

MOKO

Moana Maniapoto and Kelli Te Maihāroa

Tēnei mātou te hunga moko e tu nei i roto i tēnei ao hurihuri ao tangata



I wear my pride upon my skin

My pride has always been within

I wear my strength upon my face

Comes from another time and place

Bet you didn't know that every line has a message for me

Did you know that



The word tattoo describes the marking of my patterns

Inserting coloured dyes under a smooth skin

The word moko represents a traditional custom in which

Spirals unique to Māori are carved deeply below the skin

Surface to produce a groove scar – did you know that



Because the head is the most sacred part of the body was touched
Blood spilt the whole ceremony was tapu
The tip of a birdbone chisel dipped into sooty black pigment
Tapped by a beater to the sound of songs created to soothe
The painful process of creating moko so don't use that word tattoo
Every spiral has a name every line on the face don't use that word tattoo



The classic Māori moko has the male bearing complex spirals on
Both cheeks, both sides of the nose
Lines spread between the eyes to the temple, the nose to the chin
Over nineteen names have been identified for different parts of the pattern
Women received kauae or chin moko
Some copied their mothers or grandmothers
Others allowed the artist to express their creativity
The moko indicated genealogy, rank, accomplishment
It represented masculinity, beauty, warriorhood, identity
So don't use that word tattoo



The moko reflected the carvings and rafter patters inside the whare tūpuna

But some were made so distinctively they were like an autography

A beautiful signature written all over the face

In 1815 Te Pēhi Kūpe drew his own moko without the aid of a mirror

Every line firmly in his mind and then he drew the moko of his brother and son

Did you know that



The moko reflected the Māori way of life

Everything was connected, religion, war, lovemaking and death

For this generation, the kauae and moko were only seen in paintings

But now those images have come to life

Netana Whakaari said in 1921

You can lose your most valuable property through misfortune in various ways

You may be robbed of all your prized possessions

But of your moko you cannot be deprived

It will be your ornament and your companion

Until your last day

So don't use that word tattoo



Kōrero ki ngā tamariki tēnei kaupapa tā moko he taonga tuku iho ki ngā tīpuna

Waiaata: Moana Maniapoto

Wahine: Kelli Te Maihāroa

Tohunga Tā Moko: Rangi Kipa

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Kelli Te Maihāroa (Waitaha, Ngāti Rārua Ātiawa) PhD candidate, MA, PG Dip Children's Issues, B Ed, Dip Teaching.

Kelli is the Tumuaki: Rakahau Māori | Director: Māori Research at Otago Polytechnic.

Kelli was a co-editor with Professor John Synott and Heather Devere for *Peacebuilding and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Experiences and Strategies for the 21st Century* book. She has published on Māori education initiatives, cultural revitalisation and indigenous peace traditions. Kelli is the great granddaughter of the Māori prophet Te Maihāroa from Te Waipounamu.

