

BEYOND THE DUSKY MAIDEN:  
PASIFIKA WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES WORKING IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

Beyond the Dusky Maiden records Pasifika women's experiences of working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Using a navigational metaphor this dissertation maps the storms within higher education that are slowing down Pasifika people's journey to success. This dissertation identifies six promising practices for enabling faster change in higher education whilst also considering the hidden conversations that are necessary to identify why institutions need to change. This dissertation recognises the neo-liberal and colonial foundations of higher education and how they contribute to a white masculine imprint that enables and enforces excess labour, non-performative diversity, infantilization, hyper-surveillance, lateral violence, and sexual assault. This dissertation records Pasifika women's encounters with the white masculine imprint as they attempt to transform higher education institutions. Pasifika women share their methods for survival in higher education spaces in spite of patterns of exclusion.

To record Pasifika women's journey's this research introduces the masi methodology. The masi methodology centres Pacific/Pasifika women's voices within the research process ensuring that they are seen as the experts on their own experiences. The Pacific research method of talanoa, a narrative enquiry developed from Pacific people's oratory tradition is used to engage with twenty-seven Pasifika women about their experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## LAY SUMMARY

This dissertation examines the experience of Pasifika women working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Centering Pasifika women's voices through Pacific research methodologies and methods (masi and talanoa), this dissertation found that Pasifika women wish to use higher education institutions to move their communities towards their own goals for success. However, due to the colonial and neo-liberal foundation of higher education, Pasifika women continue to experience racism and sexism within their everyday work. Pasifika women offer ways that institutions can engage in structural change to combat their neoliberal and colonial foundations.

## PREFACE

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author.

Ethics Research Approval Certificate: H16-03155

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*Vinaka vaka levu*

## DEDICATION

*FOR ALICE*

*May you find strength in the voices of Pacific women who came before you.*

# STATUED (STAT YOU?) TRADITIONS

SELINA TUSITALA MARSH<sup>1</sup>

The 'Golden Past'  
is  
Frozen Fast  
in  
anthro-pological  
socio-logical  
ethno-graphical  
historio-graphical  
feminist-epist-o-mological  
bio-logical  
psycho-logical  
audio-logical  
edu-cational  
environ-mental  
human-biological  
pharma-co-logical  
theo-logical  
gyna-co-logical  
crimin-o-logical  
scientifically  
geothermically  
    text-booked  
    documented  
    locked-fast  
    bound-cemented  
    rock-hard

she wears lei  
    around Gaguinesque  
    blossoming breasts

---

<sup>1</sup> Published in Wasfiri

sweeping brown  
round and around  
looping above  
firm flat belly button  
peeking over  
see-thru hula skirt

*(not from her island – but what does it hurt?)*

she swings her hips  
with lips  
slightly parted  
lip-stick red  
with “come-to-bed” eyes  
highlighted by REVLON  
black sheen of hair  
sweeps the air

*(come if you dare  
to these mysterious islands”)*

frozen in glossy post-card form  
she is adorned  
with dreams  
ready for you / to  
fantasize  
romantisize  
over gorgeous big brown eyes  
gorging thighs

*(gorged out eyes from forging lies!)*

“Lovely hula hands”  
always understands  
make good island wife – for life – no strife  
(no hy-phenated name!)  
always to sing  
island lullaby song  
petals caressing wind  
all night long  
drowning in  
frangipani scent  
dreaming, seeming  
hours spent  
in islands aphrodisiac  
no lack

no loss  
in these

"Lovely hula hands"  
always understands  
make good island wife - ...

multiplying  
in silhouetted  
still-water of  
rippling  
text and  
image  
history unchallenged  
mystery 'solved.'

We have evolved  
from Noble Savagess  
to Tropical Princess  
moremore  
fantasize  
romanticize  
mesmerize  
metamorphosize your own image  
planted before we shed seeds of ourselves in the Pacific

*(and not the seed of Margaret Mead nor the semen of Derek Freeman)*

moremore  
fantasize  
romanticize  
Frankensize  
the monster of you  
into  
our flesh

stitching parts of islands together:

Solomon beads  
Hawaiian lei  
Kakala seeds  
of perfume spray from Tonga  
Fijian salusalu  
Samoan ula  
Hawaiian hula  
skirt

*(you don't wear it that way – but what does it hurt?)*

Cook Islands head dress  
and coconut breasts  
from the Marquesas  
(just to please us / and the camera)

“So colourful the way they sit together!”

stat you tradition?  
picture post-card / history diagram  
stat you tradition?  
stat me in you?

Who  
is that Pacific Princess?  
always waiting  
warm bare breasted  
anticipating  
    between ‘jungle’ leaves  
    waiting weighting  
    looking out to sea  
    fating the sight of you  
    on the site of me

aaah – moment of ‘discovery’ –

stat you tradition?

the glossed publications  
of island salutations  
‘Talofa!’ ‘Kia Ora!’  
‘Bula Vanaka!’ ‘Malo e Lelei!’  
‘Kia Ora Ana!’ ‘Aloha!’ and  
‘Have a nice day!’

forever static  
forever still  
motion-less  
meaning-less  
not my past  
not my blessed  
genealogical  
‘tis fantasy

& will freeze itself apart  
as disciplines crack under heated pressure  
of our golden rays  
tropical sun melts the haze  
breezed island days  
blow away petrified images of  
no-people  
no-where  
to-disappear

no need  
no more  
to hypothesize  
theorize  
or  
romanticize  
my tradition is here, within my eyes  
and those of my mother

For tradition  
eludes  
precludes  
concludes  
stasis

tis 'anti-stasis'  
ever-moving  
ever-grooving  
to beaten drum of lali soothing  
voices in fagogo telling  
tales of old and new

ever-revolving  
ever-solving  
mysteries of itself  
by itself

ever-growing  
ever-knowing  
of itself and other worlds  
incorporating  
investigating  
revitalizing  
unto itself  
indigenizing  
outside selves

Statued traditions  
stun still water  
swimming through  
our son and daughter  
break the surface  
breach the haze  
of cemented tradition  
of Golden Age

till

looking with new eyes  
nothing is left  
she on the post-card  
has Frozen to death.

## INTRODUCTION

Pacific peoples have long been scientists. Our<sup>2</sup> ancestors navigated the world's largest ocean intentionally and repetitively (Howe, 2006; Jolly, 2007). We read the stars, watched the birds, and listened to the ocean as we navigated to the next island and beyond to the horizon. I continue this tradition of looking to the horizon and imagining what is there and what I will need to understand and do in order to reach it. The idea of journeying to the next island and onto the horizon and beyond is part of our lived reality for Pacific peoples who work in higher education. This was evident at the last Association of Pacific Staff in Tertiary Education (APSTE) conference that I attended, when those in attendance were asked, "Can you see the island?" This is in reference to Pacific navigators and their ability to see the next island and how to get there as they stood on the shores of the current island. In higher education, Pacific peoples have used the metaphor of navigation to envision the island toward which we as Pacific peoples collectively navigate. At that particular APSTE, Pacific staff in tertiary education were asked to envision the island and what and who we would need in our drua (double hulled canoe) in order to make the journey. This research pushes this question further, asking Pasifika women in higher education what storms<sup>3</sup> currently exist and

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<sup>2</sup> As outlined later in the dissertation I am a Pasifika woman and as such will use 'we,' 'us,' and 'our' in the dissertation to indicate that I am a member of the community with whom I conducted research.

<sup>3</sup> These storms are similar to what Ahmed (2012) termed 'walls' which will be discussed later in this dissertation.

how they slow the progress of our drua (double hulled canoe), what knowledge we as Pasifika women hold that will help us to navigate these storms, and finally, how we can transform these storms so that our communities can continue on our journey to the next island and onwards. This research is purposeful about using the metaphor of journeying not only because of its connection to the Pacific but also to ensure that the metaphor used to explore Pasifika women's experiences does not fall into the common mistake of selecting metaphors that ignore female agency and power within higher education (Husu, 2001).

The journey we as Pasifika people wish to make is to an island that provides for our communities. We have recognised that higher education is a resource that will empower us on this journey: "the challenge of strengthening our academic performance and profile, progressing within the academe is driven by the desire to contribute leadership and service in the construction of metaphoric 'vaka', or the material and intellectual vessels that can carry our peoples to better, improved ways of life in homelands such as New Zealand" (Samu, 2010, p. 3). However, it is also a resource that can work against us as it contains a series of storms that must be harnessed, navigated, or avoided if we are to reach the island.

This work of navigating storms is not work that all bodies must do. As Ahmed notes, "when a whole world is organised to promote your survival, from health to education, from the walls designed to keep your residence safe, from the paths that ease your travel, you do not have to become so inventive to survive" (2014, n.p). Pasifika women need to be inventive and theorise how to survive, as the spaces we work in were not designed for us and as such they slow our journey to where we want to be. Our critical orientation to higher education institutions means that in encountering and labouring against these storms, we produce valuable knowledge on how higher education institutions and the storms within them operate (Ahmed, 2012). As hooks maintains, Pasifika's location in the margins of higher education is a powerful position, as "marginality is a central location for the production of a counter-hegemonic discourse—it is found in the words, habits and the way one lives.... It is a site one clings to even when moving to the center

... it nourishes our capacity to resist.... It is an inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonizer/colonized (1991, p. 149–50). This is reinforced by Samoan scholar Tanya Wendt-Samu who, when reflecting on Pasifika women’s experiences of restructuring in higher education, noted that Pasifika women “theorised their marginal or liminal position as an empowering space – where they could respond proactively and participate with stratagem” (2014, p. 205). Pasifika women have knowledge to map, transform, and critically engage in higher education.

This research will investigate Pasifika women’s navigation through higher education in order to theorise the possibilities and challenges/storms they embody as they take up roles within these institutions. I take up this work as a Pasifika woman who has worked in higher education in Aotearoa with the intention of speaking alongside other Pasifika women about the storms we navigate, harness, and avoid in order to progress to the island that we as a community have envisioned.

In chapter one I take account of the shores on which we currently stand. Chapter one defines Pasifika, examines Pasifika people’s relationship with higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand, and investigates possible descriptions of the island we are navigating to.

In chapter two I take account of what knowledge already exists to inform our journeying and who else we may wish to bring on our journey. Chapter two is the literature review that traces the current storms and weather systems (gender, race, ontology, neo-liberalism, colonisation) and how they impact our planned journey. Chapter two also considers ways that we can navigate these storms by transforming them or harnessing their power.

In chapters three and four I explore how what we know already will shape our mapping of the storms and how we will map out these storms. Chapter three, the methodology chapter, anchors this journey in Pasifika women’s voices, introducing the masi methodology as a way to engage in research that

centers Pasifika women's voices. Chapter four, the method chapter, examines the use of talanoa as a way to map what we know about the storms within higher education.

In chapter five we begin the process of mapping the storms from Pasifika women's perspectives. I consider what has been shared in the talanoa and also how we can understand these maps in relation to others.

In chapter six we prepare to embark on the journey to the island. I consider the maps we have drawn and what they can tell us about transforming, harnessing, or avoiding the storms as we journey to the island. Chapter six is the discussion, which considers what has been shared, what new knowledge this gives us in relation to transforming and harnessing the storms that hinder our progress to the island, and finally, if there is anything else we should investigate further as we continue our journey.

Throughout the thesis there are sections written in italics and small caps, these sections operate in two ways. The first is to speak to Pasifika readers, creating a space within the thesis to say things that are perhaps only intelligible to those of us who are already on this journey. The second is to cause those with a different ontological orientation to pause in a moment of discomfort at not understanding. This moment brings attention patterns of epistemological dominance (Kuokkanen, 2011; Ahenakew, 2016). Ahenakew (2016) also uses this method to "disrupt sense-making and prompt sense-sensing in the experience of readers" (p. 14) an important and necessary step in Indigenous research that is conducted within the academy.

Although this work is firmly anchored in the South Pacific, in practice it does cross te moana nui a kiwa (Pacific Ocean) as I write in Vancouver; on this journey I take a small detour to Hawai'i as a way to introduce how this new knowledge is formed. Hawai'ian academic Manulani Aluli Meyer (2008) introduces seven categories of consciousness through which to understand modernity. Although they all resonated,

perhaps of most importance to this research was the understanding of knowledge as “the by-product of a slow and deliberate dialogue with an idea, with others knowing, or with one’s own experience of the world” (Meyer, 2008, p. 221). This knowledge has been produced through relationship: relationship with other Pasifika women, relationship with ideas from a wide range of ancestors I have chosen<sup>4</sup> and with my own relational experiences of the world.

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<sup>4</sup> Pacific academic Teresia Teawia once outlined that academic referencing was similar to ancestral worship in the Pacific, as academic citation practices enable us to choose ancestors on which to base the way we understand and see the world.

# CHAPTER ONE: CONTEXT/STANDING ON THE SHORE

*ON WHAT SHORE DO WE STAND/HOW DID WE ARRIVE HERE/WHY DO WE WISH TO LEAVE/WHICH ISLAND DO WE SEE*

This chapter outlines the context of this research. This chapter will provide a definition of Pasifika and explain why this term is used. It will then move onto an exploration of higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand and Pasifika people's current and desired relationship with higher education.

## BECOMING PASIFIKA – PACIFIC PEOPLES IN AOTEAROA

Pacific<sup>5</sup> people had four waves of migrations to Aotearoa New Zealand beginning some twelve hundred years ago. The first wave of migration was that of settlement, when Eastern Pacific people explored and settled in Aotearoa and became tangata whenua. This first wave is important to the relationship between Māori (Tangata Whenua/Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa) and Pasifika as it cemented Pasifika as extended family to Māori and created bonds and relationships through culture and genealogy in Te Moana Nui a Kiwa (greater Oceania kinship connections) (Health Research Council, 2014). Importantly this relationship further cements Pacific peoples acknowledgement, support and respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) and recognition that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the foundation for our relationship with Tangata Whenua. These kinship ties also mean that Pacific peoples support and recognise the Tangata

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<sup>5</sup> Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, Rotuma, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Palau, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Wallis and Futuna, Hawaii, French Polynesia, Rapanui

Whenua status of New Zealand Māori and their right to exercise tino rangatiratanga (self-government). The second and third waves of migration are deeply tied to the European colonisation of the Pacific. One hundred and fifty years ago, Pacific peoples arrived in Aotearoa as trainee teachers, missionaries, sailors, and whalers in a second wave of migration<sup>6</sup>. The third wave followed seventy years later when Pacific peoples who had served the colonial government as civil servants within the Pacific ‘territories’ or in the colonial armed forces were able to move to Aotearoa (Macpherson, Spoonley and Anae, 2001). The fourth migration, which occurred fifty years ago, was perhaps the most significant and is the migration story with which most people are familiar today. For the fourth migration, Pacific people migrated for economic reasons and found work in the manufacturing and service sectors in post-war Aotearoa (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999; Macpherson, Spoonley and Anae, 2001; Macpherson, 2004; Te Punga Sommerville, 2012; Naepi, 2018). These migration stories are important as these people are the ancestors of Pasifika in Aotearoa.

I use the term Pasifika when discussing Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand as a way to differentiate between Pacific Peoples throughout the globe, and more specifically those still located within their Pacific home nations and Pacific Peoples within Aotearoa New Zealand. Pasifika is a socially constructed term (Samu, 2010) that the Tofamamao Working Party defined as “Pacific peoples in both local and global; genealogically, spiritually and culturally connected to the lands, the skies and seas of the Pacific

---

<sup>6</sup> New Zealand officially colonized Samoa from 1920–62, the Cook Islands from 1901–65, Niue from 1901–74, and Tokelau from 1926 to the present, with Niue and the Cook Islands remaining protectorates of New Zealand (Te Punga Somerville, 2012)

region” (Tafoamamaoa Working Party in Airini, Anae, Mila-Schaff, Coxon, Mara and Sanga, 2010). Suaalii-Sauni noted that Pasifika is a Polynesian transliteration and “was coined and is invoked to make a deliberate point about self-determination” (2008, p.20). It is important to recognise that the term Pasifika encompasses many different ethnicities, languages, and cultural practices and it is a term whose exact definition is still debated amongst Pasifika peoples (Coxon, Foliaki and Mara, 1994; Māhina as cited in Perrot, 2007; Māhina, 2008; Manuatu and Kepa, 2002; Samu, 2006, 2010; Suaalii-Sauni 2008). This continuous debate should not be read as problematic; instead, as Crocombe (1976), one of the first proponents of the term Pasifika, noted, Pasifika is a term that will grow in an organic environment and be open to change, modification, and amendment as a fluid concept. Therefore, it is important to outline how and why I use Pasifika as it is still a term that encourages debate.

Anae (1997) has problematized the use of Pan-Pacific terminology such as Pasifika and is supported by other critics such as Manuatu and Kepa (2002) who agree that the term Pasifika silences individual Pacific nations. The term Pasifika has also been identified as a convenient term for government and university administrators that does not reflect individual Pacific identities (Perrot, 2007). In response to the problem of the silencing of specific ethnic groups in the term Pasifika, others have argued that the term Pasifika allows for a minority group to advocate as a much larger group. Crocombe (1976) argued that Pasifika was not about homogeneity, but about bringing our people together in order to better serve our own interests in a globalized world. This can in turn be linked with Spivak’s strategic essentialism. Spivak (in Danius, Jonsson and Spivak, 1993) argues that it is sometimes politically necessary to use essentialism, urging people to remember that strategy is “usually an artifice or trick designed to outwit the enemy” (p. 3). Crocombe (1976) and Spivak (1993) offer a way to articulate how we wish to use the term Pasifika, as we can acknowledge that it is a problematic umbrella term (Anae, 1997; Manuatu & Kepa, 2002; Perrot, 2007), whilst still utilising it as a political leverage point to advocate for change. Utilising Pan-Pacific terms for

leverage can work both for and against Pan-Pacific terminologies as our decisions to leverage a communal identity can have ramifications beyond systematic change (Samu, 2011). One of the ramifications Samu (2011) notes is that the Pan-Pacific term can encourage the use of negative stereotypes such as the 'underachievement' stereotype that is portrayed in government policy and mainstream media. I therefore remain conscious of resisting this and other potentially negative impacts on our communities while strategically using the term Pasifika.

## HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Aotearoa New Zealand has eight state funded universities, 16 Institutes of technology and polytechnics and 550 private training institutions (New Zealand Education, nd). The New Zealand Ministry of Education notes that its eight universities are “well-recognised internationally, have strong international connections and collaborate with universities in other countries on a range of research and teaching programmes” (2018, p. 29). The Ministry of Education maintains its system through a series of evaluations, including its performance-based research fund<sup>7</sup> (PBRF) that “encourages and rewards research that is of the highest quality and relevance to contemporary needs” (2018, p. 29). The Ministry of Education highlights that all New Zealand universities are publicly owned (alongside receiving private donations), autonomous, offer a wider range of degrees, offer ways to move between institutions, offer a combination of large and small teaching models, and are a mix of final-year and continuing assessment models (Ministry of Education, 2018). If universities fail to meet the required standards outlined by government (such as

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<sup>7</sup> Critiques of this system will occur later in the dissertation.

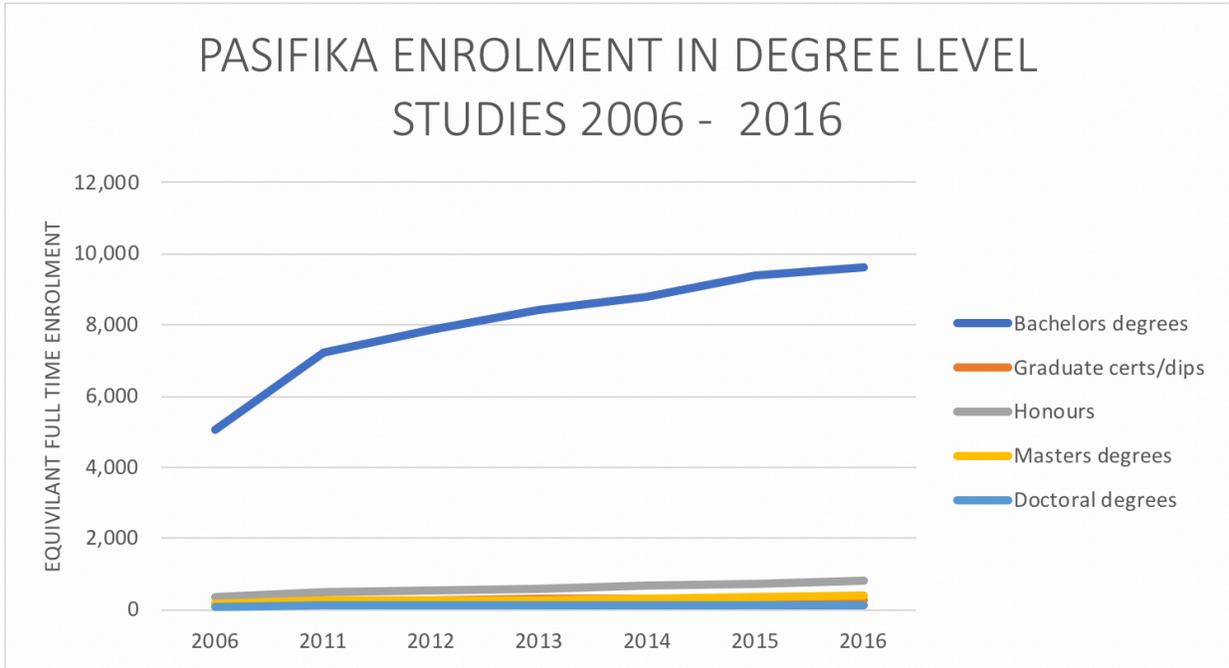
Pasifika learner achievement), their funding can be withheld which means that there are consequences for underserving Pasifika learners built into the system.

### *HIGHER EDUCATION AND PASIFIKA*

Pasifika people have a complex relationship with higher education systems in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is one where they have traditionally been excluded and are now underserved, but also one where Pasifika peoples wish to be included and successful within the system. Education systems in Aotearoa New Zealand have consistently and historically under-served Pasifika peoples (Boon et al. 2017; Chu et al., 2013; Curtis et al. 2015; Finau, 2008; Hunter et al. 2016; Kepa, 2011; Leaupepe, & Sauni, 2014; Mayeda et al., 2014; McDonald & Lipine, 2012; Porter-Samuels, 2013; Reynolds, 2016; Samu, 2006; Teevale & Teu, 2018; Theodore et al. 2018). The latest (although now out of date) Pasifika education plan outlines the Ministry of Education’s vision to see “five out of five Pasifika learners participating, engaging and achieving in education, secure in their identities, languages and cultures and contributing fully to Aotearoa New Zealand’s social, cultural and economic wellbeing” (2013, p. 3). This vision is outlined from early education through to tertiary education. In order to achieve this vision, the Ministry of Education has outlined that further research is needed to advance Pasifika success and as such has outlined actions that need to be taken within the New Zealand research space, including prioritising Pacific education research and reserving resources to advance this prioritised research.

