be able to do it too.

One graduate recounted the ineffectiveness of the Maori teacher in providing advice or support in the academic activities of Maori students. This graduate stated that:

> It was because of his inefficiencies that really made me want to be a Maori teacher. I thought that I could do a lot better than what he was doing for us. I wanted to go into mainstream (teaching) because I really felt for our Maori kids who are in mainstream.

This statement highlights the strength of the graduate whilst still at high school, and an ability to turn what could be viewed as an adverse situation into a positive, if not determined and focused, attempt at making positive change for other Maori students in the future.

The graduates referred to a diverse group of teachers who supported them through their secondary school education, and who were able to offer practical support and advice to these Maori students. Many of the teachers were non-Maori because of the lack of Maori staff in the schools these graduates attended. The graduate who remarked about the ineffectiveness of the Maori teacher, found support instead from the English teacher:

> It was our English teacher who pushed us into going to university. He physically got the application forms, and helped us fill them in.

The belief of one person to instil self-worth and faith in the student's ability seems to have had a powerful impact on all of the graduates. The main point emerging was that these people were not necessarily Maori, but were sincerely attempting to support the students in making positive decisions for their futures.

University Education

The information regarding the graduates' Schools of Study, degree programmes and other academic information will be described generally for deliberate reasons. This is to ensure the privacy of the graduates who were interviewed. Due to the small

number of graduates that I did interview for this study, identification has the potential of being an issue, especially as the Tainui Maori Trust Board does not award large numbers of grants to students in the fields of Science, Computing and Mathematical Science, Management and Law despite introducing targeted scholarships to attract more tribal members into these areas.

The University of Waikato, in 1997, had eight Schools of Study: Computing and Mathematical Sciences, Education, Humanities, Law, Management Studies, Maori and Pacific Development, Science and Technology, and Social Sciences. Of these Schools of Study, two were not represented in the sample interviewed. These were the School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences and the School of Maori and Pacific Development. The lack of graduates from the School of Maori and Pacific Development was because it was only established in 1996, and its first graduates came through late in 1997. Prior to its establishment, the teaching departments under its direction were previously under the administration of the School of Humanities, with the Centre for Maori Studies and Research under the administration of the School of Social Science. In effect, then, only the School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences has not been represented in this study because there were no graduates from this School during the time period of the study.

At the time of interviewing the graduates, all had completed a Bachelors degree in their chosen field of study and two had also completed a Diploma. One of the graduates had then continued and completed a Masters degree and another three had completed a Postgraduate Diploma (all of these subsequent qualifications were obtained at the University of Waikato). Two other graduates were enrolled for their Masters degree (one at another university). One of the graduates had obtained another qualification from another tertiary institution. None of the graduates interviewed had enrolled for a Doctoral degree programme, although two were considering the idea.

At the time the interviews were conducted, two of the graduates were studying full-time and the other seven were in full-time employment.

Two of the graduates did not enter directly into their University degree programme from high school. Instead, these graduates completed a one-year pre-entry course offered for Maori, called Te Timatanga Hou. Te Timatanga Hou is a bridging course offered to Maori students whose grades are not adequate for university entry. Available only to school leavers, Te Timatanga Hou structures its programme around courses that introduce students to university expectations and standards, such as writing for university purposes, as well as covering a range of subjects that allows the students to explore possible avenues for their future study at university.

Due to the variety of programmes the graduates were enrolled in, I totalled the combined number of years spent at university (35) and then divided it between the number of graduates (nine). Therefore, using this calculation, the graduates on average spent just less than four years at university completing their degree. A breakdown of their course enrolments and the total years spent at university, not including current enrolments or the qualifications from other institutions appears in Table 5.

Table 5: Course Enrolments and Total Years of Study of Tainui Graduates from the University of Waikato, 1992 to 1997

	Te Timata-nga Hou	Diploma	Bachelor	Postgrad. Diploma	Masters	Total Number of Graduates Represented:
3 yrs			a, b, c			3
4 yrs	d	e, f	d, e, f, g	g		4
5 yrs	h		h, i	h	i	2

Thus, three of the graduates took three years to complete their Bachelors degree (the minimum time to complete), four of the graduates took four years and two spent five years completing their university studies.

Accommodation

While at university, four of the graduates went flatting, either with other family members or friends. One of these four graduates spent the first year in the student accommodation provided by the University of Waikato, before going flatting. For two of these graduates, they had no choice because their families were in a different city, and were thus unable to provide accommodation. For the other two, both had spent the first year of university at home, before making the decision to go flatting. One of these graduates was eager to leave home:

> I couldn't wait to go flatting. It wasn't like it was hard at home, I just wanted the freedom to be with my mates, to do what I wanted. Plus it was closer to varsity.

Five of the graduates chose to live at home because "it was easier":

> I had it pretty good, I was pretty lucky because I could stay at home, whereas some of my mates had no choice but to go flatting. I didn't have to worry about food, rent, power – any of that stuff – yeah, I had it pretty sweet.

Of those graduates who went flatting, two lived in homes at some point owned by family members, although they were still required to pay rent. In order to pay for the rent, the graduates either relied on part-time work and student loans, or were eligible for student allowances. Of the four who went flatting, one stated that there was no other financial support base to fall back on if finances were stretched. The other three were able to (and did from time to time) rely on their parents to help them through lean times.

Financial Experiences while at University

The time period from which the graduates were drawn becomes important here, because it took people from among those who were affected by the changes introduced in 1991, and who had to pay substantially more for their tuition fees. Prior to 1991, university fees were minimal and student allowances were available to most students to cover these fees. In effect government policy up to this time was to subsidise the costs for university study. With the introduction of higher fees in 1991 as the result of the ideological shift in government policy to a New Right philosophy that emphasised private and individual good, and the means-tested student allowances in 1992, most of the graduates struggled financially. Seven of the graduates took out student loans over the years. Despite this struggle, only one acknowledged the amount of time spent working part-time to make ends meet. Significantly, this graduate was loath to take out a student loan, and preferred to work than be faced with debt at the end of the degree programme. This graduate described a typical weekly timetable:

> I worked weekends when I could. During the week, I worked after hours, from 5 until 10pm. Study was done during the day. Basically, I went to varsity from 9 – 5pm, studying during breaks between classes. I didn't have a social life at varsity because I was always working. I could have done heaps better than I did if I didn't work but I didn't want a huge debt hanging over me when I finished.

This graduate did have to take out a student loan to pay for course materials, which cost about $1,000 per year. Compromising the quality of the education because of the financial issues involved during the 1990s has proved topical, and finances have formed a large portion of the debate over government subsidies in the higher education arena, as discussed in Chapter Two.

The other graduates took out student loans to service their university tuition (which between 1992 and 1997 had risen annually from $1,200 to over $4000 depending on the programme of study) and living expenses:

I have a student loan – I took it out to pay for things that I wanted…I paid my own fees by working through the holidays. I was lucky because I was always able to get a holiday job through my Mum's job.

In my first year, I think I got about $11 a week from my allowances. After that, I didn't qualify, so Mum and Dad helped me out when I was stuck.

I felt sorry for my mates from other areas. If I needed money I had my parents, so I was really lucky.

All of the graduates applied for a variety of scholarships in order to keep the costs of their education to a more manageable level:

One year I got a scholarship from the [Tainui Maori Trust] Board, and another through MEF [Maori Education Foundation]. I think it came to about $3000 all up that year, so that was pretty good.

Not all of the graduates sought employment during the university year. Most (six) preferred to wait until the summer vacation in order to save for the following year. Of those who did work (three), two felt that they were fortunate to secure work within the University itself:

I got a job tutoring part time, which was choice. It was pretty good money, and the work wasn't that hard.

Tribal Relationships

The graduates interviewed describe their connections and their relationships with the Kingitanga, with the Tainui Maori Trust Board and with their own marae communities. Six of the graduates whilst brought up in urban environments, described their links with their marae communities as "very strong." Also, four of the graduates lived within very close proximity of their marae and had close involvement with the marae activities, largely due to their family involvement:

We live quite close to the marae, so we usually find out what's going on, whether it's birthdays, meetings and the like.

> Our whanau have always been involved in things to do with the Kingitanga, especially Koroneihana. I've had no choice but to be involved.

Two of the graduates stated that they didn't have a very close relationship with their marae communities, and were therefore not very involved or aware of the activities that occurred at their marae:

> I go to more of the things happening at Turangawaewae, mainly because my own marae is too far away for me to get to all the time. Plus, I feel more comfortable at Turangawaewae than at my own marae.

The higher number of graduates with strong relationships with their marae, was reflected in their knowledge of the Tainui Maori Trust Board and the Kingitanga, which was described as "above average."

All but one of the graduates interviewed affiliated to marae communities that hosted poukai (tribal meetings for Kingitanga supporters).[4] Held annually, these poukai serve to reinforce the support of the marae community to the Kingitanga and to its present leader, Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu. Held over a day, the planning for these events is often begun as soon as their poukai has just finished. The graduates' involvement in the poukai ranged from being in the kitchen - washing and drying dishes, and peeling potatoes and the like to being involved in the actual organisation of the event:

> When I was younger, I used to help out getting the marae set up for the poukai. But the older I've gotten, I've tended to stay away, and not get so involved, although sometimes I get a hard time from Mum and Dad about that.

All of the graduates expressed firm commitments to the Kingitanga, although many (five) did feel that their own personal involvement (as in the activities described

---

[4] There are a total of 28 poukai held each year. Of these, four are held on marae outside of the tribal region.

above) was not particularly extensive. This involvement in its most limited sense was described as participation at tribal meetings and the annual Koroneihana celebrations:

> Our family has always been involved in Koroneihana, it's just an expectation that we go and show our support for Te Arikinui, and the Kingitanga.

> The middle weeks of May have always been marked off for Koroneihana. Even now I am working, I still take time off to go and *tautoko* (support) the *kaupapa* (event). It would seem wrong not to.

> I usually go along to Koroneihana just to check out what's on, like the sports and kapa haka events.

> I haven't been back to Coronation since the scholarship presentations. I should, but I haven't really been able to.

The graduates support the Kingitanga movement and its activities and are committed to ensuring the future preservation of the movement. The graduates agreed that the identity of the Kingitanga movement was unique and as such, it made their own identities that much stronger and, for some, more special to their own personal development:

> I have been brought up in the Kingitanga. Ever since I can remember, it has always been about our duty to serve the Kingitanga, and to look after it.

> Our whanau are staunch supporters of the Kingitanga. We do our bit when and where we can. Without Kingitanga I don't know what sort of identity we would have as a tribe.

> We have to look after the Kingitanga, because we are the guardians of it – it's our job. If we don't do a good job, then the other tribes could come and take it from us.

> When I was at varsity, there weren't many others from Tainui. But that wasn't a problem for me. I didn't need to go to varsity to find my Tainuitanga.

In relation to their marae affiliation and connection, all but one of the graduates felt that their marae connections were quite strong, although the depth of the association was variable from graduate to graduate. For five of the graduates, this connection was through family association to one particular marae, although most of the graduates (six) had active affiliations to other Tainui marae. This affiliation was location based, where the graduate grew up in the vicinity of one marae, thus participating in its activities, while still maintaining a strong link with their other marae, and participated in their activities when they could:

> I affiliate to a number of marae in Tainui, but really am only involved on a regular basis with two of them. I don't usually go to meetings at the marae, but I have been to the big hui-a-iwi, like the Raupatu ones, and the consultation ones.

Tribal Identification

One of the questions that was not included in the original interview schedule, but was added in as a result of the pilot interviews, was that of tribal affiliation. Due to the strong association with marae and Tainui affiliation, I was interested to see the graduates' association with other iwi. Of the nine graduates interviewed, five indicated their affiliation to other tribes. Of these five, only two felt that their identification to this other tribe was as strong as that of their identification to Tainui. The other three stated that their identification was through one parent coming from another tribe, but that association did not have a major impact in their family lives. Of these three, only one was able to identify their other tribal marae, while the other two were unsure about their other tribal links:

> I know my other tribes and identify with them just as strong as I do my Tainui connection. When I was little I had a stronger connection with one of my other tribes because we were living in that area. My parents have also moved to where my mother is from, so I guess my links with my other tribes are pretty good.

> My father is from another tribe, and my mother also affiliates to another tribe besides Tainui. We have always been aware of my dad's tribal links,

because my grandmother and other whanau still live there. On my mum's side, it's not really as strong, just the Tainui side.

I know that we affiliate to another tribe through my mum. I don't acknowledge that side unless I'm asked about it, like now, mainly because we've been brought up here.

According to Smith (1995), Maori are not homogenous, and as such often affiliate to numbers of tribes, rather than just one. The ability to affiliate to numbers of tribes reflects the fluidity of Maori kinship ties and is in contrast to the more restrictive legislative definitions of tribal membership evident particularly in First Nations people's experiences (Webster 1996). However, as discussed further in the following chapters, definitions of tribal membership, particularly for Tainui post-1995, have been redefined and appeared to become more restrictive as a result.

Views on Success

The graduates had mixed opinions as to what they thought success meant. However, five of the graduates were in agreement that they did not view themselves necessarily as successful, although they did acknowledge that other people might have that impression of them:

In my eyes I think I am successful, because I am happy with my life. It has nothing to do with me going to varsity.

These graduates felt that their achievements were not remarkable. Rather, they saw themselves as ordinary students who happened to move through the university system, coming out the other side with a degree:

My mum always used to say to me, look how much money this tribe is investing in you. I don't think failing was an option.

My parents were stoked, especially my dad, I think he was really proud that I finished my degree. I suppose if that means I'm successful, then yeah, I guess I am.