The table below is adapted from Education Counts (2017) summary of Pasifika enrollment in degree-level study in Aotearoa New Zealand. It shows that over time there has been a significant improvement in Pasifika enrolments in higher education, however, the progression from bachelor’s to graduate studies still has a significant drop-off.

**Figure 1: 2006 - 2016 Pasifika Enrolment in Degree Level Studies**



These numbers matter. They matter because they give us an indication of Pasifika people’s current and future earning capacity. Currently the gap between Pasifika and everyone else is staggering. Pasifika have a median net worth of \$12,000, whereas New Zealand has a median net worth of \$87,000 (Pasifika Proud, 2017). In terms of home ownership, 18% of Pasifika own their own home, whereas 50% of New Zealanders own their own home, and Pasifika home ownership rates are dropping faster than the rest of New Zealand (Pasifika Proud, 2017). Additionally, Pasifika are twice as likely to be unemployed (Pasifika Proud, 2017). Education pathways have been noted as one way of reversing these current trends and Pasifika people see higher education as a way to contribute to their wider community wellbeing, as it increases individual income potential, which in turn increases community income (Samu et al., 2008; Samu, 2010). This connection between higher education and economic outcomes is important as “improving the incomes, education, employment and housing of Pacific peoples is critical to improving their health outcomes” (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2014, p.24); we “know that poor health outcomes are related to social

determinants, such as income, employment, housing quality and education” (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2014, p.1).

Education Counts has done research into the importance of tertiary education in enabling people to achieve “satisfying lives and productive careers” (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2017a, p.1) and they record this data as a way to show that investment into education has positive outcomes for both the individual and the government. People who complete tertiary education continue to have a higher median income both hourly and weekly (Ministry of Education, 2017b). People with at least a bachelor’s qualification earn 55% more than those without a qualification (Ministry of Education, 2017a). The continued underserving of Pasifika people within higher education has meant that our communities are not accessing the higher wages that higher education promises. Improving higher education system service to Pasifika peoples is core to improving health, income, and housing for Pasifika communities.

I am aware of the limitations of looking at this from just an economic angle; however, given today’s scarcity of resources and the number of Pasifika children living in poverty<sup>8</sup> (Child Poverty Action Group, 2017), to not consider the impact of earning potential on Pasifika community’s wellbeing ignores the lived reality of many Pasifika people. Indigenous researchers have shown the links between poverty and health, indicating that it can never be just an economic issue and that it is all interrelated (Reading and Wien, 2009). While education has great potential to impact child poverty rates, we also need to recognise that education

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<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/16/new-zealands-most-shameful-secret-we-have-normalised-child-poverty> for media coverage

does not exist in a vacuum and these same communities are impacted by social policy, economic structures, and political playgrounds (Airini, 2015). Pasifika people have much to offer the world beyond growing the economy; our understanding of the world's largest ocean, our communal based ontologies, and our sustainable resource use, etc., offer perspectives outside of the colonial science gaze into today's biggest problems including climate change and over-consumption (Shilliam, 2016). Just as we cannot ignore today's lived reality, we cannot ignore the future we are creating. As we are reminded, "we do need to take action" (Airini, 2015, p. 12) today to address social issues such as poverty as well as global issues like climate change in order to create a future in which everyone can thrive, and Pasifika people have unique knowledge to contribute in addressing these challenges.

It is not just for our own communities that Pasifika engage with higher education, as Pasifika knowledges and people are important to developing higher education institutions themselves (Finau, 2008; Fairburn-Dunlop, 2008; Samu, 2010). I quote Samoan academic Sailau Suaalii-Sauni (2008) at length here to demonstrate how Pasifika people envision the university:

The role of the university is to give students, regardless of ethnicity, colour, gender, class or creed, the opportunity to choose and learn for themselves from the best in their chosen fields these different ways. This distinction, while pragmatic, is also ideological. It is ideological in the sense that the ideal promoted here is that the moral virtues to be passed on and critiqued are the moral virtues of a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, equitable and just society, that dreams and deems all knowledges legitimate and worthy of scholarly investigation... .. It is a higher education inspired by a desire to hold onto to the virtues of what makes us Pasifika – from the sacred to the secular. It is a higher education that celebrates without apology our Pasifika heritages. It is a higher education that is scholastically rigorous and sensitive to the human potential to subjugate 'the Other'. And, it is a higher education capable of producing

knowledge, teachers, lecturers, students and learning and teaching environment not afraid to fight with reason for where they believe Pasifika education ought to go. (p. 21-22)

It becomes necessary to outline this vision of higher education as Pasifika people do not currently experience higher education in this way. Instead, Pasifika learners experience institutional, structural, and overt racism within the academy (I Too Am Auckland, 2015; Mayeda, Keil, Dutton, & Ofamo'Oni, 2014,). These experiences contribute to the underserving of Pasifika learners and as such they need to be addressed in order for higher education institutions to fulfil their potential.

Pasifika people have an uneven relationship with higher education institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is a relationship where they traditionally have been excluded and are currently underserved, leaving them unable to access and benefit from a public education system. Pasifika people wish to engage meaningfully in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand but are currently prevented from doing so. This is the shore we stand on, and it is the shore away from which we wish to navigate.

### CAN YOU SEE THE ISLAND?

The island toward which we are navigating is one where Pasifika people can reap the benefits of engaging in higher education and also begin to envision navigating to the next horizon, where wider systems that continue to oppress people and the environment are transformed. Fairburn-Dunlop sees the island as a place where Pasifika “are acceptable and an asset, not an inconvenience and a menace to the national psyche” (2008, p. 39). Samu sees the island and our navigation towards it as part of continuing Pasifika people’s tradition of ‘world enlargement’ where Pasifika people are understood to be much more than “the geographic spaces and the international boundaries to which they are confined” (2010, p. 5), and understands that the island recognizes the high aspirations of Pasifika people to contribute to the collective and also uses our transformative ability for visioning and enacting a world that ensures our survival and

sustainability as Pasifika (Samu et al. 2008). We are navigating to an island that assumes Pasifika people have much to offer this world while also taking into account Wendt's warning of 'self love' – this is not about reviving past-culture but instead creating new cultures “free of that taint of colonialism and based firmly on our own pasts” (Wendt, 1976, p. 53).

This context chapter is about taking a moment to recognise the shore on which we stand before we journey to the horizon. The context of the land we now stand on is one that has underserved Pasifika people in the area of higher education. This is not the vision we have for our people and it is for this reason we feel compelled to leave these shores and head for the island. What we must now consider is what we can expect to encounter during our journey to the island. What is between us and the island?

*THE ISLAND VALUES US/THE ISLAND SEES US AS SUCCESSFUL/THE ISLAND ACKNOWLEDGES OUR CONTRIBUTION/THE ISLAND  
ENABLES US TO SUPPORT OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY/THE ISLAND IS OUR FUTURE*

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW/THE CALL TO JOURNEY

*LET US JOURNEY/MAKE THE CALL/WHO SHALL WE BRING WITH US/WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO THEY BRING/WHAT SHALL WE TAKE  
WITH US/THE ISLAND IS OUT THERE JUST BEFORE THE HORIZON/WHO SHALL JOIN US AT THE SHORE AND GREET THE ISLAND AS  
IT RISES*

### INTRODUCTION

We can understand higher education institutions as containing storms that slow the progress of navigating to the island and beyond to the horizon. It is not impossible for us to pass through a storm, harness a storm, or go around a storm when navigating; however, the very presence of a storm slows the progress of the journey. The literature below shows that these storms operate as more than a narrative device to bring together a dissertation: they go beyond metaphor and impact the everyday experience of women working within higher education. Higher education storms are impacted by wider weather systems. When discussing Pasifika women's experiences of higher education, the neoliberal and colonialism weather systems that shape wider society and higher education institutions are of particular importance. These two weather systems feed racism, gender discrimination, and knowledge discrimination storms, all of which serve to slow down Pasifika people's progress to the island.

### NEOLIBERAL WEATHER SYSTEM

Neoliberalism is a weather system that creates many of the other storms discussed in detail below. Olsen and Peters identified that neoliberalism understood education "as an input-output system which can be reduced to an economic production function" (2005, p. 324) as a way to further emphasize higher education's role in serving the interests of capital and the ruling class (Saunders, 2010).

“Neoliberalism has become one of the most pervasive and dangerous ideologies of the twenty-first century.... ..free market fundamentalism rather than democratic idealism is now the driving force of economics and politics in most of the world” (Giroux, & Giroux, 2006, p. 22). As a result, neoliberalism needs to be at the very least acknowledged in order for us to address the storms that it produces, particularly as neoliberal reforms are enhancing, “creating and or deepening ethnicity and class-related traps for women in academia” (Angervall, Beach, & Gustafsson, 2015, p. 817).

Higher education institutions are neoliberal spaces that distract students and staff from freely producing and pursuing knowledge (Acker and Wagner 2017; Angervall, 2015; Ball, 2012; Carey, 2016; Mountz et al., 2015; Osei-Kofi, 2012; White, 2000, etc.) and instead cement the institutions’ role in the global knowledge economy as producers and marketers of knowledge (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2000). This ideology is advanced through managerialism and corporate logics of efficiency, competition and profit maximization (Osei-Kofi, 2012). As a result, “what counts as knowledge and what is viewed as worthwhile scholarship are judgments that are increasingly shaped by profit-seeking, capitalistic values... ..any scholarship that is not viewed as income-generating specifically, is marginalized” (Osei-Kofi, Shahjahan, & Patton, 2010, p. 327). This all occurs at the cost of “the fundamental social roles of public higher education, including providing increased upward mobility for underserved populations” (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2000, p. 73). Eighteen years after Slaughter and Rhoades made that observation, higher education institutions are now understood to be:

not as an innocent institution for the public good, but rather as a site for trialing new forms of oppression and exploitation, an institution intimately involved in the reproduction of inequalities. The university is recognized increasingly as a corrupt and criminal institution

complicit in patriarchal, colonial and racist systems and processes; a criminal institution comparable to the police as a racialized, gendered and class-based force of authority, surveillance, enforcement and enactments of everyday patterns of structural violence. Cleansing and sanitizing movements of dissent to render itself fit for bourgeois consumption, the university uses the discourse of diversity and inclusion as a rhetorical tool to manufacture consent and mask organizational whiteness. Not merely a marketized sphere, higher education now operates as an oligarchy working with government and business to preserve its own privileges. (Webb, 2018, p. 2)

Neoliberalism has been key to transforming the university from the 'ideal' of producing and pursuing knowledge for the public good<sup>9</sup> to being one of the forces that it has so vehemently critiqued in the past.

Slaughter and Rhoades (2000) identify two ways in which the neoliberalism of higher education institutions takes place. The first is through the academic marketization of higher education, where institutions invest in researchers and disciplines which have the potential to increase revenue. The second is in increased managerial control of faculty. Ball (2012) reminds us that neoliberalism is at the center of higher education institutions; it is part of our financial planning as we commodify our academic services and market our education product. Knowledge has its price, quite literally in this case, and as such it impacts

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<sup>9</sup> Although, it is arguable that higher education institutions were never acting in the interests of the 'public good' (Stein, 2016).

not just the structure of higher education but also our minds and souls as we interact with the institution, students, and colleagues in ways that reflect a neoliberal institution (Ball, 2012).

There are some that benefit from the neoliberal higher education institution. Academics who are identified as having research potential and the ability to produce 'marketable' knowledge are picked up early on and benefit from networks of other 'marketable' researchers (Angervall, Beach & Gustafsson, 2015; Kandiko Howson, Coate, & de St Croix, 2017). This results in a social order that "favours and reflects selfish accumulation on the part of elite upper- and upper-middle class male academic researchers who gain, maintain and then pass on their advantages, thanks to the exploitation of the academic labour power of others" (Angervall, Beach, & Gustafsson, 2015, p. 825). Those that labor within the neoliberal higher education institution without the benefit of being upper-middle class male academics find themselves met with overwhelming and unreasonable demands to the point where those that engage in the system become unwell (Mountz et al., 2015) or their work is simply not valued (Kandiko Howson, Coate, & de St Croix, 2017; Morley, 2005; White, Carvalho, & Riordan, 2011). Fisher (2007) has maintained that "the whole ethos of marketization does not bode well for generic issues of equal opportunity" (p. 508) and Osei-Kofi (2012) has shown that "neoliberalism engages with difference in tokenized, limited and commoditized forms for the purpose of profit" (p. 237). The literature suggests that neoliberal higher education institutions will not be welcoming spaces for Pasifika women, however, there is no current literature that explores this notion.

Aotearoa New Zealand has its own neoliberal system-wide performance measure for higher education institutions, the New Zealand Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF). PBRF is a measurement tool that grades academics dependent on their output for the PBRF period; this score is then utilised to calculate funding levels for universities (Cupples & Pawson 2012). The New Zealand government understands that PBRF "encourages and rewards the breadth and diversity of research excellence and its

role in supporting and developing New Zealand and our tertiary education sector” (New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission, 2018, p. 2). However, New Zealand academics have critiqued it (Curtis and Matthewman, 2005, Curtis 2007, 2008; Shore 2010) and instead see PBRF as a “mode of audit and surveillance which entrenches managerialism, undermines collegiality and academic freedom, promotes individualism, further commodifies higher education, increases workplace stress, induces people to deprioritise professional activities that are not counted in the PBRF and leads to the proletarianisation of the academic workforce” (Cupples, & Pawson 2012, p. 14). The impact of the inclusion of a Pacific research panel in this year’s round of PBRF remains to be seen.

There has been very little written by Pacific peoples about the impact of neoliberalism on how they experience their work within higher education (Samu, 2014; Underhill-Sem, 2017). However, Pacific academics have engaged with the idea of neoliberalism. Hau’ofa (2000) warns Pacific peoples against neoliberalism and notes that it is our ancestral memories that will enable us to survive this weather system:

We cannot therefore have our memories erased, foreshortened, or directed. With weak roots, we would be easily uprooted, transplanted, grafted upon, trimmed, and transformed any way that the global market requires. With little or no memory, we stand alone as individuals with no points of reference except to our dismally portrayed present, to our increasingly marketized national institutions, to international development agencies, international lending organizations, transnational corporations, fit only to be globalized or whateverized, and slotted in our proper places on the Human Development Index. (p. 464)

## COLONIAL WEATHER SYSTEM

Like neoliberalism, colonialism is a weather system that cannot be avoided and that feeds into smaller weather patterns. Colonisation is not a historical act, it is a complex and continuing act (Maldonado-

Torres, 2016) that sees Indigenous peoples disposed of their land, knowledges, bodies, and spirituality. Maldonado-Torres (2016) outlines that the first act of colonisation was to create a logic where it was possible to 'discover' an already occupied land. In order to do this, colonisers needed to follow "radical questioning about the humanity of colonized humans" (2016, p. 68); this decision to see colonized people as not people or as a different class of people continues to impact Indigenous people today through resource extraction (both knowledge and physical), silencing, and violence (Tuck and Yang, 2012), amongst other impacts. Stein and Andreotti understand colonization as an all-encompassing world system that consequently suggests "decolonization to be a global project, even as it manifests across time and place in distinct ways" (2016, p. 2).

As a result of this weather system, higher education academics and institutions are considering how to decolonise their spaces. Decolonisation in higher education can be understood as "an umbrella term for diverse efforts to resist the distinct but intertwined processes of colonization and racialization, to enact transformation and redress in reference to the historical and ongoing effects of these processes, and to create and keep alive modes of knowing, being, and relating that these processes seek to eradicate" (Stein & Andreotti, 2016, p. 1).

### *THE DUSKY MAIDEN*

One of the ways colonialism has dispossessed and disempowered Indigenous people is through the imposition of racialized and gendered stereotypes, which are then expressed in their systemic and social treatment. The dusky maiden is one key stereotype through which Pasifika women continue to be dehumanized. The dusky maiden refers to a centuries old practice of "sexualizing and eroticizing the Polynesian female form through titillating visual representations of bare-breasted, nubile Polynesian wāhine (women), which functioned as soft porn for art connoisseurs" (Tamaira, 2010, p,1). More recently the dusky maiden has developed to be a "simultaneous portrayal of Polynesian women as sexually receptive

as well as distant and dangerous (as signified by the tattoos inscribed on their bodies), served to intensify rather than curb their exotic and erotic appeal in the Western imagination” (Tamaira, 2010, p. 11). This problematic positioning of Pacific women continues. In a contemporary example, Netflix’s popular series, *The Crown*, Prince Phillip is seduced by Pacific women while on tour. In the scene, Pacific women are dancing and beckon to him over a fire, and he is then led away by a dancer with a knowing smile. This understanding of Pasifika women is both limiting and damaging. Pasifika women have more to offer the world than sensual glances and consumable bodies.

Tamaira (2010) explains how “western artists literally and figuratively painted over the agency and power of Polynesian women by representing them not as the genealogical descendants of powerful goddesses, but as exotic, vulnerable maidens” (p. 6). This painting over can operate as a metaphor for the wider impact of colonization on Pacific peoples: colonial forces entered the Pacific and painted over our knowledge systems, then re-painted them as ignorant and savage. I have argued that one possible response to these initial and ongoing colonial depictions of Pacific women is to build a more complex understanding of Pasifika women, one that is built from our own understandings of the world and how we interact with it (Naepi, 2018). This movement towards developing a more nuanced understanding of Pasifika women is not only important for how the rest of the world sees us, but also for providing alternatives that allow us to resist internalising these images ourselves (Jolly, 2007).

This dissertation opened with Tusitala-Marsh’s *Statued (stat you?) traditions* poem (1997), where Tusitala-Marsh moves through the image of the dusky maiden and her own understandings of being Pasifika. Although the dusky maiden is not directly tied to critiques of higher education it can help us to understand how and why people, including people working and learning in institutional settings, interact with Pasifika women in the way that they do. How women of colour are perceived in wider social circles impacts how they are understood to exist in higher education institutions. These images “marginalise the

ethnic group and masks the ethnic groups' true characteristics and identity" (Seo & Hinton, 2009, p. 204) and as a result the marginalised group is not given the same respect as dominant groups (Seo & Hinton, 2009). This research project is about recording Pasifika women's voices and providing space for them to be heard beyond our own circles. It is time for the myth of the dusky maiden to be placed on the shelf and instead for Pasifika women to be understood beyond this stereotype.

## GENDER STORM

Colonial constructions of gender and the dusky maiden are tied to wider gender issues. Gender impacts work in higher education (Acker, 2014; Grummell, Devine, & Lynch, 2009; Kandiko Howson, Coate, & de St Croix, 2017; Martin, 2000) as higher education institutions have what Alvesson (2012) terms a masculine imprint. Masculine imprints are evidenced in two ways; the first is a simple measurement tool, where men are over-represented throughout the institution (Fisher, 2007; Martin, 2000), particularly in leadership roles (Acker, 2012; 2014; Öhrn, Petra, Gustafsson, Lundahl, & Nyström, 2009) and as a result women appear out of place. The other imprint is the normalisation and rewarding of 'masculine' behaviours (Acker, 2012; Kandiko Howson, Coate & de St Croix, 2017; Morley, 2005) as opposed to the socially constructed and defined feminine traits such as the three Cs: care, concern, and connection (Martin, 2000). Whilst there is some evidence that there are more women represented within higher education, the performative culture of higher education means that masculine behaviour is still rife in higher education institutions (Martin, 2000; Öhrn, Petra, Gustafsson, Lundahl, & Nyström, 2009).

As a result of this masculine imprint women experience excessive labour dictated by gender norms that is neither recognised nor celebrated by higher education institutions. The first gendered labour expectation is that of emotional labour, where women take on the roles of nurturing students and supporting other faculty and staff during transitional (restructuring) phases (Acker, 2012; 2014; 2017; Carmen, 2004; Fisher, 2007; Mather, 1998). The second gendered labour expectation is the housekeeping

of higher education such as serving on committees, preparing reports, and managing change (Acker, 2014; Fisher, 2007; Kandiko Howson, Coate & de St Croix, 2017; Pyke, 2011). This type of gendered labour expectation means that not only do women often spend their time doing labour that the institution does not value (Kandiko Howson, Coate, & de St Croix, 2017), but that their taking on this labour frees up males to progress in their careers (Angervall & Beach, 2018) by doing the “important tasks of giving academic direction and pursuing research” (Fisher, 2007, p. 507). This pattern feeds into itself as women’s labour is understood to be less valuable as they produce less and can therefore be used for tasks that are of less value to higher education institutions (Morley, 2005). Carvalho and Santiago (2008) have cautioned scholars who analyse the gendering of labour in higher education, arguing that we risk reproducing societal norms in our own research if we assume the administrative and emotional labour results in less productive research. However, the under-representation of women within senior leadership roles in higher education would suggest that this form of analysis is still necessary, whilst also drawing attention to wider societal gender norms and valuing that see emotional and administrative work devalued in higher education.

The masculine imprint within higher education institutions also means that women are expected to conform (Underhill-Sem, 2017). This means that women must produce what masculine systems deem acceptable knowledge in acceptable ways in order to progress within higher education institutions (Fisher, 2007). Hearn and Parkin (2001) argue that “what has counted and still counts as knowledge has been severely gendered, so that women’s relationship to knowledge and its production and reproduction has been diminished and devalued” (p. 74). This process of gendering what is or is not considered worthwhile knowledge contributes to the ongoing issue of women’s representation in higher education institutions.

Women in higher education institutions also face external career pressures placed on them by society (Acker, 2014; Fisher, 2004; Mather, 1998). I take issue with this particular part of the literature as it makes broad heteronormative assumptions. Fisher relies on older studies (as early as 1985) to

demonstrate that women's career paths in academia are disrupted to have children. Whilst I do not disagree that having children can disrupt a career path, to isolate it as a 'women's' issue is problematic. Women do not 'need' nor are the only ones to have children (Biblarz & Savci, 2010; Edelman, 2004). This particular issue is perhaps better framed as the impact of having children on higher education institution careers as opposed to a women's issue which, as Carvalho & Santiago (2008) have demonstrated, can lead to higher education scholars reinforcing societal stereotypes about women. An aspect of having children or care responsibilities that could be framed as a women's issue is the decision whether or not to take advantage of leave. Whilst higher education institutions have seemingly integrated leave for these external care pressures, women are less likely to take the leave. Women fear that if they take leave they will face judgement from colleagues or, worse, resentment as another colleague takes up their internal workload (Samble, 2008; Williams, 2006).