> I don't think it's for me to say whether I'm successful or not. Some of my whanau would probably shoot me down for getting too big for my boots if I said something like that!

The other four felt that if the definition of success was getting a degree, then they were successful.

Some of the comments relating to the graduates' perceptions of success included comments that success came from a sense of personal satisfaction, which was a combination of personal responsibility and how badly they wanted to get their degree:

> Maoris are often the ones that are seen as the no hopers. I remember at school it was like that. In a way, I wanted to finish so I could prove them wrong.

However, one of the graduates felt that they had worked hard and sacrificed a lot to achieve their degree. This graduate also acknowledged their achievement in the following way:

> Yes, I believe I am successful because I passed and I got through. I found it okay. When I think of all the others at school who could have done just as well as me, but they weren't encouraged. Basically they were told not to bother.

This, I think, is a telling point. How many Maori are not entering the university system purely because they have already been knocked back in secondary school?

The attitudes towards success from the graduates relate to seeing themselves as role models, if that would help other young Maori students achieve their own educational goals. While reluctant to class themselves as role models, when it came to the point of helping other students, only one of the graduates hesitated in using the "role model" tag. More importantly to the graduates was this positive impact on other people, as shown in this statement:

> When I was going through varsity, people used to ask – what do you do?
> When I told them I was at varsity, they used to hassle me. Now, heaps of
> kids from home are at varsity – its like every second person is at varsity.
> Everyone is expected to go. I think that's choice.

Another graduate:

> A lot of my cousins and aunties and uncles used to think I was really
> brainy for going to varsity. Now some of them have enrolled for study,
> doing papers. It has really opened up their horizons, knowing that they can
> do it too. They have heaps more confidence in themselves, a belief in
> themselves that they can do it too.

Comment

In Chapter Two, I mentioned the lack of empirical data available about Maori
academic success, particularly from a Maori position. However, it was acknowledged
in Chapter Two of the value placed by Maori cultural notions, values and
identification. Durie's (2001:4) framework suggested that two key goals - the need
for Maori to "actively participate as citizens of the world" while also "enabling Maori
to live as Maori" – were fundamental to Maori educational advancement. It would
appear that the opinions of the graduates reflect such goals.

Responses on the Tainui Maori Trust Board

The graduates were also asked about the Tainui Maori Trust Board. The questions
were grouped into categories; the first category covering the scholarship application
process and knowledge of the history of the scholarships. The second category
queried the graduates' knowledge on the Tainui Education Strategy, which is often
referred to as the founding document for Tainui on education. The final category
referred to the graduates' opinions on the Tainui Maori Trust Board, particularly
whether the Board was deemed supportive or not during their time at University.
Equally, it was important that the extent to which contact between the Board and the

graduates has or had not been maintained was examined. The graduates were asked to assess the effectiveness of the scholarships in recruiting and retaining Tainui students through to graduation.

The main aim of this section was to gauge the graduates' responses in regard to their experiences of the Tainui Maori Trust Board scholarship process. I was also interested in their assessment of the effectiveness of the Board's scholarship process, as well as the overall effectiveness of a tribal strategy to educate its members.

The Scholarships

All the graduates interviewed received a Tumate Mahuta Memorial Scholarship (the amounts varied between $400 to $1000) from the Tainui Maori Trust Board. One graduate received a Tainui Education Grant ($500), one received the Tumate Mahuta Memorial Waikato Raupatu Postgraduate Scholarship ($10,000) and one other received the University of Waikato-administered Waikato Raupatu Graduate Scholarship ($10,000). The average length of time that the graduates received their grant was for three years.

The Application Process

Those graduates who went through the application process in the early 1990s indicated that the application forms were relatively uncomplicated. The applications consisted of an outline of past academic achievements, exam results, allowed for the inclusion of other relevant certificates or awards, and required completion of an essay question and a whakapapa form linking the student to the tribe.

Of all the parts to the process in the early 1990s, the graduates felt that the whakapapa process was the easiest to fulfil. Some of the graduates knew of other students who received funding from the Board when their whakapapa links were perhaps tenuous at best. While not denying anybody the opportunity to apply for funding if they could verify their tribal identification, some of the graduates thought it was a potential

problem on campus, especially given that others viewed the scholarship as 'easy money:'

> I knew of a couple of people who applied for a scholarship and got it. I was surprised because they had never acknowledged themselves as Tainui before. I thought it was a bit rich of them, because they used to slag us off about being Tainui, especially when everything was focused on the Raupatu and that.

When the Board changed the education scholarship process in 1995, only three of the graduates interviewed were affected. In short, the Board introduced the Tainui Education Grant, which was designed for those students who were studying at any NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority) -recognised tertiary institution (including Polytechnics, Whare Wananga and Colleges of Education, as well as University). The Tumate Mahuta Memorial Scholarship remained, but the eligibility criteria changed. In effect, this change meant that this scholarship was available for those students studying only at universities or Colleges of Education, and restricted to those students who were studying for their Masters, Postgraduate Diplomas or higher. This also meant that students applying for this scholarship received larger grants than those who received a Tainui Education Grant.

After 1995, these graduates experienced a significant change in the application process for the scholarships. Criteria were more explicit, as were the administrative processes, such as closing dates, requirement of correct information and accompanying documentation. Most noticeable was the introduction of the letters of consent into the application forms. This came about as a result of the passing of the Privacy Act in 1993 and the recognition from the Scholarship Committee that a more cohesive approach to the collation of examination results from the tertiary institutions was required. However, one graduate's response to these changes was:

> It (the scholarship) was simple as when I got it. Now I think there's so much extra stuff you have to do, it's putting people off applying.

<u>Reactions to the Application Process</u>

The reaction of the graduates to the collection of personal information was minimal, a necessary function required in fulfilling the application criteria. I remember helping with the administration of the scholarship application process at the time and recall the protests by some students at what they perceived as being an invasion of their privacy.[5] The graduates that I interviewed, however, did not seem to view this as an issue:

> I applied for other scholarships as well and the criteria was pretty much the same, they sort of wanted the same sorts of information, so it wasn't really any different with this one.

Another area where the application process became more refined was from 1995 in the identification of tribal members through whakapapa (or the tribal registration process – commonly referred to as the Benroll, a shortened version of Beneficiary Roll). The graduates, in their responses to the application process, felt that the verification of whakapapa prior to 1995 was too easy. For example, three of the graduates knew people who had tenuous links at best to Waikato and yet they were still receiving scholarships. Others recalled fellow recipients who used to laugh at the ease in obtaining a scholarship from the Board. Most (six) stated that they felt the identification and verification of whakapapa was a major factor in allowing so many people who weren't 'Waikato' to come through and receive a scholarship. In contrast, all of the graduates felt that the scholarship itself was a privilege and an honour to receive. One graduate stated:

> I thought it was a real privilege for me to get a scholarship. Prior to my receiving one, I wasn't sure if I would be accepted because I didn't apply in previous years…I didn't apply before because I didn't think I should have. I thought it should be there for other people who really needed the money. When I applied, I really needed the money.

---

[5] In 1995, I assisted with the processing of the scholarships and gained first hand experience of student reaction to the whole application process.

Only two of the graduates felt they deserved the scholarship as of right:

> I think anyone who has a link to the tribe should be able to apply for one. It's our birthright.

One aspect of concern to two of the graduates was the exclusion of several marae, who did not support the 1995 signing of the Raupatu settlement. These marae (three in number) were excluded from the marae dividends that were distributed annually to those who supported the settlement. Tribal members of those marae were still entitled to receive individual benefits, however, either through education or through sport and cultural grants. One of the graduates was a member of one of the excluded marae, while the other was a member of a hapu which fought hard for the settlement to be returned to the few hapu that were most affected by the land losses. While these graduates experienced nothing adverse, their concern was the impact it might have on other potential students from these marae and hapu, if they assumed that they were ineligible:

> I was okay, because I spent a lot of time at Turangawaewae anyway – I felt more at home at Turangawaewae than my own marae. But it'd be interesting to know whether any of the ones from my marae have been put off applying because of our marae being non-signatory. If so, that would be a shame.

One area that all the graduates were in agreement with was the essay question. The essay component of the scholarship application process was designed to test applicants' knowledge and understanding (or lack of it) of the tribe. It was also a process by which students were required to make an attempt to find out about topics relevant to the tribe. Over the years, the questions themselves have changed, although it could be stated safely that the questions were based broadly on the themes of the Kingitanga and of the history of the Raupatu. In more recent years, a marae question has also been inserted, and the questions themselves have been revamped. A

requirement to have the essay question typed, however, was seen as petty and could disadvantage those students who were not able to access typewriters and computers.[6]

The opinions of the graduates in relation to the essay question were evenly split as to whether it should be kept in the application form. Those who thought it a good idea to keep an essay component felt that it helped to keep everyone "up to play" with what was happening in the tribe; being aware of the tribal history and roots; and helping to link the students back with their marae:

> It's not that hard writing an essay, I mean you have to write essays at varsity anyway. I think the essay topics have improved over the years, so that you actually have to do some work rather than just copy information out of a book.

Those who disagreed felt that the essay question was too specific, and queried whether the people reading and passing judgment on them were qualified to do so:

> I didn't mind writing generally about the Kingitanga and that, but I think having the marae committees vet the essays is a bit too much. I mean, what's the purpose of the scholarship – to test what they know about their marae, or to help them get through varsity?

This type of comment raises two issues. Firstly, the graduate's querying of the 'validity' or 'legitimacy' of those who read the essays (particularly those from marae communities who may not be western educated) highlights perhaps a lack of understanding or - of more concern to the tribal/marae communities - an ignorance or arrogance of what constitutes knowledge. This point then raises issues about whether an investment in higher education is creating an educated elite that has little connection to the communities themselves. Secondly, it also examines the extent to which the graduates have understood the role marae were envisaged to play in future tribal development, as well as highlighting for the Board and the marae communities a lack of accountability and feeling of obligation some scholarship recipients may

---

[6] This requirement was introduced as a result in the increasing numbers of essays being illegible.

have in contributing to tribal/marae development. These are issues that are as yet unresolved.

One other aspect of the application process, which affected only those graduates who received scholarships from 1995, was the inclusion of the letter of consent in the application forms. While I stated at the beginning of this section that most graduates felt comfortable with the collection of personal information, one did not understand the need to include the letter of consent in the form. Although familiar with the reason for why the letter of consent was included, the main point raised by the graduate was that if the letter of consent was not signed, then they would not be eligible to receive a scholarship. This graduate felt that the Board was being unnecessarily "heavy-handed" by adopting this approach and thought there should be a better way of obtaining the information required:

> The way I feel is that it's like either you do this to get a scholarship or, if you don't, then no scholarship. It's almost as if the Board's putting in all these new things which is actually making it harder to apply for a grant.

Comments on Being Awarded the Scholarship

In contrast to the comment above, which questions the Board's approach, but which also highlights perhaps a lack of accountability and sensitivity by the graduate to tribal development, most of the graduates felt privileged to receive a scholarship from the Board. Furthermore, most of the graduates felt that the ceremony of awarding the scholarships at the annual coronation celebrations of Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu was a great honour. For some, having the scholarships presented before the people was a good opportunity to show face to the tribe, as well as to honour the crowning of Te Arikinui:

> It was really good, a good way for all your kaumatua to get to see your face. They may not know you but they may know your family. All students should see it as a privilege. It is such a big event.

Another graduate felt that the whole issue of kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) was very important due to the large amount of money being distributed by the Board:

> I'm pretty much a local, so it was hard case when the nannies and koros on the pae used to comment when we got our scholarships. I got a buzz. I think even more so for those who aren't able to get back to the marae so much, it would be a good idea, because when the old people hear your name and where you're from, it's like they can connect you, and I think as a rangatahi that's a really positive thing.

The other graduates agreed in the need to continue this tradition, to "show the strength and mana of the tribe" as well as getting people involved, at least once a year, in a tribal forum:

> I think it's a good idea, just so that the tribe can show something positive, especially to the knockers.

One graduate commented on the difference between receiving a scholarship at Turangawaewae Marae and at another venue where scholarships were awarded one year. This graduate expressed a sense of embarrassment at knowing "just about everybody" at this other venue, and preferred to be at Turangwaewae where other people were able to see their achievement and the intent of the Tainui Maori Trust Board in pursuing education as the way forward for the tribe:

> I was really shamed when I got my scholarship at my marae, sort of getting comments and people making fun of me. I liked it better at Turangawaewae, it wasn't so personal.

This graduate's comments, however, could be countered with the thought that by knowing 'just about everybody,' this graduate may have unwittingly been a source of pride to the community and an inspiration or role model for others to pursue higher education.

One potential problem in being awarded a scholarship by the Board and receiving it at the annual coronation celebrations of Te Arikinui in May of each year is that the tertiary year is one quarter completed. Concern has been expressed from time to time as to whether the timing for receiving the scholarships was disadvantageous to the students for payment of fees. However, the graduates felt that this was a non-issue, stating quite unanimously that students always need money and other sources of funding are available for the payment of fees:

> It's a hard one, because basically, as a student – you always need money! So maybe having the presentations in May isn't such a bad thing, although I know a lot of people used to just spend it on partying and that.

In saying that though, the graduates were divided when asked to comment on whether the scholarships should be used primarily for the payment of fees. Some (four) felt, quite strongly, that the Board should not dictate as to what the money could be spent on, others (three) thought the payment of the scholarship being credited directly to fees was a good idea; while the other two did not have an opinion on the issue:

> The criteria for the scholarships is bad enough, let alone them dictating what you can and can't spend the money on. Especially with Student Loans now, I think most people use their Loans for their fees and use the scholarship money for bills and other stuff like that. Well, that's what I did anyway.