The issues outlined above then raise the question of why women choose to continue engaging within higher education. Stengers, Despret and Knutson (2015) and Martin (2000) point to Virginia Woolf's essay *Three Guineas* (1938) as raising the initial question of why women want to join men in higher education, and if they choose to do so, under what conditions? These two important questions point to a tension that is still explored within academia (Kandiko Howson, Coate, de St Croix, 2017; Martin, 2000; Stengers, Despret, Knutson, 2015). Angervall (2018) points out that women are aware that having a heavy teaching load minimises their chances of progressing in the academy, but they are ambivalent about this impact as progression is not why they joined, and teaching provides a haven for them from the other pressures of the neoliberal higher education institution. Stengers, Depret, and Knutson (2015) note that women have always engaged in critical thought, and that we do not need higher education institutions to continue this process. Instead we have to recognise that in order for there to be women's thoughts in higher education institutions, we must be in the institution, and that "quite simply, this is the price that

must be paid” (Stengers, Despret & Knutson, 2015, p. 30). The suggestion here is that women must simply learn how to hold the tension of existing within a structure which is designed to exclude them.

However, women must hold this tension whilst working to transform higher education institutions to be less masculinist and more welcoming to diverse peoples and ways of thinking. Martin (2000) troubles the assumption that if women wish to exist in the academy they must conform. She suggests that instead of assimilation we should agitate for acculturation where a new social space is created that reflects both the ‘host’ societal structures and the ‘immigrant’ societal structures. What is ignored in this analysis is that different ‘immigrant’ groups enter the ‘host’ space with different levels of power.

## RACE STORM

In addition to the gendered nature of institutional culture, academics have recognized the whiteness of higher education institutions (Ahmed, 2012; 2017; Antonio, 2002; Carey, 2016; Grosfoguel, 2012; 2013; James, 2012; Kidman & Chu, 2017; Mirza, 2006; Pilkington, 2013; Rollock, 2012; Tate & Bagguley, 2017; Wekker, 2016). I will explore the race storm by drawing on what I consider to be the two most significant critiques and analyses of whiteness in higher education (Puwar, 2004; Ahmed, 2012; 2017).

Nirmal Puwar (2004) explores how higher education institutions are a contested social space which have a culture of exclusion:

Social spaces are not blank and open for anybody to occupy. Over time, through processes of historical sedimentation, certain types of bodies are designated as being the “natural” occupants of specific spaces.... Some bodies have the right to belong in certain locations, while others are marked out as trespassers who are in accordance with how both spaces and bodies

are imagined, politically, historically and conceptually circumscribed as being “out of place.”  
(p. 51)

Puwar’s (2004) term “space invaders” captures the experience of being a non-white person within higher education institutions. According to Puwar (2004) non-white bodies are made to feel as they though invade space through three mechanisms. The first is disorientation, where the bodies around you do a double-take when you enter a room: you are noticeable. The second is infantilization, where people of colour are not expected to be capable of authority, for instance the unexpected moment of a Dean of colour. The third is through hyper-surveillance, where when ‘given’ authority the institution (and the people within) are unforgiving of even small mistakes. This aligns with Pasifika people’s experiences of working within higher education as Wendt-Samu (2010) demonstrates in her reflection: “although we are experienced tertiary level educators, course developers/coordinators, and even administrators, most of us have some way to go before achieving full-acceptance by the academy as scholars and academics” (p. 3).

In 2012 Sara Ahmed wrote *On Being Included*, wherein she recorded the brick walls built from institutional habit that bodies of colour (space invaders) encounter when working in higher education. Ahmed argued that it is bodies of colour who make walls apparent as they come up against institutional practices that stop them whilst other bodies pass through without encountering the wall (Ahmed, 2012; 2017). I wish to draw a line of connection between the walls that Ahmed (2012) describes and the storms used within this work. The main difference is that the storms give some agency (although minimal) to Pasifika women. We can choose to engage with a process of mapping, transformation, or avoidance whilst being aware of the cost of navigating them. Instead of the imagery that Ahmed uses of running into them or banging our head against them (the walls that whiteness cannot see), storms enable us to imagine being within them and the all-encompassing nature of institutional habit. Very often (as recorded within the chapters that follow) institutional habits are not one-off events that suddenly stop us, they are ingrained

into our everyday experiences. The storms are not of our making and they do slow our progress but, within a Pasifika approach, shifting them from walls to storms gives us some agency and also recognizes the fluidity and all-encompassing nature of institutional habit while also recognising that, for Pasifika peoples, storms and navigation are a more culturally accurate metaphor.

Institutions can express a commitment to diversity whilst simultaneously working against diversity. The first way in which higher education institutions do this is through the 'politics of stranger making': "how some and not others become strangers, how emotions of fear and hatred stick to certain bodies, how certain bodies become understood as the rightful occupants of certain spaces" (Ahenakew & Naepi, 2015, p. 2). As a result, one group of people is able to declare diversity desirable and then dictate what it is about diversity that is desirable (window dressing, performance, etc.) and what is not (questioning, transforming) (Ahenakew & Naepi, 2015). The second way that higher education institutions both support the diversity that benefits them and work against meaningful diversity is through non-performative diversity commitments (Ahmed, 2012; 2017). Non-performative diversity commitments refer to the institution's ability to write and declare diversity commitments or policies but not resource their implementation (Ahmed, 2012; 2017; Ahenakew & Naepi, 2015). These policies further isolate people of colour who engage in non-desired diversity (such as questioning or reporting) as the institution is able to restate their commitment to diversity through policy in response to accusations of exclusion. The third way that institutions can express diversity but not practice it is through the expectation of gratitude. For Ahmed this is the expectation that "racism becomes something that we should not talk about, given that we have just been given the freedom to speak of it" (2012, p. 154); in this example, when diverse bodies speak of racism they cause the problem as opposed to the racist actions. The fourth way that that institutions can express diversity but not practice it is through the expectation of intelligibility (Ahenakew & Naepi, 2015), where in order to enact change diversity practitioners must use the language of the institution or be prepared to

'switch,' dependent on the argument needed to leverage change (Ahmed, 2012). As a result, the work of diversity can reproduce institutional norms (Ahenakew & Naepi, 2015) as the language that is intelligible to the institution restricts what can be said (Martin, 2000). While Puwar (2004) and Ahmed (2012; 2017) provide valuable insights into how racialized bodies experience higher education institutions, the inclusion of more voices (such as Pasifika) would add strength to their arguments as knowledge about the ways different groups experience the same space can further illuminate how higher education institutions operate (Ahmed, 2012; 2017).

## GENDER AND RACE CYCLONE

Higher education institutions are designed with the privileged in mind and still reflect the subordination of women and people of colour from the time that they were built (Osei-Kofi, Shahjahan, & Patton, 2010). Pasifika women are both *gendered* and *racialized* bodies and as such it is important to explore how other racialized and gendered bodies have experienced and thought about higher education institutions (Ford, 2011; Mirza, 1995; 2006; 2015) and the way they enact exclusion of women and racialized bodies (Ahmed 2012; 2017; de Jong, Icaza, Vázquez, & Withaecx, 2017; Osei-Kofi, Shahjahan, & Patton, 2010; Puwar, 2004). These intersecting identities mean that “women of color as outsiders within the academy have not had the same experience as white men, white women, and even men of color” (Balderrama, Texeira, & Valdez, 2004, p. 151). Considering these intersectional experiences reveals how multiple structures enact dominance and power (Mirza, 2015), which will deepen our understanding of higher education institutions (Acker, 2012) and enable us to consider complex and multiple ways of pushing back against the systematic oppression we face working in higher education institutions.

The literature identified multiple ways that women of colour experience working in higher education. Women of colour report that higher education institutions are isolating due to their lack of institutional support which leads to recruitment and retention issues for higher education institutions; this

impacts the number of senior women of colour to mentor junior women of colour, which in turn impacts promotion and tenure of women of colour (Ahmed, 2012; Antonio, 2002; hooks, 1994; Olsen, Maple & Stage, 1995; Mirza, 2015; Spivak, 1993; Turner, 2002; Williams 1991). This isolating experience of western education systems is also felt by Pacific women (Samu, 2011). Women of colour express that they experience difficulty gaining respect as qualified teachers and academics from students and staff alike (Harlow, 2003; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). Further, women scholars of colour have said that when they were asked to serve on committees, etc., it was due to tokenization and not because people felt they legitimately deserved to be there (Baez, 2000; Thompson & Sekaquaptewa, 2002). This tokenization is taxing work that women of colour are expected to do yet they are roles the institution does not value (Ford, 2011). Women of colour also expressed frustration at the wage and promotion gaps between themselves and their white and male colleagues (Angervall, Beach & Gustafsson, 2015; Balderrama, Teixeira, & Valdez, 2004; Lee, 2002). There is very little academic literature that explores women of colour's experiences with sexual harassment and assault within higher education institutions, but Mirza (2015) noted that women of colour report the most sexual harassment and assault in higher education institutions. Anita Hill's (2011) experiences and her sharing of them in popular media and the recent #metoo movement make clear that these stories do exist, however, more work needs to be done within the academy to highlight and analyse them.

In response to these experiences, women of colour do certain things that are perceived as indicative of their inclusion and acceptance in higher education institutions. The first is to manage their bodies. Women of colour are aware that like other racialized bodies they are space invaders (Puwar, 2004), and as such they attempt to minimise their difference through stereotypical gendered norms and also to mimic the presentation of bodies that 'belong' (Ford, 2011; Ong, 2005). As a result of this body management women of colour "learn to differently present, manage, and negotiate their bodies in order

to gain intellectual legitimacy comparable to that of White male faculty” (Ford, 2011, p. 472); they ‘fragment’ themselves by concealing their culture in order to integrate into higher education institutions (Ong, 2005). Ahmed (2012) notes the importance of being seen to assimilate in order to progress within higher education institutions as to not assimilate is to invoke feelings of rejection and anxiety within the white other. This process of assimilation is also embraced by higher education institutions in what Hill-Collins (1998) called the politics of containment, where higher education institutions will allow women of colour into their space so long as the institution can practice high surveillance measures that ensure they assimilate.

As a result of these experiences and their efforts to minimise their difference, women of colour within higher education institutions become sick. Being a body out of place “in white institutions has emotional and psychological costs to the bearer of that difference” (Ahmed 2012, p. 153). Mirza (2015) reflects that there are costs to just existing in higher education and Ahmed (2017) attributes this cost to being in question: “to be in question is to try to be; to be in question makes being trying” (Ahmed 2017, p. 115). Fijian academic Unaisi Nabobo-Baba notes that there is an emotional toll that comes with working within higher education and that it “stems from the fact that the challenges of new ideas, reforms and new ways of doing things at best are treated with disdain by hegemonic forces that dominate academia and in worse times are just totally written off as racist or even having no philosophical basis.” (2013, p. 94). Recording Pasifika women’s experiences of working in higher education and responding to exclusionary practices will enrich wider understandings at the intersection of race and gender.

## ONTOLOGICAL STORM

One of the most powerful storms in higher education is “presumption of a Eurocentric epistemic canon that attributes truth only to the Western way of knowledge production at the expense of disregarding ‘other’ epistemic traditions” (Tamdgidi, 2012, p. VIII). Higher education institutions are both

at the mercy of and help to create the colonial weather system by continuing to be a place where the production of knowledge is dependent on reproducing a monocultural knowledge system that is firmly anchored in Western understandings of the world (Finau, 2008; Hau'ofa, 1994; 2008; Kepa, 2011; Māhina 2008; Nabobo-Baba, 2013; Naepi, 2018; Otunuku, 2011; Samu, 2010; 2011; Shilliam, 2016; Suaalii-Sauni, 2008; Thaman, 2003a; 2003b; 2009; Underhill-Sem, 2017). The colonial project has deemed who can produce knowledge and who cannot (Shilliam, 2016), and it has also worked "to segregate peoples from their lands, their pasts, their ancestors, spirits and agencies" (Shilliam, 2016, p. 378). The intersection at which Pasifika women find themselves is a space where not just race and gender, but also ontological exclusion through previous and current colonial practices, meet.

Pacific scholars are engaged with the ontological storm that is produced by higher education institutions (Anae et al., 2001; Coxon, Foliaki & Mara, 1994; Hau'ofa, 1994; 2008; Māhina, 2008; Nabobo-Baba, 2013; Naepi, 2018; Otunuku, 2011; Samu, 2010; 2011; Suaalii-Sauni, 2008; Thaman, 2003a; 2003b; 2009; Underhill-Sem, 2017). Thaman (2009) has argued that a core threat to indigenisation is the marginalisation of Pacific knowledges and the continual epistemological silencing that occurs in higher education institutions. Interestingly, Pacific scholars are not concerned with a narrative that reinforces boundaries between eurocentric ontologies and Pacific ontologies; instead it seems they are advocating for a pluriversity where there will be space and respect for more than one form of knowledge (Boidin, Cohen, & Grosfoguel, 2012). Hviding (2003) points to Pacific Studies as an explanation for this acceptance for a pluriversity as Pacific Studies is a space "where boundaries are dissolved, not only between disciplines, but also between the categories of insider, outsider, subject, object, scholar, and native" (p. 45). However, this explains Pacific studies as a discipline and we would be ignoring several hundreds of years of colonization to assume that Pacific Studies is a discipline of Pacific scholars (Hau'ofa, 1994). Suaalii-Sauni (2008) offers a Pacific analysis of the relationship between Pasifika and Western universities: "both seem

to be searching not only for truth, but perhaps more importantly, for a methodology and pedagogy for searching for truth *together*" (p. 16) and perhaps this is where Pasifika sit. We have prepared the meal to share, as explained in Ahenakew and Naepi (2015), and are simply waiting for the institution to join us at the table in co-creating a pluriversity.

## TRANSFORMING THE STORMS

Given that Pasifika women's worldviews are shaped by Indigenous understandings of the world, I will now discuss ways that Indigenous scholars have identified for transforming the previously discussed series of storms with some references to insights by non-Indigenous scholars. Indigenous academics have shown that it is possible to believe the academy can be redeemed (Durie, 2009; Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004; Nabobo-Baba, 2013; Pidgeon, 2008; 2016), to recognise both the capacity of higher education to be a positive force whilst also recognising the behaviours and structures within higher education that need to change. Tongan academic Epeli Hau'ofa (2008) has reflected that Pacific people's ability to hold both happiness and grief, their "capacity for laughter, for grabbing moments of joy in the midst of suffering, is one of the most attractive things about our islands. We laugh and we cry and we often do them simultaneously" (p. 139). This same duality enables us to recognise that higher education institutions behave in ways that are ultimately damaging to our people while also holding out hope that they can and will change. Fijian academic Unaisi Nabobo-Baba (2013) describes the Indigenization as "a conversation between the past and present of what entails the totality of Indigenous people's lives" (p. 83). It is the ability of Pacific peoples to hold dual and conflicting ideas and emotions, the past and present, that this research takes for granted.

Research has consistently framed Indigenous peoples in problematic ways, through misunderstanding and misrepresenting Indigenous knowledges and peoples; as a result, researchers have helped to inform harmful policies for and social perceptions of Indigenous communities (Battiste, 2013;

Battiste, Bell & Findlay, 2002; Bunda, Zipin & Brennan, 2012; de Jong, Icaza, Vázquez, & Withaecx, 2017; Denzin, Lincoln & Smith, 2008; Mihesuah, 2004; Nabobo-Baba, 2013; Nakata, Nakata, Keech & Bolt, 2012; G. Smith, 2011; L. Smith, 1999, 2011; Stewart-Harawira, 2013; Thaman, 2003b; 2009; Waitere & Johnston, 2009; Wilson, 2004). Therefore, reframing research to center Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies is a key step towards the overall decolonization and/or indigenization project. This reframing focuses on “the restoration and legitimation of Indigenous knowledge systems and methods of conducting research” (Stewart-Harawira, 2013, p. 43) and highlights “that there are other epistemologies and other standpoints from which Indigenous people come to know the world and from which we understand and analyse our more recent encirclement by Western knowledge over the last few centuries and its legacies” (Nakata et al., 2012, p. 124).

Pacific academic Konai Thaman (2009) notes, “Research has always been a challenge to Pacific educators as up until recently, there was no serious challenging of the unilateral assumptions of a universal model of research, with the Academy being the central authority in knowledge production” (p. 5). This is changing, though, as Pacific people begin to develop their own forms of knowledge production (Naepi, in press) such as the kakala method (Chu, Samala Abella, & Paurini, 2013; Johansson Fua, 2009; Thaman, 2003C) where the metaphor of garland-making is used to guide the process of Pacific research, or the vanua method (Nabobo-Baba, 2008) which proposes an Indigenous Fijian research methodology that is embedded with Indigenous Fijian world views, knowledge systems, lived experience, representations, cultures, and values as a way to give “power and recognition to things Fijian” (p. 142). Vanua refers to the universal whole and “the interconnectedness of people to their land, environment, cultures, relationships, spiritworld, beliefs, knowledge systems, values and God(s).” (Nabobo-Baba, 2008, p.142). This shift towards Pacific research methods is enabling Pacific researchers to transform the way that knowledge is constructed within higher education institutions. However, what is missing from the research currently is

how Pasifika women experience the process of creating research that is still undervalued by higher education institutions.

Thaman (2009) outlines how, given the core purpose of education is the transmission of culture, it is unethical to ignore learners' cultures in the teaching and learning process. As such, a number of Indigenous academics agree that in order to transform the storm we must transform our pedagogical practices (Battiste, 2013; Durie, 2009; Gone, 2004; Hunter, 2004; Macfarlane, 2015; Pidgeon 2008; Samu, 2010; Thaman, 2003a). The vast amount of research on teaching for Pasifika success discusses the inclusion of Pasifika worldviews (Airini et al., 2011; Airini & Sauni, 2004; Anae, Anderson, Benseman & Coxon, 2002; Benseman, Coxon, Anderson & Anae, 2006; Curtis et al., 2012; Hawk, Cowley, Hill & Sutherland, 2002; Henley, 2009; Mackely-Crump, 2011, etc.). The question that still needs to be asked is if shifting to a pedagogy of inclusion will be the push needed to transform the institutions, or if it is simply re-inscribing value sets but teaching them in a different way. What is clear is that there is an abundance of research on shifting pedagogical practices but little research on the ways in which teaching curriculum that excludes Pasifika worldviews and values impacts Pasifika staff.

Relationships and respect for one another have been highlighted as a way to transform higher education institutions (Angervall, Beach, & Gustafsson, 2015; Balderrama, Texeira & Valdez, 2004; Seo & Hinton, 2009). Pacific academics have also highlighted the importance of relationships in transforming institutions (Airini, 2010; Fairburn-Dunlop 2008; Samu, 2011). These relationships by necessity must both exist within and extend beyond the institution. Samoan academic Peggy Fairburn-Dunlop (2008) calls on Pacific people to ensure that they engage in widespread knowledge dissemination and maintain networks both within and external to higher education institutions. She notes that internal networks will ensure Pasifika voices are not excluded and will give us the opportunity to showcase the values of Pasifika

knowledges. The importance of relationships to Pasifika people is a repeated theme throughout Pasifika research and is explored more in chapters three and four.

Personal care has been theorised as a form of warfare in higher education institutions (Ahmed, 2014). We must be active in “cultivating space to care for ourselves, our colleagues, and our students” and recognize that it is “a political activity when we are situated in institutions that devalue and militate against such relations and practices” (Mountz et al., 2015, p. 1239). Samu (2011) raised the important question of nurturing young Pasifika to develop a method of self-care in the form of “cultural resilience that might better equip them –to be more savvy, astute and even strategic; to self-anaesthetize, if need be, in order to protect themselves from developing negative, undesirable dispositions such as inferiority complexes, loss of confidence, insecurity and reduced self-efficacy” (2011, p. 21). We cannot just focus on individuals, though, and rely on individuals to practice self-care; we must also consider the structures that promote a space where self-care is necessary (Angervall, 2018; Mountz et al., 2015; Pyke, 2011).

Our presence within institutions does not mean the work of transformation is done. Instead, it shows small localized victories whilst the institution continues to function at a strategic level as it always has, through exclusion (Stengers, Despret, & Knutson, 2015). National and localized strategic plans are seen as key in transforming higher education institutions by Pasifika peoples (Airini, 2010; Finau, 2008). However, we should consider Ahmed’s work on how these plans amount to nothing but rhetoric unless there are bodies to do the work (2012). Osei-Kofi (2012) astutely notes that “if there were never to be any more studies on the recruitment and retention of faculty of color, but each institution across the US implemented and upheld policies consistent with the establishment of processes responsive to the findings of their earlier studies, we would make more progress in a shorter amount of time than any new study, plan or source of data would make possible” (p. 239). The call to turn words of strategic change into action is one that Pasifika people have been answering for some time (Airini, 2010). Finau (2008) noted how

Pasifika people are particularly skilled at pushing for change through “using political correctness, diplomacy, assertive language and social marketing as instruments” (p. 32). This raises the question of how to motivate this transformational change. It has been suggested that for change to occur at a systematic level, we need to be aware that change is driven by changes in the nature of capital (Airini, 2010; Osei-Kofi, 2012) and this is one of the weather fronts discussed earlier. Institutional motivation for change can be tied back to the neoliberal weather system. Stengers, Despret, and Knutson (2015) observed that universities only ask questions of access when the “institution suddenly considers women as a ‘resource’ that is not sufficiently exploited” (p. 14). As such, an institution can be motivated to transform when they recognise that they are missing out on internal resourcing through labour (Acker, 2014) or external resourcing through funding levers (Airini, 2010).

#### USING THE STORM TO GO FURTHER

It is possible to harness the storm to get to the island faster, however, many scholars indicate that to do this one must be cautious (Acker, 2014; Martin, 2000; Morely, 2005; Osei-Kofi, 2012; Stengers, Despret & Knutson, 2015), including Pasifika scholars (Samu, 2010). Osei-Kofi (2012) warns of the issue of being used by the system, as the “power of the system to socialize is not to be underestimated” (p. 238); Stengers, Despret and Knutson (2015) note that if you seek to make a career within higher education you will find yourself captured; and Martin (2000) laments that feminists of the 70s have given up their dreams in exchange for acceptance in higher education. In spite of these warnings, women who use the academy to advance their own individual goals for institutional transformation get a high level of satisfaction from their work (Acker, 2014) and if they move up to senior management levels they feel able to cast off the status of ‘other’ (Morely, 2005). However, it often leads to a moderation of more radical ideals and compromise of values and Morely (2005) theorised that “short-term opportunities for individuals could lead to long-term constraints for women collectively” (p. 427). Osei-Kofi and Thaman (2012) bring to light

an even more haunting reality for those of us who plan to use the storm and that is that “we may not want the rules to change, at least not until we have ‘won’ our round of the game, as our identities as academics depend on the continuance of the game and the rules that define it” (p. 238). Pacific academic Konai Thaman (2003a) also raises this apprehension, stating that “we must therefore be careful not to advocate something simply because our own education has largely been structured by it or our jobs depend entirely on it” (p. 5).