Support from the Board

Within the interview schedule, I included a question about the level of support from the Board. In particular, I asked whether the graduates felt that, aside from the scholarships themselves, the Board had provided support during their time at university:

> I never got any type of academic support from the Board, just the scholarship.

> No, there was no other support after we got the scholarships.

I got one of the Raupatu scholarships and we had to present a seminar about our work. Aside from the seminars, we were given space up at varsity, although a lot of the students didn't use it because it was located in A Block (the Maori block). We also got computer support - does that count? - and we also had our coordinator. She advised us about things to do with our courses, and set up a couple of courses for us – like how to do a research proposal, and how to go about doing research – stuff like that. It was really useful. But I know it was only because we got the big scholarships. It would have been good to get that for everyone.

The graduates agreed that the Board was financially supportive because of the awarding of scholarships. From there, however, the graduates were divided in their opinion as to the level of support offered by the Board. Some (three) felt that the financial assistance offered by the Board was enough, while others (four) felt that the Board should take a more proactive role in supporting the students at tertiary institutions to safeguard the financial investment made:

I think what the Board does is pretty good. They could be more supportive other than just give money, but I don't know how in terms of academic support.

In relation to this last point, those graduates who suggested that the Board might take a more proactive role put forward ideas such as mentoring programmes, tutoring programmes as well as general career guidance. Some (five) graduates were of the opinion that the Board was giving out too much money and did not appear to be monitoring whether there was any impact on the recipients as a result of distributing the money:

They have been giving out heaps of money, especially since the Raupatu, but you don't really know how much use it's been. I mean it's good because more people are thinking about education and giving it a go, but what about those who finish? There isn't any way of knowing – or the tribe knowing. Introducing the thesis presentations was a good idea, but maybe they could look at a graduation thing for scholarship recipients – or something like that. I think that would bring more students back to Turangawaewae.

Indeed, the Board has done little to track the movements of the recipients of its scholarships, and there is no information available as to those who have graduated.

Many (five) of the graduates supported the activities of the Board and what it was trying to achieve through education:

> Mum always used to say how much money the Board was investing in education, and how lucky we were as a tribe that they were able to do that.

However, some (four) of the graduates felt that this interest was only openly expressed once a year, during the Koroneihana celebrations. One graduate recalled having a difficult time accessing information from the Board to assist in their studies. This graduate felt confused that the Board was willing to help on the one hand, financially, but was less than willing to provide additional support, in the form of access to research materials and academic planning advice on the other:

> I remember approaching the Board trying to see if I could access their archives. I was told that they weren't open to the public. I thought that was kind of strange because I didn't think that I was 'public' and I wasn't sure how else I was going to get the sort of information I needed. I felt a bit put out because here they are wanting you to research on things relevant to tribal development and that, but they didn't seem prepared to offer help in opening up the archives for us students.

Seven of the graduates commented that they had little knowledge of what the Board's strategic direction was in relation to education, nor of how they could help, as educated tribal members.

<u>Other Educational Initiatives</u>

Not many (three) of the graduates actually knew of the extent to which the Board has been involved in the provision of education – be it through financial assistance, programmes or policies. Four of the graduates had some knowledge of the history of the Scholarships themselves. In this part of the interview I asked a series of questions

relating to the different education documents, the Scholarships themselves and any other educational initiatives the graduates were aware of. The responses are rather revealing.

<u>Knowledge of the Scholarships</u>

I mentioned previously that four of the graduates had some knowledge of the history of the Scholarships. Of these graduates, two stated that they gathered this information from their families, and the other two through the Briefing Evenings held by the Board prior to the awarding of the Scholarships themselves. One of the graduates I interviewed also received the postgraduate award, the Tumate Mahuta Memorial Waikato Raupatu Postgraduate Scholarship. This graduate was familiar with why the Postgraduate Scholarship was established and its purpose and intent. Only one of the graduates, however, had what I would describe as a good understanding of the variety of scholarships offered by the Board. Not one of the graduates could list all the different names of the scholarships.

What difference does it make whether students know about what sorts of scholarships are offered by the Board? In reality, I think little difference. However, the point of including this question was more to gain an idea of the graduates' knowledge about the variety of scholarships being offered, particularly since the Raupatu was signed in 1995. As the range of new scholarships established since 1995 didn't impact on many of the graduates, it is little wonder they knew so little about them. However, one graduate did highlight the fact that there were so many changes during this period, they didn't know which scholarship to apply for and ended up applying for several so as not to miss out completely. In particular, this related to the introduction of the Tainui Education Grant and the shifting of the Tumate Mahuta Memorial Scholarship to only postgraduate study.

If the purpose of the scholarships were to encourage tribal members to enrol for higher education, it would seem that the number of changes in the scholarships would

have done little to assist this aim. More importantly, it appeared that the Board was not very effective in communicating the new scholarships and its changes to tribal membership.

The Tainui Education Strategy

The level of knowledge about the Tainui Education Strategy (TES) was interesting. While many of the graduates knew of an educational strategy produced by the Board, only two knew that the TES was actually in two parts, and only one graduate knew that a review of the strategy had been conducted. Only one graduate had actually read the strategy although the other graduates were not short of ideas for what the Board might do for education in the future:

> I would say I am fairly familiar with the Strategy, although I am not quite sure how it actually applies in a real sense. I mean, beyond words, what can actually or really be achieved?

> I only know about the Strategy because of the briefing evenings.

The fact that the graduates had limited knowledge of the Strategy would not, in my opinion, impact greatly on the Board's policy direction. However, there could be ways in which the Board could promote the objectives contained within the Strategy that may allay concerns expressed by critics of the educational approach adopted by the Board in recent years.

One other point about the lack of knowledge about the Strategy refers to tribal ownership of the document, and how it could be used as a basis for tribal development. When it was developed in the 1980s and early 1990s, it was seen as a blueprint from which the tribe could track its progress, and that of education institutions within the tribal region, in terms of education participation, advancement and achievement. One graduate queried the relevance of the Strategy to university participation:

> I know a little about the Strategy, but how does it work with getting more of our people to uni? I can't answer that question, because I don't know enough about it, but is that one of the aims?

Another graduate felt that they didn't need to know about the Strategy because of its use as a policy document for the Board:

> Unless there's something specific in there for us, I thought the Strategy was more about plotting a direction for the future – sort of like asking where we as a tribe want to be. It's more of a working document, rather than a discussion document isn't it?

However, these two responses raise the question as to how applicable should the Strategy be to tribal members? Is it just a working document, as described, or is it actually something that tribal members need to familiarise themselves with in order to understand the educational objectives and strategic direction of the Board? I would suggest that some of the aims and objectives of the Strategy need to be communicated to the tribal community, especially the milestones that have been achieved, and in relation to whether some aspects of the Strategy are still relevant.

The Endowed College

All of the graduates I interviewed were familiar with or had heard of the Endowed College concept, as defined in Chapter Five. Most of the graduates stated that they had heard about the Endowed College through the briefing evenings, through reading the tribal newsletter Te Hookioi, through reading the Annual Reports of the Board, or attending tribal forums at which the Endowed College was discussed. While familiar with the Endowed College as a concept, none of the graduates could detail what academic discipline or disciplines were going to be offered there, or indeed, the purpose or reason for building an Endowed College:

> We were told that the College was there for postgraduate study, something to do with tribal development. But they haven't said anything about how classes are going to be run, or what courses are going to be taught yet.

> I heard that the College was going to be open for everybody – like people from other tribes, Pakeha and that. I don't see how that is going to further tribal development.

Two of the graduates could not understand why the Board had decided on the Endowed College concept, being of the opinion that the Board had already spent considerable resources on tertiary education. They felt that the Board should focus towards the other areas of the educational sector to achieve a more balanced approach. These graduates were also unsure as to what added value the Endowed College might have to offer as opposed to continuing their postgraduate work at the University of Waikato, or at some other tertiary institution. The other graduates were supportive of the Endowed College – as a concept – although they wanted to know in more detail what the College had to offer them:

> It seems a bit scary that heaps of money is being spent on the College when they don't seem to know what they are going to be doing there – it sort of seems like eating the cake before its even cooked.

> I like the idea of the College, but I'm not sure it warrants spending a whole lot of money on a new building for it. I mean the seminar series is doing okay isn't it?

> I wonder who would actually stay at the College. If its postgraduate, most would already be set up. I've already got my own home, so I wouldn't move there to study, and I know heaps of others in the same boat, especially moving out to Hopuhopu – what facilities are there out there?

The main point derived from the responses to questions about the Endowed Colleges is simply as I stated earlier – that the Board has a lot of work to do to market the College as a viable proposition for postgraduate education.

Final Comments

The graduates were quite supportive of the efforts the Board has made in the area of education. In particular, the Board's attitude and approach towards education generally was singled out as being a positive factor for tribal members:

> The Board, through the scholarships is doing their darndest to get students there and keep them there. How many other tribal authorities are doing the same?

The graduates felt that the Board's emphasis on having to get an education – there was no choice – was an important step towards changing the current predicament of the tribe, and the attitudes of tribal members towards education. These graduates were firm believers that education was and is the key to a better way of life. Even without the financial support from the Board, most of the graduates stated that they still would have gone to university:

> I was always going to go to uni. I think uni made me heaps more focussed. I was a pretty good student at school.

> I think the more I went through varsity, the more I enjoyed it.

> I was more focused on the process, like actually getting through, rather than the outcome. I think the process is heaps more important than what you come out with at the end of the day.

Many of the graduates believed that the large numbers of students going through tertiary education were a direct result of the Board's emphasis on education as a whole, and in particular, in its commitment to funding assistance for tertiary education:

> I think the Board is doing heaps more now than when I was going through. I think it has really encouraged our people to stay on and develop themselves.

> There is a greater awareness now of higher education, and what that means, and how it can be achieved.

There seems to be more of a focus on education now, and the iwi and hapu and that are more focussed of where to go in education.

Summary of Board Responses

A number of points have emerged from the responses given by the graduates towards the Board's attempts to increase tribal participation in the tertiary sector. Most of the graduates felt that the application process wasn't anything more than what was required from other scholarship application forms. However, concern was expressed at what appeared to be a 'big brother' type approach in eliciting further information from the student's chosen tertiary institution in the form of the letters of consent.

It would be fair to say that all the graduates felt honoured in receiving a scholarship, and most were positive of receiving the scholarship at the annual coronation celebrations of Te Arikinui, seeing this as a privilege. Most also felt that this was a good forum for being presented to the people, especially the elders of the tribe.

Many of the graduates felt that the Board was supportive of their educational goals, although this was only expressed in the form of financial assistance. Some of the graduates felt that the Board needed to strengthen its investment in tertiary education by ensuring there were appropriate support services available at university to assist students if required.

In my opinion, very few of the graduates had a good understanding of the other educational initiatives that the Board was involved in. Only a small number of graduates knew of the Tainui Education Strategy; and even less knew of the contents or objectives the strategy espoused. Many were familiar with the Endowed College, although only a few could describe the detail to which the College had progressed to at the time of the interviews.

Overall, the graduates had a generally positive attitude towards the Board and were supportive of its attempts to provide assistance towards furthering the participation of its tribal members in tertiary education. Many comments and suggestions were made at ways in which the Board might improve or diversify, and these will be explored in further detail in the following chapter.

Responses on the University of Waikato

This section will describe the graduates' views on the University of Waikato. In particular, this section seeks to summarise the graduates' opinions as to why they chose Waikato; their opinions as to the responsiveness of the University of Waikato to Maori needs; their knowledge of the recruitment programmes offered by the University which target Maori students; and other aspects of the University which may or may not have impacted on the graduates' experiences whilst there.

Reasons for Choosing the University of Waikato

Of the graduates interviewed, a number of reasons were given for choosing the University for their tertiary education. Some of the reasons were practical; very few of the reasons given were based purely on academic choices.

Some (four) graduates chose the University purely for geographical purposes, in that it was the university that was in close proximity to where their families lived. Others (two) chose the University for quite the opposite, in that they were able to move away from home to pursue their tertiary education. Three of the graduates had no choice but to move away from home, because the University of Waikato was their institution of choice and their families lived in other cities.

Other reasons offered by the graduates supported my feeling that the large population of Maori students was more attractive to new students. Seven of the graduates stated that, aside from the geographical location, they felt comfortable in attending the

University because there were more Maori students, more Maori lecturers and more Maori staff in general. When pushed as to how they came to find out this information, they stated from other friends and family members and from what they had heard "on the grapevine:"

> I was lucky to be able to live close to varsity. I didn't have the hassles of trying to find accommodation like some of my mates. But they said they came here because there were heaps of Maoris, and they were right. There were heaps of us Maoris, so you didn't really feel out of place.