We must also understand how the institution uses us. Tongan academic Konai Thaman (2009) noted how institutions will appropriate our knowledge. This concern aligns with Stewart-Harawira’s (2013) assertion that Indigenous knowledge is only included within the university as long as it is still “compatible with overriding concerns for knowledge that creates profit” (p. 40). Tamdgidi (2012) and Burman (2012) argue that it is not possible to do the work of transforming higher education institutions from within the institutions for the very mechanisms we use to transform the institution (publication, etc.) further entrench the system. This is reinforced by Stengers, Despret and Knutson (2013) who note that the future we envision for institutions will never come from within the university. There are also scholars who advocate for leaving higher education institutions to seek out the answers needed within the academy, as they do not believe we will find them within (Fairburn-Dunlop, 2008; Shilliam, 2016). These critiques raise the question of whether we should even bother to engage the storm to go towards the island or, instead, seek to navigate around the storm.

## CONCLUSION

Although much has been written about higher education institutions and the ways in which those who do not fit the ‘ideal’ find difficulty in moving amongst its various structures and spaces, little has been shared about how Pasifika women navigate these structures and spaces (Samu, 2011; Underhill-Sem, 2017). Perhaps the most powerful thing that we can do in this current moment is to record our stories in

order to map and transform these storms (Ahmed, 2012; Balderrama, Texeira, & Valdez, 2004; Mohanty, 2003b; Stengers, Despret, & Knutson, 2015; Underhill-Sem, 2017), for although we all experience these storms differently, the local has a role in “illuminating the universal” (Mohanty, 2003b, p. 503).

There is much we can illuminate with our stories. I return again to Hawai’ian academic Manulani Meyer, who reminds us that there is courage in truth telling. It is necessary for Pasifika women to engage in truth telling about the academy, as it will enable us to reach our island sooner. However, truth telling can be difficult, so I ask us to remember Hau’ofa’s reflection that Pacific peoples can laugh and grieve at the same time; it is one of our greatest strengths. We must also take some self-care guidance from Manulani Meyer (2008): “Please put on some tea. I’ll get the candles” (p. 264), or when I think of visiting my Bubū<sup>10</sup>’s house as a child – “please put on some tea, I’ll get the purini<sup>11</sup>.”

*AS WE STAND ON THE SHORE LOOKING TO THE ISLAND LET US ACCOUNT FOR WHO HAS ANSWERED OUR CALL TO JOURNEY. WE HAVE PEOPLE FROM ACROSS THE OCEAN WHO INTIMATELY KNOW THE STORMS WE ARE ABOUT TO ENCOUNTER, THEY HAVE MAPPED AND RECORDED THEM SO THAT WE MAY JOURNEY WITH SOME KNOWLEDGE. LET US ALSO BRING THOSE THAT DOUBT THE JOURNEY, WHO LOOK TO THE STORMS AND POINT OUT THE WEATHER SYSTEMS. WE WILL NEED THEM TO STAND ON THE SHORES OF THE ISLAND AND REMIND US OF OUR INTENTIONS TO LOOK TO THE HORIZON AGAIN. THOSE THAT ARE TURNING AWAY, SAYING THE STORMS ARE TOO STRONG, WHO HAVE BATTLED THEM BEFORE AND CAUTION US TO PUT THE DRUA*

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<sup>10</sup> Grandmother

<sup>11</sup> Fijian Pudding

*AWAY. LET US BRING THEM, FOR WE NEED THEIR WISDOM TO TELL US WHEN THE STORM IS TOO STRONG, IN OUR STUBBORNNESS TO JOURNEY WE MAY NOT RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO PAUSE AND WAIT ANOTHER DAY.*

*LET US ALSO ACCOUNT FOR OURSELVES; FOR WHAT DO WE KNOW OF SURVIVING AND TRANSFORMING STORMS.*

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY/ACCOUNTING FOR OURSELVES

*WHOSE DRUA DO WE USE/HOW DO WE KNOW IT IS OURS/WHO WILL GUIDE MAKE SURE OUR DRUA IS STURDY/HOW WILL WE CRAFT A DRUA THAT WILL NOT SINK*

In order to understand masi as a metaphor for research it is important to first understand the context from which Aotearoa New Zealand Pacific<sup>12</sup> research methods and methodologies have evolved and the theoretical underpinnings of Pacific research as a whole. When considering these developments it is of significance that Pacific knowledge is created in relations; this means the academic institutional habit of drawing a neat line between methodology (why) and method (how) is not as neatly drawn in Pacific research. Instead the line becomes fuzzy as method and methodology cross over, with Pacific researchers less determined to separate the why and the how and instead to see these two aspects of research as existing in a relationship that goes beyond how one informs the other. Once this background has been established it is possible to consider how and why the masi research methodology developed in subsequent chapters is distinct from other Pacific research methodologies.

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<sup>12</sup> The switch to Pacific here aligns with more generally with how Pacific research methods and methodologies are discussed; this is because of the theorization and development of the research methods by Pacific peoples and Pasifika.

## PACIFIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND DECOLONIZATION

Pacific research methodologies are an act of decolonization within research. Research has consistently framed Indigenous peoples in problematic ways, through misunderstanding and misrepresenting Indigenous knowledges and peoples. Academic researchers and their research have played a key role in informing harmful colonial policies and social perceptions of Indigenous communities (Battiste, 2013; Battiste, Bell & Findlay, 2002; Bunda, Zipin & Brennan, 2012; Denzin, Lincoln & Smith, 2008; Hau'ofa, 2008; Kovach, 2009; 2010; Mihesuah & Wilson 2004; Naepi, in press; Nakata, Nakata, Keech & Bolt, 2012; G. Smith, 2011; Smith, 1999; L. Smith, 2011; Stewart-Harawira, 2013; Thaman, 2003a; Waitere & Johnston, 2009; Wilson, 2004). As a result, reframing research to center Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies is a key step towards the overall decolonization project. This reframing focuses on “the restoration and legitimation of Indigenous knowledge systems and methods of conducting research” (Stewart-Harawira, 2013, p. 43) and highlights “that there are other epistemologies and other standpoints from which Indigenous people come to know the world and from which we understand and analyse our more recent encirclement by Western knowledge over the last few centuries and its legacies” (Nakata et al., 2012, p. 124).

Pacific research methodologies are a direct response to calls to decolonize research. Indigenous research methodologies can be understood as a way of doing “research by and for Indigenous peoples, using techniques and methods drawn from the traditions and knowledges of those people” (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008, p. 6). Indigenous research methodologies are a way to ensure that the answers to the questions, “Who benefits, how and to what purpose?” (Stewart-Harawira, 2013, p. 44) are: Indigenous peoples, on Indigenous terms, for Indigenous people’s own definitions of advancement and success. Pacific research methodologies provide a way for research within Pacific communities to be driven by Pacific

Peoples, for Pacific Peoples, whilst also opening up the opportunity for research to be conducted on broader social and global issues from Pacific paradigms. Tongan academic Konai Helu Thaman outlined the differences in Pacific research and Western research through her poem Our Way:

*OUR WAY - KONAI HELU THAMAN*

your way

objective

analytic

always doubting

the truth

until proof comes

slowly

quietly

and it hurts

my way

subjective

gut-feeling like

always sure

of the truth

the proof

is there

waiting

and it hurts

(Thaman, 2003a, p. 4)

Konai Thaman (2003b) called on Pacific researchers to decolonise research by developing “their own research methodologies and techniques as a way of empowering not only themselves but also the people and communities with whom they work” (p. 163). Thaman is one of the Pacific academics and educationalists who led the call to decolonize research. Another champion in this area was Tongan academic Epele Hau’ofa. A turning point for how Pacific peoples interacted in the academy was Hau’ofa’s 1993 essay *Our Sea of Islands*, a text that critiqued the academy for its role in ensuring the Pacific was understood as islands in the far sea with primitive people and ignoring the history of Pacific people navigating the largest ocean in the world in order to maintain a complex economic, political and relational world (Hau’ofa, 1993). Hau’ofa (1993) cautions Pacific academics that when writing about the Pacific they

should actively resist their disciplines' Western habits of defining the Pacific as islands in the far sea, and instead reminds them that:

We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in tiny spaces that we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed places and from which we have recently liberated ourselves. We must not allow anyone to belittle us again and take away our freedom. (p. 16)

Pacific research methodologies provide a way to decolonize research and also ensure that Pacific peoples play a key role in how the rest of the world understands the Pacific, Pacific peoples, and Pacific culture.

## PACIFIC RESEARCH IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

In Aotearoa, Pacific research developed as a framework within the state sector as part of a wider investment into Pacific research in order to address social and economic issues occurring within the Pasifika community that had become part of the national discourse in Aotearoa New Zealand. There are two key areas in the state sector in which Pacific research frameworks began to be developed. Samu (2010) outlines how an increased interest in Pacific education research and research methodologies has been largely funded by the state sector. Of significance in these state funded publications were the *Pasifika Education Research Guidelines* (Anae et al., 2001). These guidelines outlined how the Ministry of Education expected contract research with Pasifika communities to be approached. Meaningfully, this document outlined that there were Pacific approaches to research and that Pacific research should weave Pacific epistemologies into the methodological design of the research (Anae et al., 2001). These guidelines were also tied to the idea of growing capacity in Pasifika research through the Pacific Education plan which envisioned

partnership approaches between government and researchers<sup>13</sup> and explicitly noted that Pacific education research “interrogate the assumptions that underpin Western structures and institutions” (Anae et al., 2001, p. 7). The second key area in which Pacific frameworks were developed was health. Building on Anae et al.’s work, the Health Research Council published their own set of research guidelines in 2004 (Health Research Council, 2004) which were reviewed and updated ten years later (Health Research Council, 2014). These guidelines are used to assess government funding for research with Pacific communities and have also served as a guide for other institutions and bodies that wish to create their own Pacific research guidelines.

As Pacific research methodologies are becoming more popular in research due to the increase in Pacific researchers, some institutions, such as the University of Otago, have begun to develop their own Pacific research guidelines (Bennett, Brunton, Bryant-Tokalau, Sopoaga, Weaver, & Witte, 2013). More recently the Tertiary Education Commission included Pacific research as a separate section in their Performance Based Research Fund Guidelines alongside such other research areas as Biological Sciences, Business and Economics, Education, Health, and Māori Knowledge and Development (New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission, 2018). This proliferation of Pacific research guidelines indicates a growing interest in Pacific research methodologies and suggests it is time to consider what is Pacific research, who can and should do

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<sup>13</sup> The concept of partnership was later developed into the Teu Le Va Framework.

Pacific research, and how we move from metaphor to method as many Pacific and Pasifika researchers use metaphor to shape their research methods and methodologies.

Pacific research has been defined by numerous people. Bennett et al. (2013) defined Pacific research as occurring throughout the disciplines and stated that the “primary role of Pacific research is to generate knowledge and understanding about, and for, Pacific peoples and their environments” (p. 107). The recent Performance Based Research Fund Guidelines published by the Tertiary Education Commission articulated in more depth what Pacific research can be understood as:

- drawing on research methods that are specific to Pacific cultures, languages and communities
- researching in ways that are meaningful to various means of grouping Pacific peoples, for example, Pacific, Pasifika, Pasifeka, Pasefika
- using research methods and methodologies from studies of the Pacific and that may be Pacific-related, Pacific-sensitive, or Pacific inclusive
- building the capacity and capability of Pacific peoples in research, for example, actively involving Pacific peoples as researchers and research leaders
- conducting research in accordance with disciplinary and ethical standards and values and aspirations characteristic of the Pacific region (2018, p. 85).

This research project fulfills these criteria to be considered Pacific research.

## PACIFIC RESEARCH PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Pacific research methodologies have shared frameworks for reflecting Pacific values that should be considered when conducting Pacific research. Pacific values include respect, reciprocity, communal

relationships, collective responsibility, gerontocracy, humility, love/charity, service, and spirituality (Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). It is important when conducting Pacific research to respect that although Pacific communities have shared value systems, the ways these values are enacted or their importance differ from community to community (Bennett et al., 2013).

These values have been translated into research principles in various ways. The principles below have been developed by the Health Research Council (2014), the Ministry of Education (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001) and Otago University (Bennett et al., 2013).

## **Respect**

Respect when working with Pacific communities is about “acknowledging the primacy of the group and recognizing that the individual is a valued member of the group” (Bennett et al., 2013, p. 109). How respect is shown is specific to the Pacific community with whom the researcher is working (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014).

## **Relationships**

Relationships are integral to Pacific research; they should be developed and maintained in a respectful manner (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014).

## **Cultural Competency**

Cultural competency in Pacific research refers to both the researcher’s culture and also the culture of the community with whom the researcher is working. Researchers must be aware of their own cultural practices and values and understand how these impact their research and relationships in research (Bennett et al., 2013). Researchers should also be aware of the cultural practices and values of the

community with whom they are working (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). As a result of understanding both where they are coming from and where the community is coming from, they should be respectful of beliefs that differ from their own within the research process.

## **Meaningful Engagement**

Meaningful engagement with the Pacific research context requires an understanding that meaningful engagement in research is about developing, maintaining and sustaining relationships built on trust (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). This can be a long process; however, it is important to recognize that strong relationships produce meaningful and trusted Pacific research.

## **Reciprocity**

Reciprocity should be enacted both in the research process and in knowledge dissemination and utilization. Reciprocity during the research process is about not only providing appropriate reimbursement and acknowledgement when people participate in the research, but also developing the Pacific community's ability to engage in research themselves (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). It is about ensuring that the Pacific community can access the research free of charge and that Pacific peoples are mentored through the research process beyond completion of the project. Within the University of Otago's guidelines, they request that researchers who stand to significantly benefit financially from the research engage with their Research and Enterprise Office to arrange a clear and fair arrangement to benefit both the researcher and community, including the co-ownership of intellectual property (Bennett et al., 2013).

## **Utility**

Research with Pacific communities should have outcomes that are beneficial to Pacific communities and the environment (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). This is not limited to practical work; it is equally important that theory, research methods and methodologies grounded in Pacific ontologies and epistemologies are developed (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014) and that these methods and methodologies are replicable (Airini et al., 2010).

## **Rights**

Similar to traditional notions of research ethics, this refers to ensuring that collaborators<sup>14</sup> are aware of their rights as collaborators to informed consent, confidentiality, coercion-free participation, and the right to withdraw (Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014).

## **Balance**

Balance in Pacific research refers to two different forms. The first is the balance of power between the researcher and collaborator. It also refers to the balance of distribution of benefits from the research: it is important that Pacific peoples and communities benefit from the research alongside the researcher (Bennett et al., 2013).

## **Protection**

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<sup>14</sup> The use of the term collaborator as opposed to participant/subject is outlined within Chapter Four.

Protection of data and collaborators ensures that trust is built between the researcher and collaborators. There are particular concerns for Pacific research that go beyond traditional understandings of protection ethics. Knowledge that is shared in Pacific research belongs to the knowledge holder and this should be acknowledged in Pacific research (Bennett et al., 2013). When Indigenous Pacific knowledge – particularly knowledge on healing – is shared, it should be protected (Health Research Council, 2014). Also of importance is an awareness of the hierarchical nature of Pacific societies; this hierarchy can impact when and how knowledge is shared. When a collaborator shares knowledge, researchers should engage with the collaborator to find out if and how that knowledge should be shared as the knowledge and data belongs to the collaborators. Core to Pacific beliefs is the connection of land, environment, people, and other forms of life; Pacific research should account for this.

### **Capacity Building**

When conducting research with Pacific peoples it is important to ensure that Pacific people's capacity and capability is developed in the process (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). Capacity and capability building ties directly into the research principle of reciprocity as it is a lasting way that the researcher can give back to the community.

### **Participation**

Pacific peoples should participate at all levels of the research project. In practice, this means ensuring that Pacific peoples have a voice in key decisions throughout the research project (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014).

Although these values and principles are useful guidelines for conducting Pacific research, they do not fulfill all the needs of this research project. This project engages with Pacific/Pasifika women and, as a result, this research needs not only to adhere to the principles outlined above but also to respond and

engage with the practice of working with Pacific/Pasifika women. Therefore, I have developed my own research methodology from the standpoint of a Pasifika woman in order to respond to the specific social and cultural context of the research.

## MASI MAKING

The Fijian women's art form of masi<sup>15</sup> will be used as a metaphor for research that centers Pacific women's experiences within the research process. The use of a cultural practice as a metaphor for research is not uncommon in the Pacific (kakala, tivaevae, etc.). Masi as a terminology automatically locates this research within the Pacific, and for those with knowledge of the Pacific it suggests a gender-specific focus. The use of masi as metaphor is also an intentional moment, a moment where I am attempting to fulfill Suaalii-Sauni and Fulu-Aiolupoeta's (2014) argument that "in using our own Indigenous terms to represent research methodologies that carry our Pacific values, we stand a better chance of transporting these values across not only multicultural and multiethnic domains, but also across generations" (p. 336). In recording and using masi as metaphor in research I contribute to a wider intentional movement to use our language and culture in spaces where they traditionally have not been found. This use of masi as metaphor empowers other Fijian researchers to embrace their language and culture within a Eurocentric institution and to recognise that the Fijian worldview has a lot to offer the institution.

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<sup>15</sup> Masi is the Fijian term for tapa, kapa, siapo, etc., a form of bark cloth that I describe in more detail below.

While the use of masi as metaphor is an important decolonisation exercise I am also careful to ensure that its use within a Eurocentric institution does not ascribe new meanings to traditional teachings and knowledge, and that I take the time to clearly outline what masi is and its significance to Fijian culture. Masi is a bark cloth made from the paper mulberry tree and involves various steps. The bark must be stripped from the tree; the inner bark is removed from the outer and then beaten to spread the fibers. Sometimes the fibers are soaked to soften them. To produce a large piece, the pieces are layered and beaten together to make the piece of cloth bigger. Each piece is then colored and patterned by hand. Masi artists can use stencils to create detailed designs, a mixture of folding and painting, hand painting, or rubbing tablets. The patterns on masi are symbolic and depending on the planned use for the masi, it can have different patterns or designs. Patterns and designs can also reveal where the masi was made. Masi is considered a women's art form as women pattern the masi. Historically masi was used to communicate with the gods. A thin long piece of white masi would hang from the top of the temple bure (building) and touch the floor by the corner post so that the gods could pass through the masi to the priest. Today masi is gifted and used in ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, significant birthdays, acknowledgement, welcoming honoured guests, and graduations.

## MASI RESEARCH

Masi as a metaphor for research reflects many of the Pacific research values outlined by the Health Research Council, Otago University, and the Ministry of Education. However, where it differentiates is in its purposeful centering of the Pasifika/Pacific women's voice. In practice, this research has abided by general Pacific research principles while also centering Pasifika women's voices. This research involved conducting fourteen one-on-one talanoa (Pacific relational narrative enquiry research method) with Indigenous Pacific women who work in higher education and six community talanoa.

## Centering Pasifika Women's Voices

Masi making is a women's practice, and it is for this reason that I have chosen to use masi as a metaphor for research that centers Pasifika voices. A number of characteristics of masi making render it an appropriate metaphor beyond it being a women's art form, including its endurance as an art form, the process through which masi is made, and its value within the community. As an art form, masi has outlasted other male-dominated art forms such as carving boats or masks which have been overtaken with the use of modern tools and materials (Neich & Pendergast, 1997). This endurance is reflected within masi research by assuming that Pacific women hold knowledge that will be useful for generations to come, just as masi is. This knowledge is not unique to masi research methodology (Kaopua, 2013; Lipe, 2014; Naepi, 2016; in press), but masi research methodology centres this as a core assumption. Masi making as a process involves women either working on one piece together or working on individual pieces (Neich & Pendergast, 1997); it is for this reason that masi research involves a gathering of Pacific women to work on the research together. In this case the community talanoa was a moment for Pasifika women to come together and work on the research. Masi is a valued piece of art work within Fijian communities, gifted at significant moments in an individual's or family's life from the first gift of masi at birth to the masi one is wrapped in at death. In masi research this means recognising that the work that Pacific women do should be valued. In practice, this is about recognising that the information that is shared by Pacific women collaborators is valuable and should be treated as such in the research process.

This research was intentional in viewing Pasifika women as knowledge holders who are experts in their field. In practice, this meant that when designing the study every opportunity was given to Pasifika women to be the authority on the research. This was done in a number of ways throughout the research process. One of the initial steps was to use a research method that enabled Pasifika women to be the

authority. Talanoa<sup>16</sup> ensured that Pasifika women were able to share their stories unhindered by specific questions or timing. Secondly, this research used community talanoa with Pasifika women as a reliability and validity measure, ensuring that Pasifika women were seen and understood to have the best understanding of our own stories.

## **Respect**

Respect when working with Pacific communities is about “acknowledging the primacy of the group and recognizing that the individual is a valued member of the group” (Bennett et al., 2013, p. 109). How respect is shown is specific to the Pacific community with whom the researcher is working. In practice this meant I was aware of where the collaborators came from and respected their cultural practices. For example, there was the possibility that some Samoan collaborators could hold chiefly titles. These titles suggest a different level of reverence, not just as Pasifika women but as a Pasifika woman who holds a title and is therefore respected and upheld in her community. When I was aware a collaborator held a title, I addressed her by her title in email and talanoa until I was told to do otherwise.

## **Relationships**

Relationships are integral to Pacific research; they should be developed and maintained in a respectful manner (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). In practice, this meant that I engaged with Pasifika women with the respect that my culture dictates.

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<sup>16</sup> A conversational research method specific to Pacific research practices described in more details below.

As a younger Pasifika woman, it was important that I acknowledge the women and their work. This meant that throughout each talanoa I acknowledged the work that many of the women had done. For example, I opened talanoa 14 with reference to how other women had recognised and continue to recognise the collaborator's contribution to the field:

You've come up in nearly every talanoa by myself or someone else as a Pacific woman who's led the way, shown what we can do, mentored people and encouraged people... .. Your voice is in here whether or not you took part, I think this is what I want you to know because everybody ... women have spoken about the impact of having you in their lives and having your mentorship and your guidance.

Taking the time to acknowledge the work of the women who took part is an important part of respect; it was about ensuring that these women knew that I understood who they were, what they had contributed to the community, and the impact their work has had.

### **Cultural Competency**

Cultural competency in Pacific research refers to both the researcher's culture and also the culture of the community with whom the researcher is working. Researchers must be aware of their own cultural practices and values and understand how these impact their research and relationships in research (Bennett, et al., 2013). Researchers should also be aware of the cultural practices and values of the community they are working with. As a result of understanding both where they are coming from and where the community is coming from, they should be respectful of beliefs that are different from their own within the research process. Within this project, this meant taking the time to reflect on my own positioning as a Pasifika woman with Fijian and Palangi (settler/white) ancestry. I needed to understand that although all of my collaborators were Pasifika, they were also diverse. They were from many different Pacific Island

nations, some were born in Aotearoa New Zealand, others migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand at a young age or more recently. Their different backgrounds meant that there were different cultural specifics of which to be aware. One way that I tried to bring this into the talanoa was by ensuring that within our relationship building, I acknowledged that they were from a specific Pacific nation, making sure that they knew although this was a Pasifika project there was space to be specifically Pacific. They were also diverse professionally; some held senior leadership positions whilst others were just beginning their journey in higher education employment. This meant being aware of the different professional circles that Pasifika women operate in and ensuring that I did not say anything or coerce them into saying things that may jeopardise their working space.

### **Meaningful Engagement**

Meaningful engagement with the Pacific research context requires developing, maintaining, and sustaining research relationships built on trust. This can be a long process; however, it is important to recognize that strong relationships produce meaningful and trusted Pacific research (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). I knew many of the collaborators before the research began, either on a personal level or on a professional level. Those I did not know beforehand usually knew of me, or I of them, through professional and personal networks. This was an important part of the talanoa process; there needed to be trust in order for them to share their experiences. Relationships were built during the talanoa process which have meant that I have continued to stay in touch with collaborators. Collaborators receive updates on the research process and I met with some of them in Aotearoa outside of the research process.

### **Reciprocity**

Reciprocity should be enacted both in the research process and in knowledge dissemination and utilization. Reciprocity during the research process is about not only providing appropriate reimbursement

and acknowledgement when people participate in the research, but also developing the Pacific community's ability to engage in research themselves (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). Beyond the research process it is about ensuring that the Pacific community can access the research free of charge and mentoring Pacific peoples through the research process beyond completion of the project. Within this project reciprocity was shown in a number of ways. Where I could, during one on one talanoa I shared academic resources or opportunities from North America. For the community talanoa I provided a meal over the talanoa and also a gift for the spaces that hosted me. This research project will also be available free of charge in soft copy once the dissertation is completed.

## **Utility**

Research with Pacific communities should have outcomes that are beneficial to Pacific communities and the environment (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). This is not limited to practical work; it is equally important that theory, research methods, and methodologies grounded in Pacific ontologies and epistemologies are developed. This research has utility in two ways. The first is in the development of replicable Pacific research methodology that is centred on women. The second is through the knowledge dissemination and translation of this project. Collaborators will receive a summary of the work and the summary will be available online for free.

## **Rights**

Similar to traditional notions of research ethics, this refers to ensuring that collaborators are aware of their rights as a collaborator to informed consent, confidentiality, coercion-free participation, and the right to withdraw (Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). As shown in Appendix One: Study De and Appendix Two: Collaborator Consent Forms, collaborators had the right to informed consent, confidentiality, coercion-free participation, and the right to withdraw.

## **Balance**

Balance in Pacific research takes two different forms. The first is the balance of power between the researcher and collaborator. It also refers to the balance of who benefits from the research; it is important that Pacific peoples and communities benefit from the research alongside the researcher (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). Due to my positioning as a younger Pasifika woman with a decreased amount of social capital compared to my collaborators, cultural hierarchies ensured a balance of power between the researcher and collaborators. As a member of the Pasifika community I will benefit from the research in that I will receive my PhD and this will contribute to capacity and capability building within Pasifika communities. However, I am also aware of the need to ensure that the wider Pasifika community benefits. This means that this research needs to be publicly available and also used to push for change. I intend on doing this a number of ways. First, a summary of the project and the dissertation will be available online for free. Secondly, I intend to ensure knowledge translation and dissemination are a key part of my activities post-completion. I have already begun this process by presenting this work at conferences and I intend to continue my current publication rate but with a focus on this project.

## **Protection**

Protection of data and collaborators ensures that trust is built between the researcher and collaborators. There are a number of particular concerns for Pacific research that go beyond traditional understandings of protection ethics (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). Knowledge that is shared in a Pacific research context belongs to the knowledge holder and this should be acknowledged in Pacific research. When Indigenous Pacific knowledge is shared it should be protected. Also of importance is an awareness of the hierarchical nature of Pacific societies, as this hierarchy can impact when and how knowledge is shared (Bennett et al., 2013). When a collaborator

shares knowledge, researchers should engage with the collaborator to find out if and how that knowledge should be shared as the knowledge and data belongs to the collaborators (Health Research Council, 2014). Core to Pacific beliefs is the connection of land, environment, people, and other forms of life; Pacific research should account for this. Collaborators had the option of being identified within the study; while none of the collaborators requested that they be directly quoted in the one on one talanoa, some did ask to be mentioned by name in the acknowledgements.

### **Capacity Building**

When conducting research with Pacific peoples it is important to ensure that Pacific people's capacity and capability is developed in the process. Capacity and capability building ties directly into the research principle of reciprocity, as it enables the researcher to give back to the community in a lasting way (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). As a member of the Pasifika community I will benefit from the research in that I will receive my PhD, and this will contribute to capacity and capability building within Pasifika communities.

### **Participation**

Pacific peoples should participate at all levels of the research project. In practice, this means ensuring that Pacific peoples have a voice in key decisions throughout the research project (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014). This research project was driven by a member of the Pasifika community (me); however, I am aware that this in itself does not fulfill the participation aspect of Pacific research methodologies. This project ensured participation beyond my own by consulting with collaborators in the research project. The community talanoa was an opportunity to engage with the community about the research and how it would be discussed and published.

### **POSITIONALITY**

“I was just going to say, I think it's really important that you tell your story because you're a young Pacific academic woman coming through and so that's part of that Talanoa process.” – Talanoa 13

I go by Sereana Naepi. I am named after my great-grandmother who raised my mother in the village of Nakida in Natasiri, Fiji. My last name is that of my husband whose parents grew up in Avatele and Tamakatonga in Niue. Before I was Naepi I was Patterson, the name of my father who is Pakeha (settler/white) and grew up in Pakuranga, Auckland, New Zealand. The Fijian teachings I hold were learnt on the streets of Mount Wellington in Auckland, not on the banks of the Wainamala River like my mother.

I am completing my PhD at the University of British Columbia because my Samoan master's degree supervisor suggested it, continuing the process of Pasifika women mentoring each other to navigate to the island sooner. She shared that gaining a PhD from an international and higher ranked university would progress my career tract faster. I did my Master of Arts on teaching and learning for Māori and Pasifika student success in a Bachelor of Arts out of increased frustration at the inaction of many academics within the university; they called for evidence-based practice and did not find my experience as a Pacific undergraduate at their university and my experience supporting 1200 Maori and Pacific students to be relevant.

I was educated in a low-decile high school that was predominantly brown in a white neighborhood. When I was serving on the Board of Trustees at the high school, the board suggested that we only take in-zone (read: white) students as a way of thinning out the out-of-zone (read: brown) students so that more South African immigrants would be attracted to the school (“we really like what you are doing here but it is a little too brown”). I sat in that board room as an alumnus who was out-of-zone (read: brown) and decided that something needed to change.

During my undergraduate studies I witnessed the few Pacific students who were in my early undergraduate classes slowly disappear. Then in my honors I was asked where the other Pacific student in our class was (because we all know each other...). While completing my master's degree I was told by a white 'ally' that my master's would not be funded by a national organization because they would not be interested in it (in spite of it being about a key strategic area). While working in the university I was dismissed at various moments, either because I was Pacific, because I was a woman, or because I was young. I sat in an admissions meeting and had an associate dean ask me to stand up and turn around, at which point he said, "I don't know what you are concerned about: your butt is not that big." Until then I had been attending Faculty-sponsored gym sessions with him and other Faculty members... this was in an admissions meeting.

In Canada I was told that I was the most qualified and most experienced of job applicants but that I would disrupt the homogeneity of the space, and that perhaps I could consider changing my appearance, much like the person who was giving me the advice changed their clothes depending on who they were meeting as their gender identity made some people uncomfortable (because you know, the brown washes off). The graduate college that I lived at had compulsory dining hall meals; over breakfast I was told that "it makes sense to limit migration, a homogenous population is more peaceful," by an individual who is now a Vanier scholar<sup>17</sup>. When leaving that college I was told by the Principal, in front of everyone, that despite anyone's efforts to change the college it would remain the same. I had spent a significant amount of time

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<sup>17</sup> Vanier is a highly competitive national scholarship program in Canada

trying to increase Indigenous engagement and raise awareness of sexual assault; this is the same college that made national headlines for their inaction around sexual assault and the Principal's parting gift for me was to let me know this had not and will not change.

I had my first baby (Alice) during the data collection of this thesis and I fear that my daughter will have the same experiences, and like my mother, I will cry on the phone as these stories are recounted and feel disbelief that the world really has not changed despite all of its advances. I understand research as way to combat these experiences: we need to tell our stories and share our worldviews so that the generation after us does not have the same stories to share. Higher education needs to serve Pasifika people better and this research is a small step toward that goal. This dissertation is in service to the Pasifika community and I will use it to advocate for change.

*THIS IS OUR DRUA/WE HAVE CRAFTED IT WITH KNOWLEDGE FROM THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US/LET THEM GUIDE US ON THIS JOURNEY/LET THEM BE THE SAFETY IN THE STORM*

## CHAPTER FOUR: METHOD/PLANNING OUR JOURNEY

*HOW WILL WE JOURNEY/WHOSE SIGNS WILL WE READ*

### INTRODUCTION

The data for this research was collected in two phases. The first phase was a series of one on one talanoa conducted over Skype. The second phase was a series of six community talanoa across Aotearoa where the findings from the first talanoa were discussed. This section of the dissertation will give a summary of the collaborators, explain the method used in the research, and outline data validity and reliability measures.

### COLLABORATORS

For both phases of the research I wanted to speak to women who identified as being Indigenous Pacific (Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, Rotuma, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Palau, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Wallis and Futuna, Hawaii, French Polynesia, Rapanui) and had worked in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand in the last five years. As a result, people who did not identify as women, were non-Indigenous Pacific (e.g. Indo-Fijian), and had not worked in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand in the last five years were not included.

I recruited a total of twenty-seven collaborators who collectively represent 216 years of experience working in higher education. Majority of collaborators worked at research intensive universities with none working in wānanga (Māori universities). The first phase was fourteen one-on-one talanoa with Indigenous Pacific women who work in higher education. Phase two consisted of six community talanoa with Indigenous Pacific women which ranged in participation from two to six collaborators, with a total of

thirteen collaborators. The women who participated were from Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Rarotonga and Aitutaki<sup>18</sup>, Fiji, Tuvalu, and Tahiti. Given the small number of Pasifika women working within higher education it is not possible to give a detailed breakdown of the roles of these Pasifika women within different institutions, as that would jeopardise their right to privacy/anonymity. However, these women work in universities across Aotearoa New Zealand, and they hold both academic and professional staff roles at both junior and senior levels.

This dissertation uses the term collaborators to indicate that the women who participated in this research were not bodies or stories to be studied. Instead their role in the research was to collaborate in talanoa and co-create research that would ultimately benefit our community. This is an intentional moment of decolonising research.

## TALANOA

Talanoa as a form of narrative enquiry developed from Pacific people's oratory tradition. Like other Indigenous research methods, talanoa as a research method is based on Indigenous epistemologies and philosophical understandings (Kovach, 2010). It is therefore important that before outlining what talanoa is as a research method, we first visit what talanoa is as a Pacific cultural practice that is firmly tied to Pacific epistemologies.

### *TALANOA: CULTURAL PRACTICE*

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<sup>18</sup> Cook Islands

Although talanoa is now used as a research method and methodology, talanoa was first and foremost a cultural practice. Talanoa as a cultural practice can be found throughout the Pacific (Prescott, 2008). Although Pacific peoples share a broad understanding of what talanoa is there are small nuances of understanding to each island. Within a Fijian context there can be formal and instrumental talanoa (veivosaki) and more informal talanoa. Talanoa differ depending on who is involved, and the type of talanoa informs what practices and language are necessary (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014). More broadly, talanoa in Fiji is two or more people talking together where one is the storyteller and the audience are mainly listeners (Nabobo-Baba, 2011). Nabobo-Baba has noted that Fijians can have particularly meaningful talanoa referred to as vakamosi yalo (painful to the spirit-soul) or vakamarautaka na yalo (causing happiness to one's spirit-soul) (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014). Tongans understand talanoa as "a personal encounter where people story their issues, their realities and their aspirations" (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 21) or, more generally, it is a Tongan term for when people engage in conversation (Otunuku, 2011). Samoans understand talanoa as "the ancient practice of multi-level and multi-layered critical discussions and free conversations" (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 24).

#### *TALANOA: RESEARCH METHOD*

Talanoa began to be developed as a Pacific research method after Sitiveni Halapua used it as a form of conflict resolution in Fiji's 2000 coup (Farrelly & Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, 2014). It has since become the most commonly used research method in the Pacific and it is more commonly used in education-based research (Farrelly and Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Suaalii-Sauni & Fulu-Aiolupotea, 2014). Although talanoa has been used interchangeably as both a research method and methodology, this research aligns with Suaalii-Sauni & Fulu-Aiolupotea (2014) and Tunufa'I (2016) and views talanoa as a research method.

Talanoa method can be defined as a Pacific relational narrative inquiry method. However, each Pacific academic who has used talanoa identifies nuances that are specific to how they have used the

talanoa method. Tongan academic Timote Vaoleti (2006) was the first to imagine talanoa as a research method. Vaoleti (2006) deconstructed the word talanoa in Tongan and observed that tala was to “inform, relate or tell” and noa was “nothing in particular” meaning that talanoa was to talk “without any particular framework for that discussion” (p. 23). Pacific academics have since built on this definition. Otunuku (2011) defined talanoa as “dynamic interaction of story-telling, debating, reflecting, gossiping, joking, sharing families’ genealogies, food and other necessities. It is talking about everything or anything that collaborators are interested in” (p. 45). For Halapua (2008), talanoa may be understood as “engaging in dialogue with, or telling stories to each other absent [of] concealment of the inner feelings and experiences that resonate in our hearts and minds” (p. 1). Fijian academic Nabobo-Baba speaks of talanoa as also meaning to offload (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2012). Each of these definitions builds on the idea of talanoa as a narrative inquiry method. However, to understand talanoa as just narrative inquiry is to gloss “over its emotional and cultural complexity” (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2012, p. 1). Prescott (2008) compared talanoa and the modern interview technique, identifying that the modern interview is primarily focussed on gathering knowledge, whereas talanoa is about creating or strengthening relationships and coming to reach a state of understanding between those involved. Most recently in a study on Sport Management and Talanoa, Stewart-Withers, Sewabu, and Richardson (2017) summarised the work on talanoa as:

a process which affords value to, for example, kinship, land, tradition/custom, relationships, ancestors, ceremony, cosmology, space, language, ethics, the chiefly system, systems of faith, and protocols. Talanoa encompasses behaviors/manners such as openness, patience, tolerance, flexibility, silence, humility, generosity, gifting, reciprocity, humour, empowerment, listening, sharing, forgiveness, and subjectivity. (p. 59)

There are many interpretations of what the nuances of talanoa contain. As such it is important that when using talanoa, time is taken to explain how talanoa has been used (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Vaioletti, 2006).

A critique of talanoa has been that there is an absence of time restrictions and that collaborators can deviate from the focus of the research. For those unfamiliar with Pacific customs “it can be repetitive and confusing and can look like collaborators are being evasive” (Stewart-Withers, Sewabu & Richardson, 2017, p. 65). However, as Otunuku (2011) notes “the researcher allows for these digressions because it is respectful to allow them to happen, and it helps with the rhythm and the flow of talanoa” (p. 50). This can make the talanoa process time consuming, but it is within these deviations and repetition that relationships are built, which is a core part of the talanoa process.

An important part of talanoa is to be open to building relationships with your collaborators. In order to host a successful talanoa, the researcher needs to recognize that within talanoa, emotions and empathy are essential (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014). This aspect of talanoa was within Vaioletti’s (2006) original definition; he noted that talanoa involves the intermingling of the emotions, knowledge, experience, and spirits of the researcher and collaborator. It has been argued that the results of a talanoa are “found at the nexus of shared knowledge-sensation-emotion” (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014, p. 328).

Talanoa is a specifically Pacific approach to broader Indigenous scholarship that decolonises and indigenises research. This is a process in which voices that previously had been marginalized and subjected to colonial research involving exploitation and abuse are instead centered and valued within the research process (Chilisa, 2012; Chilisa & Tsheko, 2014; Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Liamputton, 2010; Smith, 1999; Stewart-Withers, Sewabu, & Richardson, 2017; Suaalii-Sauni & Fulu-Aiolupotea, 2014; Thaman, 2003a, 2003b; Vaioletti, 2006). Talanoa is in many ways what Konai Thaman (2003b) was referring to when

asking Pacific researchers to decolonise research by developing “their own research methodologies and techniques as a way of empowering not only themselves but also the people and communities with whom they work” (p. 163). Talanoa has been developed by Pacific peoples for Pacific people; it claims and creates a space that is free of racism and gendered bias within the academy that has traditionally devalued, and continues to devalue, Indigenous and racialised women. Talanoa as a research method is being used in education to advance Pacific communities and is ensuring that when we conduct research, we conduct it our way. Our way involves centering our relationships, respecting the process by not limiting time and discussion points, allowing for spirituality and emotion within the research process, and respecting our cultural teachings and customs.

## USE OF TALANOA IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT

This section is in two parts. I will first address how my use of talanoa aligned with the definitions outlined above. I will then outline how my use of talanoa differed due to my methodology.

### *CENTERING OUR RELATIONSHIPS*

Talanoa is a relational research method, which means that within the process of talanoa relationships should be built or strengthened. This was evident in this research project in numerous ways. Initial conversations in the talanoa were about (re)connecting with each other; much of this time was spent discussing my pregnancy or the baby and how collaborators’ lives had changed since I saw them last. If I did not know the collaborator then this time was usually spent finding out what possible connections we might have to each other in not only research but also community. Whilst this meant that not the entire talanoa was spent on the research topics, it was more important to me that the relational side of talanoa was embedded in the research.

### *RESPECTING THE PROCESS*

In order for people to share meaningful stories there needs to be no limitation on time or topics. Within the research this meant that unless I was asked, I did not refer to the research questions. Otherwise each talanoa began with collaborators sharing how they came to be working in higher education and from there we began to talanoa about their experiences and how they related to change-making in higher education. I was also very careful to ensure that collaborators knew there was no time limit; as a result the talanoa ranged from 45 minutes to 120 minutes for one-on-one talanoa, and up to 2 ½ hours for community talanoa.

### *ALLOWING FOR EMOTION AND SPIRITUALITY*

The inclusion of emotion and spirituality aligns with my own understandings of talanoa. Fijian academic Nabobo-Baba has noted that the Fijian values of empathy, love, and humility are a core part of talanoa (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2012). In practice, this meant that when collaborators cried when recounting a story or experience this was not ignored; instead, this outpouring of emotion was embraced. This embracement meant that the collaborator understood that their emotion was welcomed in the space and felt that they could continue to express their inner feelings. Spirituality was included through the acceptance that some collaborators understand their world through faith-based teachings (Christian or traditional Pacific understandings). Instead of discouraging them from sharing this understanding, I encouraged them to reflect on the role of faith in their everyday work.

### *RESPECTING CULTURAL TEACHING AND CUSTOMS*

Respecting cultural teaching and customs was particularly important in this research. As a younger woman engaging with older women it was important I showed deference and respect for the collaborators, not just as knowledge holders but also because of their standing within the Pasifika community. One

collaborator requested that I return to Wellington to engage in a community event and also to conduct a talanoa in person. Given this individual's community standing, it was extremely important that I returned to Wellington despite not having initial plans to return.

## BEYOND THE DUSKY MAIDEN TALANOA

Growing up I was taught that talanoa was something that men engaged in around the kava bowl. It was a formal practice whereby the males of the family settled disputes and discussed possible family futures, etc., or wider political issues such as coups. However, women can and do participate in drinking kava in less formal situations such as family gatherings, birthdays, and weddings. It is with this in mind that I use the talanoa method alongside the masi methodology, as it enables me to acknowledge the role of women in talanoa and also make clear that the talanoa in which I am participating is tied to how women participate in talanoa. Otunuku (2011) has noted that talanoa can be gender-based. However, in Otunuku's research they found that women left that talanoa space as subjects shifted to male-orientated issues. This research project differentiates from this as I set up the talanoa specifically to be a women's space. As a result of setting up a specifically female space we were able to discuss issues such as male/female relationships, sexual harassment, raising a family, what it means to be a Pacific woman, etc. In practice this meant that even though I had a newborn who would cry and need to be fed during talanoa, the cultural and gender framing of the research meant that this was not seen as an interruption or a reason to stop the talanoa; instead, the talanoa would continue and many of the women would share their own experiences of motherhood while working in higher education or completing their studies. An example of this is from talanoa 13:

Think about Talanoa today, we engage as whole people. Not just as academics. If you need to breastfeed Alice, you breastfeed Alice. That's how it works. I mean, that's how we should be able

to do it. Because we don't cut off part of ourselves to go and do this academic thing over here. We bring all of ourselves.

## FEEDBACK ON THE METHOD

During the research process some members chose to give feedback on the process of participating in a talanoa that enabled them to have conversations about being a Pasifika woman working in higher education:

I was surprised how very angry I was, and I thought about that for a long time afterwards, the necessity to have platforms to talk about stuff, it keeps coming back to me a lot, between that one and this one. Having had a chance to process some of that stuff and going, okay, I can put it aside and continue on, but now at least I know that that is there and was there, and was a part of my experience, and it's better to know that something is living with you, then to have it suddenly flare up. Something that you weren't aware of, explode in the committee meeting somewhere, so thank you for allowing that part of my academic experience to breathe, to see the light of day, and I think move to a healthier place. (Community Talanoa One)

And it can be quite therapeutic. It can help you think through a lot of ... Some of the challenges, and some of the things that we do well, that we can accentuate. (Talanoa seven)

The two talanoa above suggest that Pasifika women need more space to share their experiences of working in higher education, as a self-care practice. Talanoa give an opportunity not only for reflection but also for a building of connections that can form the basis of support and mentoring relationships.

So maybe our secrets will be shared, but we wouldn't have partaken in your research if we had fear of that being used against us at a later stage. I think that our voices need to be heard more broadly and more widely, and regionally, but internationally as well. (Talanoa seven)

The collaborator from talanoa seven is directly addressing a concern of this research, that it could be used against Pasifika women who are attempting to navigate and harness storms. However, the suggestion here is that the need for Pasifika women to be heard outweighs the risk of repercussions.

### *PHASE ONE TALANOA*

Collaborators for stage one of the talanoa were recruited using my own networks and the snowball technique. Potential collaborators were emailed a description of the study (Appendix One: Study De) and invited to contact me to arrange a time to meet if they were interested. Once a collaborator confirmed her interest we would arrange a time to Skype that was convenient to her. At least two days before the talanoa I would reconnect with the collaborator with the ethics form (Appendix Two: Collaborator Consent Forms) and to see if they had any concerns while also reminding them of the research questions:

1. What experiences do Pacific women have working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand?
2. How do Pacific women define success for themselves and their communities?
3. How do Pacific women respond to clashes between their community's goals and the universities' goals?
4. What can we learn about how to prepare institutions to support Pacific women who work in higher education?
5. What change-making techniques can we share with our community to enable faster change within a slow-moving system?