One reason that was not proffered readily by the graduates in choosing the University of Waikato for tertiary study were the courses offered by the University. In fact, many of the graduates were unfamiliar (until after some prodding on my part) with the positive recruitment programmes offered for Maori. This point will be discussed further in another part of this section.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect that can be taken from this brief discussion on the reasons for choosing the University of Waikato is the fact that the reasons given have been quite perfunctory. Of more concern perhaps has been the obvious lack of analysis within these responses by the graduates in relation to the academic programmes, types of degree programmes, and the courses and subjects offered, in order to fulfil the degree obligations of their chosen courses of study. This was across all academic disciplines and all Schools of Study. While explanations towards this may include responses such as a possible dismissive approach due to "youthful exuberance" and being unsure of the university system, I was mildly surprised that the graduates, especially those who enrolled at a time when the fees rose over $2000, did not seem very concerned about their future directions. Some of the graduates had definite ideas about what they wanted to study at university (particularly those who did Education, Law and the Sciences), while others gave the impression that they "floated" through university, doing some papers at random and out of interest as opposed to a set course of study from beginning to end:

> I knew what I didn't want to study, but I wasn't really sure what that left for me to do. So I sort of floated the first year, just trying out a few courses. In hindsight, I think it was good and bad. Good, because I got to do a number of subjects I probably wouldn't have done otherwise. Bad, because I ended up having too many papers at the end of my degree.

I can empathise with these experiences (remembering my own early tertiary education doing papers I wasn't really suited to or could pursue to a higher level), although my assumption that these graduates might have planned their tertiary education in a bit more detail was completely unfounded. Perhaps what this highlights is a lack of help in planning tertiary education prior to entry.

The University of Waikato and Maori

After asking the graduates about their reasons for choosing the University of Waikato for their tertiary education, I asked them what their opinions were in regard to the University of Waikato responsiveness to Maori needs. Similar to the responses I received for the prior question, I was rather surprised at some of the replies to this question.

Some (three) of the graduates stated that they chose the University of Waikato for their tertiary study because it was "friendlier to Maori" and more sympathetic to Maori needs. Once the graduates were in the system, however, some (two) found that this was not quite the case. One graduate described their experience as thus:

> I don't think the University cares at all about us Maoris. They say they do, but I don't reckon…Some of the lecturers, they can but they won't help Maori. Only one did, …she was really good – straight up. Others weren't so supportive or willing to help. The non-Maori staff – some were okay, some were approachable, others weren't. The Maori staff weren't that great…There was a bias towards whiter looking Maori. They took it easier on the Pakehas and harder on the Maoris – I didn't think that was fair at all. Once, I complained about the marks I received, but they didn't see it like that, they thought it was fair. It put me off them.

It should be stated that this graduate was one of the few who were quite blunt in their analysis of the University staff, the different departments and perceived treatment of them as Maori students. Other graduates held less passionate views on this matter. For example, another graduate felt that the interest shown to them by their lecturers was more of a personal nature, where the lecturer genuinely expressed interest in the graduate's progress:

> I got a shock when one of the professors on my course stopped me in the hall and asked how I was doing. It gave me a buzz knowing that he was taking an interest. I didn't think he'd know me from a bar of soap.

This graduate felt that on the whole the institution was not as openly supportive to Maori as was first believed:

> I was under the impression that Maoris were like anybody else, no special treatment. It was sink or swim, which was pretty hard for a few people I knew – they didn't cope very well.

> It was really hard at first, adjusting, especially to the freedom – not having anyone check up on you and that. It took me a while to click, and the lecturers didn't care, so long as your assignments came in – I don't think they worried about how we were coping.

> The workload was a major shock and some of our lecturers were pretty useless – they wouldn't explain things very well, and I was too whakama (shy) to go and ask.

From these responses, it would seem that the University of Waikato took the laissez-faire approach described by Hurtado et al (1998) in Chapter Two. A report by the Minorities in Higher Education Committee (American Council on Education 1993:32) in the United States talks about how institutional responsiveness to minority needs must come from the "top down." If one were to transfer this approach across to the University of Waikato, is one making the assumption then that senior management are not sincere in their concerns for Maori? Certainly the experiences of the graduates, as highlighted above, seem to suggest so. However, this points more to

the institutional approach, and also questions the role of staff in supporting or guiding Maori through the higher education process. This will be examined in more detail, particularly, the role of Maori staff within academic institutions, in the next chapter.

The University and Recruitment of Maori

It was interesting to note that six of the graduates interviewed did not view the University of Waikato as being proactive in its recruitment of Maori. Of those who did think so, one came from Te Timatanga Hou programme (a proactive Maori recruitment "bridging" programme), and one other from the School of Education. Some of the comments from the graduates in relation to the proactive nature of the University paint interesting pictures as to how the University has, I believe, evolved as an institution:

> The University didn't come out to our school, and I only found out about TTH by chance. I got into varsity, but I wanted to do TTH, because I didn't think I was quite ready for the sort of work that I expected. I got into T.Coll, but I wasn't really sure that that was what I wanted to do, so that was another reason I did TTH.

In particular, a large number of the graduates were around when, particularly, the Schools of Law and Management instituted positive initiatives to encourage greater enrolment of Maori students. These initiatives included the introduction of Treaty papers in Law, the establishment of the Maori Resource Management programme in the School of Management; and the more inclusive approach for Maori in some departments within the School of Social Sciences; and the introduction of whanau and rumaki groups in the School of Education.[7]

Retention Programmes for Maori at the University

Many of the graduates had difficulty answering this question, which I suspect was due to the way I had worded it. I found that I had to explain in more detail about what

---

[7] The whanau and rumaki programme was designed by the School of Education to cater for the needs of delivering the national curriculum in Maori. Kana (1999) conducted a study on the effectiveness of this programme.

I meant, which in turn may have affected the responses. Nevertheless, most of the graduates (excluding those who were enrolled at the School of Education) were familiar with the Maori tutoring service that became operational at the University in 1991. The Maori Student Academic and Advisory Centre (MSAAC – now called Te Kaunuku Awhina) provides peer tutoring as well as collecting statistical information on Maori students, building profiles as to the status of Maori students on campus.

Five of the graduates were familiar with the Centre, although none had actually used its services. Two of the graduates were employed at one stage as peer tutors, an experience they described as insightful and enjoyable. Some (three) of the graduates couldn't give reasons as to why they didn't use the services of the Centre, although it was suspected that they just couldn't be bothered. A number of the graduates felt that they preferred the less formal peer tutoring groups that they organised themselves:

> We had a whanau group, so we used to work on our assignments together. We used to cover for one another, because we all wanted everyone to pass.

> We had heaps of readings to do for our course, so we used to give out the readings, so everyone had a different reading. Everyone was supposed to go and do the reading and come back and share it with the rest of the group. In that way, we could cut down on the time we spent doing the readings, analysing them and that, and keep up with the workload…There were some in our group who didn't come very often, some tried to come without doing the work – just sponging off everyone else – but we usually wouldn't give them anything.

This rather harsh response gives a good view of the realities of university life. In my opinion, this example characterises the generally helpful nature of most of the students and their inventive ways to help each other keep up with the coursework. Underlining this, however, was the expectation that in order to participate you still had to contribute your own piece of work. In short, nothing was for free. However, another aspect of this example is the resourcefulness of students to cope with the pressures of university. This graduate also felt that by helping each other, they pushed each other through the low points, ensuring that they all graduated together.