The talanoa ranged in time from 60-120 minutes for one-on-one talanoa and up to 2 ½ hours for community talanoa. From there, collaborators were invited to reflect on the research overall as “Pacific women’s experiences in higher education in relation to change-making” and also the questions which had been sent to them two days earlier. These talanoa were recorded and then transcribed. Each transcription had any identifying features removed (unless the collaborator had requested to be identified in the research) and then sent back to the collaborator for final approval before being analysed for sharing during phase two of the research.

#### *PHASE TWO TALANOA*

Phase two of the talanoa involved six community talanoa: three in Auckland, two in Wellington, and one in Otago. Recruitment for these community talanoa followed the same pattern as phase one. I used my own networks to send invitations and encouraged them to invite others to participate. Collaborators were given an ethics form (Appendix Three) and also a summary of phase one of the talanoa (Appendix Four). As is culturally appropriate I provided food and we had a talanoa about the findings so far. These talanoa confirmed the themes that had been identified and also added to the stories of working in higher education.

#### DATA VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY MEASURES

This research used two methods to test the validity and reliability of the findings. The first was through the use of phase two of the talanoa. These talanoa involved reflecting on the findings so far, and during the talanoa collaborators were encouraged to reflect on the stories and themes provided, consider whether they reflected their own experience of working in higher education and if the themes aligned with the stories, and to contribute anything further. The community talanoa were rich in discussion of the

themes, and there was general agreement that they aligned with collaborators' own experiences of working in higher education but some disagreement about my interpretation of them.

A particularly powerful example of this was my reading of some of the phase one findings as examples of sexism. In my initial summary of the findings I classified some talanoa as examples of 'sexism' with the expectation that I would frame these stories using traditional feminist critiques of patriarchy and power. However, once I shared this classification in the community talanoa it became clear that this did not align with the masi methodology value of centering and valuing Pacific women's voices. One collaborator was very clear about the use of a feminist lens and noted that "this theory of feminism, is sort of contradicting with our Pacific feminism because these theories were written outside of our world" (Community Talanoa Two).

In this process, an argument was made that instead of being viewed as examples of sexism, these stories should be viewed as a breaking of tapu. These stories are tapu-breaking as many of the cultures within the Pacific have an understanding of the male/female relationship as a sacred one of trust. In community talanoa one, a collaborator said, "*Where I've got to in thinking about it since then is and having the opportunity to move into a Pacific space and look at why the energy is so very different, it's the brother/sister thing*" when reflecting on why working with her Pacific male counterparts was different to working with other male counterparts. Males and females who are not family are still understood to be 'brothers' and 'sisters'; therefore, it would be inappropriate within a working space for there to be sexual advances or harassment, not because it indicates a power differential but because it is a breaking of tapu through a severing or disruption of sacred relationships. This argument does not dismiss or deny the existence of power differentials but instead offers an alternative way to interpret how a patriarchal structure within an institution can impact women of different cultural ontologies.

The second validity and reliability method was the option for collaborators to remain in contact with the researcher. Within the ethics forms, collaborators had the opportunity to indicate if they wished to be updated on the research project. Those who indicated they wished to be updated received updates on significant findings in the research, such as the summary of themes for phase two of the talanoa and also a draft of the analysis section of this dissertation. Collaborators were encouraged to indicate if they had doubts or concerns about these findings and my interpretation of them. Collaborators shared their thoughts via email about the analysis and also provided feedback on the framing of the stories.

## SUMMARY

This research used the talanoa method to conduct fourteen one-on-one talanoa with Pasifika women. The findings from these talanoa were used to inform six community talanoa with thirteen Indigenous Pacific women. In order to ensure data reliability and validity, I actively sought feedback from collaborators and used the community talanoa to confirm findings. Talanoa is a relational research method; therefore, the knowledge that is produced from within this research method is collaborative and collective in its approach to meaning-making.

*WE WILL JOURNEY WITH EACH OTHER/WE WILL TRUST IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS/WE WILL TRUST IN OUR HISTORIES/WE WILL  
JOURNEY WITH EACH OTHER*

## CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS/MAPPING THE STORMS

*LET US PAUSE IN THESE MOMENTS OF UPHEAVAL/AS THE WAVES RISE ABOVE OUR DRUA/THE WINDS PULL AT OUR BODIES/OUR CAREFULLY WOVEN SAILS LOOK SET TO COME UNDONE/THE RAIN, THE RAIN, THE RAIN /LET US MAP/WE ARE HERE NOW AND CANNOT TURN BACK/THE ISLAND IS JUST BEYOND THE STORM/HOW WILL WE SURVIVE THIS/LET US MAP/LET US SHARE/LET US LAUGH/LET US CRY/LET US MAP*

This chapter addresses the five research questions of this project. The first three questions will be addressed individually whilst four and five will be addressed together:

1. How do Pasifika women define success for themselves and their communities?

*What does the Island look like?*

2. What experiences do Pasifika women have working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand?

*What do the storms look like?*

3. How do Pasifika women respond to clashes between their community's goals and the universities' goals?

*Do we harness the storms/transform the storms/or look to the horizon?*

4. What can we learn about how to prepare institutions to support Pasifika females who work in higher education?

*How do we transform the storms?*

5. What change-making techniques can we share with our community to enable faster change within a slow-moving system?

*How do we transform the storms sooner?*

An unexpected sixth question came up during the talanoa. Pasifika women shared advice on how to be a Pasifika woman working within higher education. The emphasis that was placed on this sharing suggests

that the collaborators (as the experts) wanted to share not just how to change the institution but also how to be in the institution while that change is happening.

### *How do we survive the storms?*

This chapter will address each of these questions using quotes from both the one-on-one talanoa and the community talanoa.

## MAPPING

Mapping has been used by Indigenous academics previously (Goeman, 2013). I use the term mapping as a way to connect back to our Pacific ancestors. When considering the navigational practices of Pacific people, we know that we would head out to an island before even knowing it was there. One person would head out to a point and map the stars, tides, birds, etc., and then head back and teach these signs to the next navigator, who would reach the initial point faster and then go beyond, all the while mapping so that those who followed could journey faster (Howe, 2006). This is how I envision the sharing in these talanoa. Pasifika women have mapped their journeys to where they are and now they share not only what landmarks made their journeys possible but also the storms they encountered that slowed their journeys down. This sharing means that the next Pasifika women who attempt to navigate to the island will be able to recognise the signs and the storms in order to travel faster and further than before.

## WHAT DOES THE ISLAND LOOK LIKE?

Before mapping the storm that slows our navigation we should consider our destination. Pasifika women shared reflections on what the island we are navigating toward looks like or what success looks like for them and their communities. Collaborators understood success as being deeply tied to their community, wellness, and cultural identity and practice.

Collaborators saw their own success as deeply intertwined with their community's success. A Tongan collaborator delved into Tongan worldviews to explain what it means to tie your success and progress to your community in talanoa nine: *"Langa Fonua. To build the land... ...It's about growing together, it's about uplifting each other, and becoming more self-sustained... ... Bring it back to actually build the community."* This idea of success as bringing and giving back to community was also reflected in community talanoa two: *"It's about growing together by lifting each other and becoming more self-sustained,"* and community talanoa six: *"we all want the same things for our communities really. None of us are working to make sure our students or our communities don't do better. We're all working to move to that one place."* The reoccurrence of the idea of success being about uplifting of communities throughout the talanoa suggests that it is key to how Pasifika women understand success, that it is not possible to be successful unless your community is also successful.

A number of talanoa reflected on a shared vision where our communities experience and benefit from the current system by referencing wellbeing statistics. For example, the collaborator in talanoa seven states that we have:

*[A] common vision that we want things to be better. We always want things to be better for our people, and we want our people, our Pacific peoples, to be at the top of some of these statistics. In that vision, we don't want our people to be dumbed down in a racist system or want our children to be fighting for their identities and cultures. So, we don't want our children and the younger generation to be fighting for what we have to fight for now."*

She emphasises wanting the next generation's experience of the system to be better than her own. In talanoa fourteen a collaborator recognised that part of being in a role of influence and change is to work towards a better future for Pasifika children:

*My understanding of success is being about lives being lived better... We together will actually make sure that every little brown girl and every little brown boy has a good life, a safe life, and lives out every year that they should've been entitled to. It's not right that brown kiddies are born these days, and they're going to, statistically, live a shorter life and have less money in their homes. That's not right. We get put into positions of leadership and influence to actually do something about that.*

These visions of success are tied to wellbeing statistics, which suggests that collaborators understand Pasifika success as having positive wellbeing statistics.

As shown above, collaborators define success in part as community wellness. Conversely, in talanoa thirteen a collaborator reflected on how it is a Pasifika academic's role to ensure that Pasifika communities understand that they can be and need to be successful in multiple worlds, that is, Pasifika, Pacific, and white worlds:

*So many of our Pacific communities still see that the way to be successful is through an English only approach. And I would say that we have to as Pacific academics who are considered at the top of the academic ladder we have an ethical responsibility to say to our communities, it is so important that you hold onto your languages, cultures and identities. Because ultimately that is what is going to set you apart from everybody else. That is what is going to give you something so special that non-Pacific people don't have. That is what is going to be more and more important, especially in this city that we live in. That we will be people who have real capability in knowing how to move effortlessly across multiple worlds. Knowing how to behave in the village when you go home to the islands and with the family, what's appropriate there. Being secure in that space and also being secure and knowing how to behave and how to speak at the highest levels of the university. Knowing how to behave in our communities here in*

*Aotearoa. But I don't think it should be either or, I think we should be encouraging our young people that they can be successful in both worlds.*

The island we are travelling to is one where we contribute to our community's success without giving up part of our own identities. The island is a collective space where Pasifika are in positions of influence and power to ensure that Pasifika communities are served well by the current system.

## WHAT DOES THE STORM LOOK LIKE?

The Pasifika women who took part in this research described experiences that are loosely aligned with others who experienced these storms. We will first look at their experiences of the weather systems of neo-liberalism and colonisation. Then I will move onto the storm that gender, race, and clashing ontologies create and its impact on Pasifika women. I have chosen not to divide these storms within the findings as Pasifika women are not able to separate their intersecting identities within their daily lives. To separate the findings by race/gender/ontology is antithetical to how knowledge is understood to be created in the Pacific: knowledge occurs in relationship (Meyer, 2008) and as such it needs to be presented in relationship.

## *NEOLIBERAL WEATHER SYSTEM*

As shown earlier, neoliberalism feeds the need to measure everything, from student completion rates to publication impact, as a way that universities (and the bodies within them) can be held 'accountable' for how they use and create their public and private resources (including time) (Acker, 2014; Caanan & Shumar, 2008; Mountz et al., 2015; Nast & Pulido, 2000; Readings, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2000; White, 2000) through an ideology of managerialism, corporate logics of efficiency, competition, and profit maximization (Osei-Kofi, 2012). This research records how Pasifika women experience neoliberal higher education institutions.

Collaborators confirmed that higher education institutions are part of the wider system of neoliberalism which is difficult to avoid. In talanoa two the collaborator remarked that *"one of the things we have to try to appreciate as well is that given the economies that we have set up for ourselves, right, we being the society in general, Aotearoa, Canada, Samoa, Fiji, wherever. We are now part of this global economic system, which has really made it hugely difficult for us to escape the business model where everybody is pushing for that elusive dollar."* This comment suggests that Pasifika women within higher education are aware that higher education institutions are part of a larger system that impacts the 'business model' of the institution. The impact of higher education's investment and participation in this system is shown in talanoa thirteen: *"I'm kind of quite cynical about what it is the university wants. It's really there to make money. I mean, that's what it's about, that's the priority."* This illustrates that higher education's investment in neoliberalism is fostering distrust between the institution and Pasifika women. The reality for collaborators is that the wider neoliberal system impacts their daily work in the devaluing of their knowledge and marginalization of their work. Within talanoa five the collaborator shared that, as a result of how the measuring is done, she feels that her work is marginalised: *"it's not that people can test the kind of work that I do. They just ignore it or they discount it by marginalizing what it is that I do. It's so easy to buy into, because you're just not that kind of academic. You constantly do things differently."* This quote speaks to how neoliberalism impacts the ways in which different knowledges are valued, with Pasifika knowledge being understood as having little to no value.

Interestingly, collaborators also expressed an apathy or lack of investment in the critique of the wider system, instead placing more importance on their ability to serve their community through interacting with the system, as demonstrated in talanoa six: *"it is about people, it is about serving society, it is about maintaining, and in that maintaining it becomes economical,"* three: *"I sort of reason that I work in a white man's world and in order for me to survive and make money and to help my family, I just have to cope,"* and

thirteen: “we're part of the system so how are we ensuring that they [students] will be successful so that it hasn't been a total waste of time and resource?”

Pasifika women are aware of the neoliberal weather system but they are not overly concerned about transforming it at this moment. Whilst it does impact their daily practices, they have invested in the system out of a necessity to reach the island that is outlined above.

### COLONIAL WEATHER SYSTEM

Although higher education institutions are touting their commitment to decolonisation, collaborator stories suggest that there is still a significant amount of work to do in this area. Pasifika women have clearly given some thought to the wider colonial weather system. In talanoa two the collaborator shared her reflections on how decolonisation can be understood as a form of politics because she sees the reintroduction of Pasifika ways of knowing into mainstream thinking as a political exercise:

*the privileging of the spiritual, the privileging of ideas of the soul, bearing in mind that restrictiveness of the English language and the way in which it uses concepts of the soul and the biases around that. All of those things I think need to be brought into the discourse, into our narratives, into our conversations today, and that's a political exercise. That's why I talk about it as Indigenous politics.*

Unlike the neoliberal weather system, the collaborators openly challenged the colonial weather system and its impact on Pasifika and other Indigenous groups, such as in talanoa seven:

*In some respects, that's why our people are down, because people have been towing the line. We haven't been pushing enough boundaries. We've been giving in. We've been colonized, you know? It's like coming back to decolonizing our mindsets, standing up for who we are and being who we are, but in a positive and a strength-based way, and affirming our identities.*

This excerpt suggests that the collaborator sees decolonisation as a step towards reaching the island which aligns with the vision of the island as being a place in which we can stand strong in our identities.

As shown below, the findings of the talanoa reveal that Pasifika women are experiencing questioning, harming, silencing, and ignoring of their knowledges, bodies, and spirituality within higher education institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand. As a result of higher education institutions continuing the colonial project, Pasifika people choose not to share knowledge with the institution. The main concern about sharing knowledge with higher education institutions is that it leaves Pacific culture vulnerable to misinterpretation, as shown in talanoa eight:

*There are some things about Indigenous knowledge and things that I know from my master's, from all of my work that I don't share. It doesn't belong in the academy. You will see others from outside talking about these things, and I'm saying, "There's no way. There's no way I'm going to share any of that."*

In talanoa ten, the collaborator also reflects that the misinterpretation of knowledge can then be used against Pasifika people:

*We have some knowledge that is shared, and some that is protected because it's sacred. It's sacred because it's open to misinterpretation by someone who doesn't really understand it. And so that becomes a weapon with which we are hit, as a people. So, some things we do hold to ourselves, that might make us vulnerable, and that's okay too.*

Colonial institutions have devalued Pasifika knowledge to the point where Pasifika people no longer wish to include their knowledge within the higher education space.

## THE PASIFIKA WOMEN CYCLONE

At the intersection of race, gender, and indigeneity (ontological rejection) we approach the Pasifika women cyclone. As demonstrated above these different storms have various ways of slowing 'space invaders' down. This section will reflect a mapping of how Pasifika women experience this cyclone of race, gender, and indigeneity.

Collaborators shared that their experience of this cyclone included encountering the masculine imprint through the normalisation and rewarding of behaviour that is male (Alvesson, 2012). In talanoa twelve the collaborator spoke of trying to break into the 'all boys' network and how it involved performing in a certain way: *"it's trying to break that whole 'all boys' network, which is still very much in the power here at the University, but sometimes you tend to lose your femaleness, when you're operating in their space."* Collaborators also indicated that race played a role and that higher education institutions also have a white imprint as shown in critiques of higher education institutions by people of colour (Ahmed, 2012; 2017; Antonio, 2002; Carey, 2016; Grosfoguel, 2012; 2013; James, 2012; Kidman & Chu, 2017; Mirza, 2006; Pilkington, 2013; Rollock, 2012; Tate & Bagguley, 2017; Wekker, 2016). In talanoa seven the collaborator spoke of how, in order to advance within the institution, *"they expect you, they as in the institution or the system, expect you to be a different person. To be white. To be whiter. To tow the line, so to speak."* The wider impact of the masculine and white imprint present in higher education institutions is evident below.

Pasifika women also experience the excessive labour outlined by numerous scholars (Acker, 2012; 2014; 2017; Carmen, 2004; Fisher, 2007; Mather, 1998); this excessive labour contributes to Pasifika females not meeting other expectations of performance, which can hinder their ability to progress whilst other bodies progress on the backs of Pasifika women's excess labour (Angervall & Beach, 2018). Pasifika women in particular face external labour expectations and are aware that this external labour is not valued by the higher education institution. In talanoa ten the collaborator shared the extra labour requests she

receives daily: *“every email is a request from a community member, or a post-graduate student, and I don't want to say no, because you can't do that to your own people, and so it's always, 'Can you write me something? Can you speak at something? Can you come and supervise a student at another university?’”* She also went on to share how she understands that these moments of external labour are not valued by higher education institutions, commenting that *“there is service, but not as the way the university is defining service, but the way we see service around growing our people, about serving our people.”* This excessive labour and extra pressure from community is invisible to the institution, as the collaborator in talanoa ten observes: *“they don't see it. I have got a full responsibility to community, to my bloodline... ..My ancestors are telling me to do this.”*

Pasifika women built on the idea of excessive labour beyond ‘housekeeping’ (Acker, 2014; Fisher, 2007; Kandiko Howson, Coate & de St Croix, 2017; Pyke, 2011) or emotional labour (Acker, 2012; 2014; 2017; Carmen, 2004; Fisher, 2007; Mather, 1998), noting that just the act of going to morning tea can be an exhausting process given the number of filters they are currently engaging in order to ensure that white fragility is protected (DiAngelo, 2011). The collaborator in talanoa ten offers some insightful commentary on this and I quote her at length:

*I was talking, again, to my lovely colleague, who's a good-looking white man. And he was talking about, something or other about, "Yes, it's just great in the department. We can all just have such collegial relationships." And I was thinking, "Do you know how many filters I'm running right now, to sit in this room with you?" But I can't- What do I say? I can't say, "Actually, it's quite stressful for me to go to morning tea," because people say stupid, ignorant stuff about poor people, and then look to me to confirm this is what brown people think... ..It's exhausting to manage all of these perceptions in a way that people feel safe around me, because it's easy to make people scared. If I lost my temper, even once. Fifteen years in this department, I've never really given someone the swerve, as my*

*mother-in-law would say. I've never done that, despite being mightily provoked. So, the energy that goes into presenting a face that people are comfortable with, the kind Pacific lady, is something that I don't think - my male colleagues - it ever occurs to them that they would need to do that. It's about whatever they think, no matter how rude it is.*

Pasifika women also referred to the excess labour involved in body management or the conscious decision to manage appearances in order to look the part or to pre-empt assumptions that will be made about them (Ford, 2011; Ong, 2005). In talanoa ten a collaborator shares her frustration at the excess labour: *"if I have just spent energy managing the room so that people aren't inappropriately in my space. Oh, my male colleagues aren't doing that. It's not the part of their brains that's being used. Look how smart I could be, if I wasn't constantly managing all of these pricks. If I wasn't looking in the mirror in the morning and going, 'Am I sending a message here, with my clothes, that is gonna be misinterpreted?'"*

What is clear from the talanoa is that Pasifika women experience excessive labour through not only housekeeping and emotional labour, but also through the necessity to protect white fragility in order to protect themselves, and by changing how they act and dress to protect themselves from stereotypes that are projected onto them within institutional whiteness.

Pasifika women also shared how they are aware that the knowledge they produce and bring with them to higher education institutions is not always considered acceptable. This reflects diverse gender (Fisher, 2007; Hearn & Parkin, 2001), race (Puwar, 2004; Ahmed, 2012; 2017), Indigenous (Battiste, 2013; Mihesuah, 2004; L.Smith, 1999; Stewart-Harawira, 2013; Wilson, 2004) and Pasifika (Finau, 2008; Hau'ofa, 1994; 2008; Naepi, 2018; Otunuku, 2011; Samu, 2010; 2011; Thaman, 2003a; 2003b; 2009; Underhill-Sem, 2017) experiences of higher education institutions. The undervaluing of non-Western forms of knowledge contributes to the lack of representation. Pasifika women are aware of the cost of not producing knowledge

that is deemed valuable by the institution. In talanoa seven the collaborator expresses concern about the ramification of not producing 'valuable' knowledge: *"I'm worried. I think in the last PBRF round, there was a lot of Pacific academics ranked poorly, and that there are ultimate costs for that because we've seen people be made redundant."* The collaborator sees the cost of this as deeply tied to student wellbeing – although others have critiqued the gender norm expectation of emotional labour, Pasifika women understand it is a part of their wider community role and recognize that the undervaluing of Pasifika knowledge and therefore the loss of female Pasifika staff affects students, as shown in talanoa seven: *"I think we saw all the ramifications already in the short term, medium term, and now long term is hitting, is that students aren't cared for... .. We've seen Pacific student numbers drop as a result."* This is not a new mapping of the storm; Pacific academics have mapped this aspect of the storm previously (Finau, 2008; Hau'ofa, 1994; 2008; Naepi, 2018; Otunuku, 2011; Samu, 2010; 2011; Thaman, 2003a; 2003b; 2009; Underhill-Sem, 2017), however, connecting it to student wellbeing adds a new dimension to the mapping.

Pasifika women also experience some of Puwar's (2004) space invaders mechanisms. Collaborators reported being infantilised, as when talanoa ten collaborator shared her experience of being in a leadership position, noting that *"sometimes people have difficulty seeing me as a leader."* This difficulty is the infantilizing of which Puwar talks; Pasifika women are not expected to be capable of leading and therefore when they are in positions of leadership they are met with disbelief. Pasifika women also reported experiences of hyper-surveillance. These ranged from pushback on institutional equity measures such as the one shared by the collaborator in talanoa ten: *"I say, 'Well can we look at our affirmative action space?' And someone said to me last week, 'Well, she's already had quite a lot of affirmative action already.' Is there a limit? Is it like a pie or something?"* to comments on people being late to meetings in community talanoa one: *"Just comments like, oh, yeah, it's island time, they're going to be late. PIs [Pacific Islanders] are always late, because it's island time."* This infantilizing and hyper surveillance of Pasifika through what they can

access (affirmative action) and when they should be present (island time) operate as ways to remind Pasifika women that they are space invaders, that they inhabit bodies that mark them as trespassers.

Pasifika women are further inscribed as trespassers through the process of stranger making (Ahmed, 2012). Collaborators experienced situations of exclusion through their presence being questioned or ignored. In community talanoa four a Pasifika woman reflected on an experience of being looked through: *“He was so dismissive and so rude, and I just knew... You know, you see people and the way they behave and you go up and you introduce yourself and they just look past you. ‘Hello, I’m here. I’m here.’”* The collaborator’s “you just know” suggests that this is not a one-off experience for her; rather, she has learnt how to read the room and the people within, instinctively knowing who will act to make her a stranger. Interestingly, one of the collaborators in talanoa seven reflected on how she uses these practices of stranger making to continue doing what she considers important:

*The university helps by being ignorant because they don't see you as valid. They're less likely to hear you or see you when they don't really appreciate you. So, you can get away with a lot more. But you can go off and do a lot more stuff in the community and the students because they don't care, honestly. Because they don't care, actually, they're blind to the work, and so that means we can go off and do a lot more work for our people. And that way, their blindness is very helpful.*

This recognition that it is possible to harness the storm to transform it will be explored more in chapter six.

Pasifika women experience the impact of desirable diversity, with collaborators sharing how people have certain expectations of what a Pasifika body should do. In talanoa ten, when reflecting on how she manages to make changes within higher education institutions, a collaborator shares how she must approach everything from a position of desirable diversity, noting, *“The thing is, everything I do, I have to do with a smile on my face because I’m Pacific and I have to be nice to everyone all the time... ..So it's like*

*you have to do all of the same things, but you can't ever lose your temper, you can't ever cry, you can't ever take offense."* Collaborators recognised that when they do not enact desirable diversity their career prospects are limited, such as in talanoa seven when a collaborator shared her view on 'towing the line': *"people who tow the line get promoted, or they sit on committees, or they become the professors in some respects. The people who antagonize the systems like ourselves, and push the boundaries, we're seen as renegades, or we're seen as the problems."* This desirable diversity is also rejected in talanoa seven where a collaborator pushes back and says this is not all that we are, we are more than the dusky maiden:

*There's this romanticising, we're kind of the dusky maidens, we play guitars, and we're happy-go-lucky. And then we just go with the status quo but in actual fact that's not who we are, because we're not understood, and I know in my experience, I've had very few hints of schools, or managers, or deans really get to know who I am, or any of my Pacific colleagues. And they don't have coffees with you, and they don't take the time to conversate about your culture, or your identity, or what you represent, and those ... That worries me. That really worries me, but it also doesn't surprise me.*

Others push back further still by refusing to participate in what makes somebody a desirable body, as shown in talanoa eight:

*Then one of the things I have done is resist the many, many requests to be profiled as a Pacific academic. It's happened a lot. I've said, "Yeah, okay, then. Let's do it. Let's do it next month." Then a month follows, and that's been a purposeful thing, because it's a little bit about saying we don't all exist in the profiles that you think... ... I just did not want to be absorbed by the institution, that's what it was. Didn't want to be absorbed by it. I was happy to be absorbed*

*and be part of whatever this other group was, but I did not want to be absorbed by the university, and so that's why I resisted it.*

The quote above reveals that Pasifika women are aware that their bodies are desirable for the institution, but they also recognise that they have the power to reject this desirability by slowing the process of 'absorption' through refusal.

Like other diverse bodies, Pasifika women experience the expectation that they should be grateful for their inclusion in higher education institutions (Ahmed, 2012). Some collaborators were aware that this expectation of being grateful is tied directly to resourcing, as community talanoa three illustrates: *"They think we're ignorant about the resourcing that comes into these institutions. They think, 'Oh, they'll be grateful for this.'" Others recognized that this expectation of being grateful extends to protecting white fragility, as in talanoa ten: you are kind of in a no-win situation when it comes to challenging these things, because people think you're complaining, or you're being difficult. So, if you get angry, and you use that anger to drive forward that conversation, and be brave enough to raise something, you're the angry black woman. If you get upset, you're the upset weak woman who can't handle the jandal," seven: "you accuse racism, then you get done for more damage," and community talanoa six, when a collaborator spoke about the impacts of colonisation: "someone said to me the other day, and it was completely unexpected source, and from a scholar and he said why aren't we over colonization yet? And I was like, I can't believe you just said that to me, so I had nothing ready to say to him."* These experiences of expectations of gratefulness reinforce to Pasifika women that their place in higher education institutions is not to question what has been given to them and instead to continue being the desirable diversity that does not challenge the institution.

Pasifika women also experience the expectation of being intelligible to the institution. This suggests that even when the institution would like to include Pasifika knowledge, it needs to be translated for them as opposed to the institution doing the translating themselves (Ahmed, 2012; Ahenakew & Naepi, 2015). One Pasifika women in talanoa two, when speaking about language exclusion, shared how she enjoys reading French theorists as they use poetic languages similar to Polynesian styles of writing, yet she realises that Polynesian ways of sharing knowledge are not as readily accepted:

*It speaks to the poetry in our Polynesian languages, in a lot of our Polynesian languages where meaning is by intimation, is by illusion, not by directness. You get a lot of that in Foucault, which is one of the things I like about him. There's a lot of blunt, a lot of factual stuff, and spelling out, but there's also there's a hunch of suggestive meaning, which I like. There's a lot of imagery. For example, even the word 'governmentality,' I love that. That's a beautiful play, and we do that a lot in our languages. Or at least in Samoan we do that a lot. From what I understand, in the other languages they do the same, whereas the English have tried to move away from that from what I gather. They want to be to the point. No messing around about meaning.*

Pasifika women also reported feeling isolated in higher education institutions. This aligns with other women of colour who have shared their experiences of working in higher education (Ahmed, 2012; Antonio, 2002; hooks, 1994; Olsen, Maple & Stage, 1995; Mirza, 2015; Spivak, 1993; Turner, 2002; Williams 1991). In talanoa ten the collaborator reflects at length about this isolation:

*But, the thing with this - probably quite unique about the whole Pacific woman in academia thing is, who do I talk to? I can talk to various generic counselors about my marriage, or my children, or my relationship with my parents, or any of the other things that might trouble you*

*as you go through your life. But there's not many of us, and unfortunately, the slightly competitive process that the institution has set up for us sometimes means that we're looking over our shoulders at each other going, "Hmm."... ..about how to unpack it. I can get little bits from feminism, and I can get little bits from unpacking Pacific history, and understanding where all this stuff comes from that I receive. But yeah, there's not many people around that I can have a real conversation with about it. Which perhaps means that my progress in understanding it is slower than what it could be.*

This quote is interesting as the collaborator makes a brief acknowledgement that the competitive nature of neoliberal higher education institutions further isolates her from the Pasifika people that are around and that she has begun to turn to the literature to find support. As a result, her understanding of being a Pasifika woman in higher education is limited to her own experience. Pasifika women also reported feeling isolated by Pasifika men, noting that they often had to reach out to the men, as evidenced in talanoa three: *"Yeah. I actually had emailed him several times, saying, 'hey senior male Pacific academic, don't forget about us.'"* In talanoa seven a collaborator reflects on how this isolation is difficult and leads into not having enough bodies to make the changes the institution needs, observing, *"The less of us there are, the fewer of us there are to apply for those positions and to make those changes. That's if they ... Or not by towing the line, but making real changes. Yeah, so it's incredibly hard. I think it's an incredibly hard time when there aren't Pacific woman academics around."*

Pasifika women pushed understandings of being a diverse body in the academy by noting that it is not just about tokenisation when being asked to sit on a committee or a board (Ford, 2011), but it is also about the expectation that you can speak for an entire group of people simply because there are not enough people within the institution. In talanoa two a collaborator shares how she has found herself in a position of responsibility simply because there are not enough bodies:

*I guess part of the default position that Pacific like many other minority women or people at places like universities find themselves in is that because you're part of the few, you get to take on responsibility to things. I guess in that sense you are finding yourself in roles where you are expected to speak for and often speak for Pacific as if you are representative or have this mandate.*

The Pasifika women who participated in this study also raised issues that were not readily available in the literature including experiences of sexual assault and lateral violence. The experiences of sexual assault were shared with a specific reference to the dusky maiden. In talanoa ten a collaborator briefly touched on her experience with a supervisor:

*This kind of dusky maiden stuff. And it made a lot of sense to me, in terms of stuff that had happened to me as a younger academic... ... Another supervisor did cross a line with me. And again, it was- I think he liked the otherness of... I don't think he'd ever had any other Pacific students. And again, I'd just sort of blow it off as being a drunken thing. But again, incredibly inappropriate and wrong, and I just pretended it hadn't happened."*

This quote reveals how damaging and dangerous the dusky maiden trope becomes in a space where there is a masculine and white imprint that means that some bodies are seen as consumable, and therefore boundaries are crossed that should not be.

Collaborators were also honest in their experiences of lateral violence. In talanoa three a collaborator shared an instance of lateral violence that she experienced in person in a very public way:

*Some woman got up and just ripped me down in front of everybody, saying things like 'you're not really a Samoan, because your first name which is English, you're born in New Zealand, you haven't even lived in Samoa, so how can you stand up and present as a Samoan when you've*

*never lived there?'... ... It's a terrible thing when English is your first language and Samoan is second. I've been humiliated. That was in front of an audience of maybe a hundred something. I just had to stand there and try to be graceful, try and recover. Even though I really felt like I was going to cry, I really had to hold it in. It's not my fault that I was born in New Zealand and raised here, that English is my first language but, the humiliation that I received for ... and she's a colleague.*

In talanoa fourteen another collaborator shared her experience of lateral violence that came via an anonymous source through her line manager:

*I had an academic write to me one time because he had received an email from someone he regarded well within the university who was from Pacific circles and had written to him with a comment about how un-Pacific I am, and that this other Pacific scholar would never have anything to do with me and never recommend me for anything because I wasn't connected to community. It's that typical thing of being brown on the outside but white on the inside that was what was clearly conveyed. That was what was conveyed. So, for reasons that are unknown to me, that Palagi academic then sent me the email and said, 'I'm left in a dilemma. What would you like me to do?' I read it and it was just such a painful email. So that part of me which is the clinical manager, leader part, I responded in terms of this is what the policy says. This is what, yadda, yadda, for this supervision sponsorship thing that they were doing. Then I closed my laptop and went for a walk, and just felt really knifed, really knifed. Not because I feel virtuous in any way, but because for some reason, that day, it just felt like an attack on me personally. I had no idea that anybody was out there judging me so deeply and badly.*

In talanoa nine the collaborator reflected on an experience of lateral violence and her response, stating that *“there have been times when they questioned me, but I hold strong to my values and beliefs into what I believe in this particular program that we run. And I talk about the program. Remind them I’m not the program, I facilitate the program. Ask me about the program; don’t ask me about me.”* In community talanoa collaborators shared their fear of this type of identity-based lateral violence, such as in community talanoa five: *“but I think what’s concerning though is that it is a real fear for people, which means that it’s happened enough around us that we all know that it’s a thing that can happen, and that when is it going to happen to me moment.”*

Collaborators provided three explanations of lateral violence. The first was that these interactions could simply be read as Pasifika women contributing to the storm, such as in a talanoa three collaborator’s observation that *“sometimes we are our own worst enemy. Even when we are successful, or we know of someone else who is successful, as Pacific people, we tend to rip them down.”* This reading sees the ripping down of other Pasifika women as inevitable, as a practice we do not only to each other, but also to ourselves. The two other explanations take a critical look at the lateral violence and consider what it is about the current situation that contributes to lateral violence, identifying the neoliberal weather system and racism.

An alternative reading of lateral violence came from the community talanoa who recognized it as a symptom of the neoliberal weather system. In community talanoa three, collaborators spoke about the ways in which uncertainty in institutions created through neoliberal models can lead to lateral violence, noting, *“With the uncertainty, with the restructure, after restructure. They create that uncertain environment that then makes people feel threatened about their roles and their positions within the university and then it just goes haywire over that.”* This is an example of how neoliberalism breaks down the very foundations of Pasifika culture (community and relationships) and in turn isolates Pasifika women,

which is damaging to their wellbeing. Community talanoa six pointed to the feeling of being an imposter (space invader) as contributing to lateral violence: *“I think that's one of our weaknesses that we have as Pasifika, it's a long-time standing the imposter syndrome or whatever it is, that makes people do that.”* This excerpt points to how being a ‘space invader’ can lead to lashing out against other ‘space invaders’ who also lack the institutional power to push against the forces that make them outsiders to begin with.

Pasifika women shared stories of sexual assault within higher education in their talanoa. However, this work does not share these stories. Masi and talanoa are both grounded in relationality, as such any decision within the research needs to be considered from a relational lens. Pasifika women shared their stories and as part of the research process I emailed each collaborator and asked for the permission to share quotes within a certain timeframe. For quotes relating to sexual assault I did not share the stories unless I received express permission, I did not consider silence as permission given the nature of the stories. From a relational perspective omitting these stories seemed like the correct thing to do in order to maintain the va (sacred space) between myself and collaborators. However, this does not exclude these stories from being shared at a later date alongside the collaborators whose stories these are.

Pasifika women who participated in this study have mapped the storm they face. It is similar but different to storms mapped previously. Pasifika women experience a storm that is made up of a white masculine imprint that enables and enforces excess labour, non-performative diversity, infantilization, hyper-surveillance, lateral violence, and sexual assault

#### DO WE HARNESS THE STORMS/TRANSFORM THE STORMS/OR LOOK TO THE HORIZON?

There tends to be agreement within the talanoa that these storms need to be survived and transformed. In talanoa fourteen a collaborator shows that Pasifika women are not naive about higher education, they just have faith in their ability to co-opt the institutions, commenting, *“I think about being*

*us. I think I recognize that the university does its thing. I see the university as being able to be co-opted into some other bigger plan, and that what I need from a university is the space to be me.”* This may provide insight into why Pasifika women continue to engage in higher education institutions. In community talanoa one a collaborator reflected on why she continues to engage in professional development; she noted that *“I’ve had someone, our Associate Dean Pacific saying things like, ‘We need you guys to be sitting at those tables where those conversations happen’, and for me, it was like that’s never going to happen, and then you think, but then you have to, you have to, because it’s not just you.”* Another collaborator in community talanoa one also noted the importance of mentors in pushing for survival and transformation: *“it wasn’t until I talked with a senior Pacific woman about how we’re going to get to where we need to go? Well, we need some associate professors, we need some professors, because they’re the people who will be in the room. That there’s certain jobs that a university won’t give you until you have that tick box and a PhD is one of them, but certainly the associate professor/professor stuff is one of them too.”* The significance of this mentoring and mentioning of community success will be outlined more in chapter six.

One collaborator shared how she is harnessing the storm as a temporary solution to a very real problem. In talanoa ten the collaborator reflected how she shares one of her main leadership roles, as she realises how people see her and she knows that in order to provide safety and job security to her team, there needs to be a leader whom the institution recognises as being capable of being a leader:

*So, I share one of my main leadership roles, but sometimes people have difficulty seeing me as a leader. So, I choose to share this with a man- older man. It just provides a level of safety for my team. If it was just me, I would be okay to take that risk and just see if I can hold the land. But there’s 10 other people whose jobs rely on us to be trusted, so I have my colleague there for those people who can’t see me. They see him and they’re reassured that there’s someone in charge who looks like someone that they want to be in charge.*

This is problematic but also serves as an example of Pasifika people's ability to think with duality: she knows this is not ideal but recognizes the need to operate in this manner in order for short-term gains and also to protect her team. This practice of moving with the system in the short term to move against it in the long term is not without critique, as some question the ability of diverse bodies to achieve the long-term gains needed when short-term compromises are made (Acker, 2014; Thaman, 2003a; Martin, 2000; Morely, 2005; Osei-Kofi 2012; Samu, 2011; Stengers, Despret & Knutson, 2015).

## HOW DO WE TRANSFORM STORMS SOONER?

Collaborators recognised the need to transform storms at both an individual and structural level and as such we need to recognise that everybody has a part to play in transforming the storm.

There was an emphasis on collective action for transforming the storm, such as in talanoa fourteen where the collaborator noted that we need window dressing efforts such as the choir for raising the profile, and we also need the structural engagement such as advisories: *"Yeah, everybody's playing their part, though. We actually need that profiling in the choir. We also need the money, and then we need the people who are part of the advisory group, including [senior pacific male], to help set that up and to validate it as well. So, it's not going to be any one person."* Further, a collaborator in talanoa twelve commented that *"together as a collective we have decided that we would put all of our energies together and hopefully, the accumulation of all that energy is going to give us the momentum."* There was also a critique of those who operated without the collective from talanoa nine: *"if you're gonna make a change and influence change, it should represent the wider group, rather than just what you think. So, having that discussion... .. when you're going to represent your community, they know you're not just speaking for you. You're speaking for everybody else."* In community talanoa three, collaborators reflected that it is hard to transform the storm by yourself and that you need others around you, observing, *"It's strength in numbers, which you've got to*

*have the support of those around you because, you can beat something when there's more of you behind it. It's hard to do by yourself."*

One collaborator (talanoa ten) identified the idea of collective action as a direct response to the neoliberal structures within higher education institutions:

*I think sometimes people are waiting for the superstar to arrive, to fix everything. That academic person that - with the PBRF, and who has the community links, and who gets all the grants, and all that kind of stuff. Actually, long term I think we need to invest in the staff that we have, and from a Pacific perspective, moving as a collective makes intuitive sense. And to do what the university does around having superstars, and the superstar researcher, and all of their minions that run around after them and do lots of work for them. It doesn't work, it doesn't make sense. Whereas, if we have a collective, we're all moving forward together and we're all helping each other to get to that next level. Whatever it happens to be, it might be cultural skills, it might be language, it might be being comfortable going home to your home country with other professionals here. It might be teaching It might be doing research. Whatever it takes. Whatever that next step is, and the next step. Just like we'd do in a family. And treat all kids the same, you know. Build on the things that they have and try to see a space for them that will thrive.*

This recognition that all people have a part to play in transforming the storm is an important one, particularly as it was clear within the talanoa that there are tensions in the Pasifika community (that were not agreed to be transcribed) about how change is achieved; some believe that individuals do not push enough, are exclusionary, or push too much. However, the recognition that we are all journeying to the island together means that these issues are overlooked.

Collaborators recognised that overarching strategic change is needed to transform the storm. In talanoa twelve the collaborator noted that having a strategic plan that focuses on Pasifika people had *“been critical for the supporting of Pacific students. It's been critical for supporting students, because it essentially says, 'Pacific students are important to the University.' That's what the University has accepted, and because they're important, we are going to do the following things to help them succeed.”* But she also reflected its dependence on people: *“it's got a momentum here, but it really depends on the people. The plans are only as good as the implementation, and the energy of the people behind it.”* This reflects Ahmed's (2012) critique of how institutions do diversity: by writing a plan they can consider their work done, however, diverse bodies know that the plan needs people to implement it. The impact of this was reflected upon in community talanoa six, where a collaborator commented that *“within my experiences, it's such a build-up, this whole institute is like a big build up, but when you're in it you realize it's so political and it's so ... it can really hurt your soul. It can really hurt.”*

Collaborators also reflected on the role of the individual in transforming storms. Core to Pacific ontologies is relationships (Airini et al., 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013), and as such it makes sense to see Pasifika women emphasise the importance of individual relationships in transforming the storm. A collaborator in talanoa twelve stated:

*You got to know who has the power, who wields the power, how the power is maintained, how those committees make those decisions, who is the critical part, because these decisions just don't get made up out of the blue. It's the people that make these decisions. That's the good thing. I always say to people, 'That's the good thing.' Because it's people, it's not a robot. If you're talking about people, people can be influenced, because people are people.*

This reflection is particularly important as it shows that Pasifika women are aware of the power play involved in transforming higher education institutions, and that they are strategic about with whom they build relationships in order to transform the space.

Collaborators reflected on the speed of the change with an awareness that this would be a slow process. In community talanoa four the collaborators recognised that this is how change works within higher education institutions: *“ideally change is supposed to be revolutionary. But I think change comes with small incremental steps.”* For some collaborators this slowness could be attributed to Pasifika people ignoring cultural practices to move collectively, as shown in talanoa nine:

*You have the ‘talanoa,’ the discussion, you need to be patient with people. But it takes a lot of work. You need to be patient enough to actually get a consensus... .. I think one of the reasons why change is slow is it's just based on one person's agenda, or what they think people should benefit, rather than this is what people are actually saying. They just maybe go on with their own agenda. It's all about you.*

This is interesting as it suggests that the slowness of the change does not lie with the institution but instead with the individual who is buying into the neoliberal system that is entrenched in higher education. Within this same talanoa (nine), the collaborator reflected that Pasifika peoples *“compete with each other, because some of us are empire-building and some of us are not.”* When these two quotes are aligned they reveal that although blame is placed with the individual, it is a system levels reward system that is encouraging this behavior.

Transforming the storm will be a long process. The Pasifika women who participated did not reflect often on the need to change pedagogy and research - instead the focus was on transforming the storm

through structural change that is driven by individuals at different levels of the institution who are supported by the collective.

## HOW DO WE SURVIVE THE STORM?

As the collaborators leaned towards transforming the storm as opposed to avoiding the storm, it became necessary to discuss how to survive the storm. The importance of sharing models of surviving the storm cannot be underestimated. As shown in the literature (Ahmed, 2012; 2017; Mirza, 2015; Nabobo-Baba, 2013) engaging in an institution that is actively trying to reject you is tiring work that makes you sick. This is reflected within the talanoa, such as in talanoa 14: *“You know, it's interesting to me that many of those who have held Pacific-specific leadership roles have needed to go into other roles at some point because of how taxing the warrior pose and work is. I can feel that in myself too, that from time to time, I need to have a good release, and just look after myself a bit more, get perspective.”* In community talanoa one collaborator spoke of our collective responsibility to take care of each other:

*You see that burn out, and you see people who are unhappy, dissatisfied, bitter in their work, and part of what we have to do in our spaces is make sure that none of us get to that space, because it's very toxic. A lot of the problems that you hear about in academia are directly due to that, whereas if we can keep the light in our space, we'll keep attracting people into it.”*

During the process of this research the community of Pasifika women lost an academic who was an anchor for many of the women who took part in this study. During talanoa and emails a number of collaborators shared reflections, questioning if working within the institution was what made her sick or if it made her illness progress faster. It was a moment of reflection for the community which reinforced that we must share how we survive these storms and we must also support each other in the navigation of these storms.