In keeping with the MSAAC, one other graduate commented that they thought the MSAAC was only available for those Maori students taking courses in the Maori department. This was due to the placement of MSAAC in the grounds of the department. Another graduate felt that there needed to be a MSAAC, or more Maori tutors available in all the different Schools across campus. This graduate thought that there weren't enough tutors at the MSAAC who could specialise in the different fields within each School, where answers could be provided and not just advice on procedural issues. In other words, this graduate did not want to learn about how to write essays, how to handle university pressures and so forth. This graduate wanted substantive assistance that they believed the MSAAC was not able to provide.

Some of the departments throughout the University offered tutoring, or set up tutoring programmes specifically for Maori students. Of those graduates whose departments provided this support, most used the services offered. The reasons given for using these services, however, arose from staff who were involved in establishing the programmes rather than the actual programmes themselves. For instance, one graduate felt that they gained a lot out of the changes that a particular staff member in their department had instigated, mainly because they felt that the staff member was genuinely concerned about their welfare and progress. It should also be stated that not all these staff members were Maori themselves. In fact, some graduates stated that they received guidance, tuition advice and support from a diverse range of people who held different positions of academic authority within the University.

Other Aspects of University Support/Responsiveness to Maori

There are two other areas within the University of Waikato structure on which I would like to comment: the Waikato Student Union and Komiti Awhina (Maori Students Association).

According to the graduates I interviewed, very few were familiar or had involvement with the Waikato Student Union (WSU). In four of the graduates' recollections, their

involvement would have extended to the social events organised by the WSU, such as Orientation Week and other socials throughout the year or through reading the University magazine, Nexus. From the interviews, I gained the impression that many of the graduates felt that the world of university student politics was more the domain of their non-Maori counterparts and beyond that, many were not interested in delving into the other activities WSU may have offered.

The graduates' opinions on Komiti Awhina were very different however. Most (six) of the graduates knew what Komiti Awhina was and the sorts of functions and activities it offered. While most were familiar with Komiti Awhina, four of the graduates chose not to involve themselves in the activities offered by them, for a number of reasons. It would be easier to categorise these reasons into "positive" and "negative" camps. Firstly, those whose reasons fell into the positive camp referred to the lack of time that they felt they had in their own schedule to commit to any of the activities offered by Komiti Awhina. Secondly, some of these graduates felt that they were too far away, or too isolated within their Schools of Study and thus didn't hear or weren't informed about the activities arranged by Komiti Awhina. Isolation, lack of time and also lack of interest were the main reasons proffered by the graduates for their lack of participation in the affairs of Komiti Awhina.

For those graduates who fell within the 'negative' camp of responses towards Komiti Awhina, specific reasons were given outlining why. Most of these reasons related to bad or negative experiences suffered by the graduates in relation to Komiti Awhina. For example, one graduate recalled an experience when funding was sought to assist with a hui that they were organising. The experience recounted by this graduate referred specifically to the School in which they were enrolled, and they were told by Komiti Awhina to get the funding from their School rather than approach them. While this could be seen as perhaps a trivial matter, the graduate stated that it was, until their committee organising the hui found out that Komiti Awhina had given quite a substantial amount of money to one individual for what appeared to be of less

benefit to Maori students in general (the person awarded the money was, according to the graduate, well known to Komiti Awhina). In the opinion of the graduate, it appeared that a definite bias by Komiti Awhina was displayed and from then, the graduate didn't bother with Komiti Awhina:

> I was really disgusted with what happened. It may me really mad, because I thought that was what they were there for. But obviously it was who you knew, so I couldn't be bothered with them after that.

These experiences, both positive and negative, impacted on the activities of Komiti Awhina, especially when assessing its effectiveness and ability to reach the students it represented. This was especially important given that Komiti Awhina was funded by the union fees for Maori students who attended the University – in effect, Maori students did not have a say as to whether they could have been represented by the WSU (and thus have their union fees directed to WSU) or by the Komiti Awhina. The point being was that the option of choice (and perhaps effective representation) appeared to be missing.

Final Comments

There were many other comments made by the graduates in relation to their experiences whilst at the University of Waikato. A lot of these comments related to wishing they had known about options and choices for degree programmes, wishing they had more guidance when choosing their options and so forth. Some of these comments are worth exploring further, and some I have chosen to form some recommendations that I believe may assist the University of Waikato in its future planning where Maori are concerned.

Overall, the graduates stated that their experiences at University were exactly that – experiences. Most thought that the mistakes they made helped them to grow and to learn, as well as learning not to make them again! While some felt that they could have done with less stress, most of the graduates were in agreement that the

university experience is unique and one has to endure both the positive and negative aspects associated with university life.

Summary of University Responses

A number of areas were covered in the interviews that recounted the graduates' experiences whilst at the University of Waikato. These included the graduates' opinions and knowledge of why they chose to attend the University of Waikato, how responsive they thought the University was to Maori, their knowledge of the recruitment and retention programmes offered by the University and other aspects, which included the Waikato Student Union and Komiti Awhina. From this section, I think it becomes clear that some graduates appeared content to have a low-key, low-level of involvement of university life, while others were much more involved. For those whose involvement was much more than reading the University magazine, I have found their experiences offer insight into what the University is like as an institution which claims to be responsive to the needs of Maori. It appears clear from some of the responses given by the graduates that the University of Waikato still has a lot of work to do in meeting the aspirations of Maori students. The following chapters will explore how the University might go about meeting such aspirations.

Chapter Summary

This chapter sought to examine the responses of the interviews from those graduates of the University of Waikato between 1992 and 1997 who had also received funding from the Tainui Maori Trust Board. The chapter outlined the approach adopted for the selection of the participants in the study, as well as how the interviews were conducted. A profile of the graduates was provided, giving an insight into the graduates' family background and prior educational experiences. The graduates' responses to the questions posed in the interviews, summarised in this chapter, highlighted their diverse range of experiences whilst attending the University of

Waikato. The lack of knowledge about the University and its responsiveness to Maori is a particularly revealing finding, which will be examined further in the following chapter. Similarly, the graduates' concern about aspects of the Tainui Maori Trust Board scholarship process questions its effectiveness and asks the question as to whether the educational objectives, as highlighted in the Tainui Education Strategy, are relevant. Again, this will be examined in the next chapter.

What can be drawn from the responses given within this chapter are a number of complex issues, related to knowledge of programmes, institutional responsiveness to Maori needs and aspirations. Furthermore, these responses query whether either institution has examined their respective policies and initiatives in relation to Maori education and participation since their inception, and whether there are any opportunities to monitor, evaluate and refine such policies and initiatives. In effect, this chapter has questioned to what extent has either the University of Waikato or the Tainui Maori Trust Board enhanced the participation and graduation of Maori students. Some of the key areas identified in this chapter will be critically evaluated in the following chapter. Essentially, it is posited that both the University of Waikato and the Tainui Maori Trust Board have much work to do to ensure that Maori students continue to participate in and graduate from university.