A key survival technique is the presence of other Pasifika people both within and external to the institution. Pasifika women within the institution provide mentoring, support, and strategy for Pasifika women, as described in talanoa six: *“she actually asked me right at the beginning, ‘where do you want to be in five years time? Where do you want to be in ten years time?’ She taught me the ropes and showed me student funding to go for and all that, but at the same time, she was still role-modeling along the way.”* Pasifika communities outside of the institution provided Pasifika women who participated in the study with a way to ground themselves, as reflected in talanoa six collaborator’s statement, *“I always need to ground myself first, because, at the end of the day, when all this is all over and done with, it’s about returning to the community. And your families and my family is my only constant. Cause they’re with you all your life.”* Community also provided a level of protection as described in talanoa nine:

*The communities really, really help, because they rally behind you, so you can look at them as your foundation, or you can also look at them as like your cloak that hang around you, so they act as someone who provides warmth around you. Because there’ll be moments of doubt, there’ll be moments of uncertainty, there’ll be moments that you will question yourself. They’re around you, in terms of their love and support.*

Once again collaborators returned to operating as a collective, this time as a survival skill (not just for transformation). In talanoa twelve this was highlighted as the one piece of advice they would give to Pasifika women entering higher education institutions to work:

*Being Pacific means that you need to operate as a collective. I think that is a very important thing, if I was to give any piece of advice to the ones coming up, it would be to say to hold on to that as a strength, as a Pacific person, is that you can only do so much, not by yourself, but by working*

*together as a team... ..You got to operate as a collective ... Then it also feeds your spiritual side, for motivating you to stay, and doing the work.”*

In community talanoa two, a collaborator shared how the families of those she works with and for are what keep her going through the difficult politics of transforming higher education institutions, noting, *“It's the families that keeps me going, actually it's the families practice, and the Indigenous families practice that actually keeps me going while I can deal with politics. We are a united group. Then we will be able to handle the politics whenever things happen, we all pull in together to be a strong force.”*

Pasifika women also spoke of what it means to be a Pasifika woman. Pasifika women understand that their role within the world is to build and maintain relationships through service to community or family. The importance of relationship is echoed in Pacific academic work such as Meyer (2008) and Naepi (2017; 2018). In talanoa nine, a Tongan collaborator shared how, for her, being a Tongan female is about holding tauhi va as a core driver in her everyday actions:

*Tauhi is to nurture; is to look after. So, in terms of 'tauhi va,' it's not just about saying hello... .. Every single thing counts, and every single thing matters, because that's part and parcel of who we are. Sometimes, we just see us as a big family, but we have different parts to play. And if we are able to make sure that our family is taken care of, and things are functioning well, that's what we need to do. 'Cause at the end of the day, we leave the university. Who do we have? We have each other. And for us, that matters most. It's the relationship that we have with people.”*

A Samoan collaborator reflected in talanoa six that being a Samoan woman is about service through love:

*'E tau'i le alofa i le alofa' means: literal translation is 'One reciprocates love with love'. I used it in the context of service. It is a Samoan 'alaga upu' proverb that is widely used within the realm of the*

*church and faith. Service: you reciprocate and serve with reverence to others and your actions are with love. For service it is about giving of yourself - time and space (Va). It is about maintaining positive relationships by doing things for others.”*

The significance of these can also be intelligible through an English lens as shared in talanoa fourteen:

*I don't think that we can do higher education without relationships of all sorts. I'll frame it in the positive. Higher education is about relationships. They get expressed in different ways, whether it's people-to-people relationships, or institution-to-government, or money-to-university, and being accountable for that, because being tax payers' money, by-and-large. I have been helped by more relationships than I know in my career to date, and because of that, I feel a responsibility to be part of helpful relationships for others, too. I mean, I could just list off for the next half hour all the people who have helped me... ... Then of course, we've got all the relationships that are outside the university, but unwittingly dragged in here as well: our husbands, our family members, our friends. It all hinges on relationships.*

Key to surviving the storm for Pasifika women was mentoring (other Pasifika women), their community, and the relationships they built and maintained.

## SUMMARY

Pasifika women who participated in this research provided new ways of mapping the storms that slow down our Pacific/Pasifika community navigation to the island. The island we navigate to is one where Pasifika people contribute to our community's success without having to give up key parts of our identities and worldviews. It is an island that is collective in nature and we are in positions of power and influence that enable us to ensure that Pasifika peoples are served well within the current systems. Pasifika women

who participated in this research highlighted the role of the neoliberal and colonial weather systems in creating these storms and also declared their intentions to move away from storms that are fed by and feed the colonial weather system. They mapped out storms that slow down our navigation to the island by ensuring that our navigation is impacted by a white masculine imprint, excess labour, knowledge devaluing, desirable diversity, sexual assault, and lateral violence. However, collaborators also indicated a desire or need to harness these storms to move forward in our navigation to the island, though it is preferable that we transform the storm through structural change which is made possible by having individuals at all levels of the institution who are supported by the collective. In order to transform the storm, we must ensure that we survive it. Pasifika women who participated in the research noted the importance of relationships with other Pasifika women and their community as key survival mechanisms.

*WE HAVE MAPPED/WE KNOW THE SIGNS/WE KNOW THE STORMS/WE HAVE MAPPED*

## CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION/NAVIGATING TO THE ISLAND

*WE KNOW THE STORMS/WE KNOW THE WEATHER SYSTEMS/WE KNOW THE ISLAND/LET US JOURNEY*

This chapter opens with reference to legacy. Many Pasifika women who work in higher education institutions create legacies that impact many Pasifika communities, through their research, service, and relationships built with students, families, and communities. It is these legacies that enable me to do this work; many Pasifika women came before me and envisioned the island that we all journey to, and their mapping of their journeys has made my own journey easier. Dr. Teresia Teawia is an example of these Pasifika women who left a legacy that continues to impact many learners and communities. The poem below was shared at a community poetry reading for Dr. Teresia Teawia when she was unwell. During the course of my doctorate I came to know her through her writing and brief emails of intentions to participate in this work. I wanted to hold space for her in this work as she made and held space for so many of us. I thank Dr. Karlo Mila for giving me permission to use this poem to hold this space as a reminder of the legacy of Pasifika women working in higher education.

FOR TERESIA

*KARLO MILA*

I am going to light a candle for you  
e hoa, although at our age  
candles should be for lovers  
and shy bodies ushering in  
trust,  
or for mindfulness  
at the end of a long  
short-wick  
of a working day.

Not for this.

He tangi oiaue.

I will light this candle.  
The spendy kind,  
cradled in glass  
that burns for days  
smelling of coconut and vanilla  
and I will say prayers for you  
even though my prayers  
are like bad poems  
and are often wordless.

I hope  
at the least,  
you will feel the  
longburning  
flame of my intent,  
warming the space  
between us.

You are the first of us  
"young ones"  
the OG feminist  
Dr dusky maiden  
who famously  
cried salt tears  
and sweat ocean  
creating a wake  
wide enough  
for so many of us  
who followed,  
eager for inclusion  
and approval.

In the deep multicolour  
of your wide wonderful wake  
I am thinking of a word: Huliau  
described to me once  
by a Tongan artist  
but no google search  
reveals its meaning.

And as you well know,  
the stuff really worth knowing,  
isn't found on google.  
Although i see in Hawaiian,

huliau means climate  
and sister,  
climate changer,  
feels right to me.

We felt you  
change  
the climate Tere,  
Daughter of Oceania  
ambiguously native  
kin somehow  
to all of us,  
(even us polys,  
while calling us,  
our volume,  
and our  
repetitive  
raw fish,  
out.)

You are,  
Maraea nailed it,  
'kaupapa as'  
unafraid,  
yet overburdened  
with community service,  
with marking,  
and mentoring,  
and doing all of this,  
and all of that,  
with so much  
determination  
and good grace  
it escalates  
around you.  
Contagious.

Although I for one,  
wish you had more time  
to write poetry  
and just sit, very quietly,  
where ever you liked.

You are the reason  
I sat with coconut cream  
in my wild hair  
on a wilder beach

in west Auckland  
with other curly girls  
in a salt pool  
in dark black sand.

You told me via story  
that a tatau should never  
point to your sex, giggling,  
pointing to your paradox.  
We were standing at the time  
next to a replica moai,  
but still, it was on a beach  
nobody can laugh at  
that southern-most water  
too cold to swim in.  
And in Wellington,  
in a sea of Palangis,  
in the windy wide-eyed dry,  
I was thirsty for your stories  
of tatau and French Polynesian authors  
and an Oceania  
more expansive than mine.

Shy admission: more than once  
I caught my breath,  
with how much  
there was to admire.  
Diplomat: representing us overseas with your not-missing-a-beat articulate  
Truth teller: revealing and peeling off your skin  
in front of students unaccustomed  
to real  
in school assemblies  
when in uniform.  
Activist: in front of everyone  
that little bit braver,  
than the rest of us.

You are  
a voice,  
a song,  
a poem,  
an essay,  
a direct quote,  
a protest sign,  
a presence.

Beloved.

You are  
my prayer.

One of the difficulties with presenting this work is the mismatch between the original intent of the research and what the research became through the process of talanoa. The initial research aimed to identify promising practices for institutions and the Pasifika women who work within them to enable change in a slow-moving system. However, it became clear during the talanoa that a much deeper conversation needed to happen at the same time. Pasifika women embody the ability to hold dual and sometimes conflicting concepts (Hau'ofa, 2008; Nabobo-Baba, 2013); this ability enables Pasifika women to recognise wider, seemingly insurmountable obstacles (neoliberalism and colonialism) and still make changes within the system (which could be read as investing in the system) without being paralysed into inaction. Pasifika women can navigate to the island while still critiquing the weather that pushes our drua (double hulled canoe)

As pointed out earlier in the dissertation, we must do something, and promising practices enable us to take action now, whilst also having deeper conversations that recognise the need to address wider systemic issues. As such this dissertation will honour both the original intent and the evolved intent of the research within this discussion. First, the discussion will outline promising practices that become apparent when participating in the talanoa: this is our urgent change that we can do today. Second, the discussion will reflect on the conversations that went beyond promising practices and reflected on why change is even necessary. Finally, this chapter will discuss the implications and limitations of this research. Throughout this chapter there will be moments where further research is identified as a way to help us further understand what has been exposed within this research. We must continue to navigate to our island and in order to

travel faster to our island, we must continue to transform and harness the storms that currently shape higher education.

## PROMISING PRACTICES

Within the collaborators' talanoa a number of promising practices were identified in relation to transforming, and surviving, higher education institutions. In order for higher education institutions to fulfill their potential outlined by Sailau Suaalii-Sauni (2008), "to give students, regardless of ethnicity, colour, gender, class or creed, the opportunity to choose and learn for themselves from the best in their chosen fields these different ways" (p. 21), it is important that they invest in practices that show promise to transform them from spaces of white masculine imprints. Pasifika women must also continue to survive in these spaces until we can thrive; as a result we must practice our work in ways that enable us to survive and push higher education institutions to transform faster. This research identified six promising practices that will support both higher education institutions in transforming, and also support Pasifika women in speeding up the change.

### 1. Mentoring for Pasifika women

Collaborators identified the essential role of mentoring by other Pasifika women for surviving higher education institutions. As a result, higher education institutions should seek to make formal or informal arrangements for Pasifika women to be mentored by other Pasifika women in their current roles. Pasifika women should foster mentoring relationships with other Pasifika women, providing guidance in both surviving and thriving within higher education. This mentoring is a strength-based approach that recognises that Pasifika women have the knowledge and skills to support each other to survive and thrive in higher education.

## 2. Collective approaches to change-making

Collaborators identified the importance of collaborative approaches to change-making. As a result, higher education institutions should provide spaces for Pasifika people to come together. This can be in the form of physical space or in process space such as Pasifika councils or advisories. Pasifika women should engage in collaborative change-making models that enable them to move forward as a group. This will lead to navigating to the island sooner.

## 3. Pasifika women at all levels and roles in the institutions

Collaborators identified that there needed to be Pasifika women at all levels and roles within higher education institutions in order to speed change. This means that we need more Pasifika women bodies within the institution, such that higher education institutions need not only to recruit more Pasifika staff, but also to consider how they retain these staff (including the implementation of the promising practices outlined above). There needs to be investment in professional development for Pasifika women so that they are able to fill roles higher up in the structure of higher education, and a proactive approach to shoulder-tapping Pasifika women to take on roles throughout the institution.

## 4. Develop institutional awareness

Collaborators reflected on the importance of understanding how change is made in higher education. In practice this means Pasifika women must continue to build relationships around the institution so that they are able to see and interact with the different leverage points for change throughout higher education institutions.

## 5. Collaborative approaches to wellbeing

Collaborators noted the importance of community in their wellbeing when working in higher education. This means that higher education institutions need to ensure that the wider Pasifika community feels welcome within the institution. Pasifika women need to continue to engage with their communities and find strength in their community's care of and for them in order to survive the cyclone. Pasifika women also need to care for each other; this can be in the form of mentoring (outlined above) or in the simple process of building relationships with each other in ways that enable check-ins or supports.

#### 6. Have a Pasifika strategic plan

Collaborators identified that Pasifika strategic plans acted as levers for institutional change. As such it is important that higher education institutions have relevant and powerful Pasifika strategic plans that can be used to make changes throughout the institution.

These promising practices highlight ways in which higher education institutions and Pasifika women can engage in change-making and also survive the white masculine imprint that shapes higher education institutions whilst the change is occurring. These promising practices enable us to take immediate actions whilst also considering long-term actions that will enable us to take action on the wider systematic issues that create the need for promising practices.

## HIDDEN CONVERSATIONS

While conducting the talanoa it became clear that the collaborators wanted to share more than promising practices for change. They also wanted to share about how they experience working in higher education: they wanted to map the storms that slow the journey. Collaborators wanted people to understand not only how institutions can change but why that change is necessary. This sharing was not

about pausing the journey to discuss the storms, instead it was about recognizing the storms were there and continuing to navigate to the island in spite of them. Whilst many things were shared within these narratives, what this section will focus on is what the talanoa revealed about desirable diversity, performance, and camouflage, why Pasifika women choose to survive and transform as opposed to avoiding higher education, and finally how to harness the white masculine imprint to move Pasifika ahead.

This research suggests there is an aspect of performance to being a Pasifika woman working in higher education. This performance can be seen in how Pasifika women perform desirable diversity, or how they camouflage themselves in an effort to protect themselves from the stereotypes that are projected onto them through institutional whiteness. In talanoa ten a collaborator notes, *“Wouldn't it be nice for my daughters if they didn't have to think about camouflage all the time, and their clothes, and their voice, and their manner, and the way that they run meetings, and manage their relationships with co-workers. If they didn't have to go camouflage all the time.”* This excerpt suggests that there is a constant work involved in order to just ‘be’ in higher education institutions for Pasifika women. Labouring to just ‘be’ through camouflage is a form of excess labour that has previously been unexplored in the literature, particularly how it intersects with desirable diversity.

This research provides new insight into the way that desirable diversity and excess labour interact with each other. Ahenakew and Naepi (2015) and Ahmed (2012) note that desirable diversity means that higher education institutions will allow diversity within their walls as long as the diversity performs in ways that are beneficial to the institution. This means that Pasifika women are required to perform not only the excess labour outlined in the literature (emotional and housekeeping) but also a performative labour that ensures they meet the institution’s expectation of desirable diversity if they wish to progress or remain in their careers. Pasifika women showed that in order for them to perform desirable diversity, they must learn to read a room, fulfill stereotypical expectations of Pasifika women (smile, be generous, etc.), and engage

in body management. Talanoa ten provided insight into the daily operations of labour in order to perform desirable diversity: *"do you know how many filters I'm running right now, to sit in this room with you?"* She also shares that her white colleague is happy to be part of such a collegial department; they are not aware that those who are not white are performing extra labour in order to empower the institution to claim diversity whilst the institution works against diversity (non-performative diversity) (Ahmed, 2012). This interaction of performative labour and desirable diversity is a new understanding that deepens arguments made by Ahenakew and Naepi (2015) and Ahmed (2012) while also building on understandings of excess labour (Acker, 2012; 2014; 2017; Carmen, 2004; Fisher, 2007; Mather, 1998).

Pasifika women are frustrated at this extra labour; it is labour that they do in order to progress in the academy, but it also hinders their ability to progress as the labour takes up extra emotional and psychological space that should be used in advancing their careers or engaging with their communities. There are a number of ramifications of this extra labour. First, as a result of this excess labour, they are unable to dedicate as much time to supporting their community's success, which is the reason many of them joined higher education institutions. Second, it potentially contributes to burn-out. In talanoa 14 the collaborator reflects on *"how taxing the warrior pose and work is"* when thinking about Pasifika women in higher education. This is also reflected in the literature (Ahmed, 2012; 2017; Mirza, 2015; Nabobo-Baba, 2013), however, there is very little written about what this labour is (shown here to be performative desirable diversity) and how it links with the non-performative diversity that institutions practice (Ahmed, 2012). Third, it also means that higher education institutions continue to underserve Pasifika people by creating spaces where valuable Pasifika labour resources are spent on performative desirable diversity, which in turn slows our navigation to the island.

This need to camouflage can result not only in looking and sounding different but also in acting in ways that are counterintuitive to Pasifika women's worldviews. Collaborators shared stories of lateral

violence and fear of lateral violence within higher education institutions. Interestingly, collaborators pointed to the wider weather systems (neoliberalism and racism) as causing this lateral violence. Neoliberal universities operate in ways that celebrate individual success and universities in Aotearoa have a measurement system that some have argued turns academic staff on each other in their efforts to climb to the top (Cupples & Pawson 2012). This is in opposition to how Pasifika people have explained their own relational worldview (Airini et al. 2010; Anae et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2013; Health Research Council, 2014); as a result, Pasifika women are isolated from each other and collaborators in this project pointed to this as a cause of lateral violence amongst Pasifika women: *“it’s a long-time standing the imposter syndrome or whatever it is, that makes people do that”* (community talanoa six). Removing Pasifika from spaces that reward and encourage their relational worldview results in uncharacteristic behaviours in order to be accepted within the new space. What this research brings to light are ways that the current wider neoliberal system influences relational peoples to centre themselves and do harm to others in the process, in an effort to climb to the top.

In spite of higher education institutions acting to slow down our navigation process, Pasifika women continue to navigate to the island. It needs to be asked why Pasifika women continue to invest in a space that slows down their community’s progression to success. This engagement can be seen as an exercise in duality. Pasifika women understand they must labour in order to just be in higher education, and that as a result they can become ill. However, Pasifika women also believe that higher education will enable us to journey to the island faster. Pasifika women can hold this tension without it causing paralysis because of their ability to exercise duality. As noted earlier these different aspects of the Pasifika women’s cyclone lead to the need for us to find ways to survive within the storm. Pasifika women reflected on the role of having other Pasifika women around, and also their community, in providing support. I would like to argue that the drive to transform or harness the storm comes from within these survival techniques.

Having other Pasifika women around us within higher education institutions inevitably leads to mentoring. This mentoring is an important survival tactic, given the core relational nature of Pacific ontologies; this mentoring is also what leads to the communal desire to transform, harness, and survive the storm of higher education institutions. As shown in the quotes above, Pasifika women are mentored into understanding their existence in higher education as a core leverage point for navigating to the island. They are mentored into taking on roles that provide Pasifika communities with power to transform the storm, and it becomes a given that they will engage the storm. Pasifika women also understand themselves in relation to their community, as shown in the talanoa, which means we are ontologically compelled to take action that benefits our communities, and for now our communities see engagement with the storm as the best way forward.

Pasifika also consider themselves able to hold dual notions that may conflict with each other (Hau'ofa, 2008; Nabobo-Baba, 2013). This means they are able to exist in a space that insists on one form of knowledge while also working and expecting the institution to move towards a pluriversity. Both the literature and the talanoa reflected that Pasifika women value relationships, and many of us have built a relationship with the institution (Thaman, 2003a). This is yet another reason I believe that Pasifika women hold onto the dual understanding that higher education institutions do harm while also holding out hope for transformation. We are not only mentored and bound through our communities to engage in a system that has shown the potential to benefit our communities, but we are also ontologically bound to expect that as part of a good relationship the institution will eventually meet us half-way and want to transform itself. Unfortunately, this does not take into account that the institution itself does not have the same ontological understanding of the world and currently understands the world as market-driven, not relationship-driven. As a result of these two mechanisms (both mentoring and ontological) Pasifika women will continue to insist on transforming, harnessing, and surviving higher education storms.

Harnessing the storm is not outside of the realm of possibility. Collaborators showed how they were not only able to recognise aspects of the Pasifika women's cyclone that exists in higher education, but they were also able to harness the cyclone in order to journey faster. In talanoa seven a collaborator shared how the process of stranger making (Ahmed, 2012) by the institution makes it possible for her to do the work that is meaningful to her and her community, as the institution fails to see her. Another collaborator (talanoa ten) shared how she recognises that she is being infantilised (Puwar, 2004) but is driven by "*10 other people whose jobs rely on us*" (talanoa ten) to accept this and use the institution's own expectations of who looks like a leader against the institution: "*they see him and they're reassured that there's someone in charge who looks like someone that they want to be in charge*" (talanoa ten). This approach is not beyond critique, as some question the ability of diverse bodies to achieve the long-term gains needed when short-term compromises are made (Morely, 2005). I would argue that when Pasifika women harness the storm, they do so with the intention of benefitting their communities and with the intention of navigating to the island faster. These same women have broader conversations about the wider systematic issues, they are aware of them, and it is perhaps a day-to-day survival mechanism to harness while imagining the island that awaits them.

Collaborators indicated in their talanoa that while promising practices are important, it is equally important that we have hidden conversations, conversations that reveal why higher education needs to change. These hidden conversations point to the impact of the white masculine imprint on the everyday experience of Pasifika women. The imprint pushes Pasifika women to engage the excess labour of camouflage and performative diversity in an effort to engage with institutions' non-performative diversity actions. Sometimes this camouflage and performative diversity can lead to lateral violence within the Pasifika women community; this behaviour is encouraged or at the very least rewarded through the neoliberal higher education institution. Pasifika women continue to engage in a system that demands this

of them as they are mentored into and ontologically compelled to hold out hope that higher education institutions will enable us to navigate to our islander sooner. Pasifika women also show it is possible to harness the storm, using the storm against itself in order for us travel faster; this is not without risk, but it is a risk that Pasifika women have decided to take. Pasifika women's capacity for duality means that it is possible to both invest in a system and identify promising practices whilst also recognising that it is a system that hinders our progress.

## IMPLICATIONS

This research has implications beyond this project. This work introduces a women-centred approach to doing Pacific research through the masi research methodology, and it establishes six promising practices for both transforming higher education institutions to better serve Pasifika peoples and also to support Pasifika women during this transitional period. This research records Pasifika women's experiences of higher education, revealing how the white masculine imprint impacts their daily work. Perhaps most importantly, this research explains that Pasifika women will continue to navigate towards success in spite of the white masculine imprint, and that we do so because we are mentored and ontologically compelled to.

In order to conduct this impactful research, it was important to ground it in a Pacific worldview that centred women's voices. As such this research developed the masi methodology. By intentionally centring the women's voices and aligning with Pacific cultural practices it is possible for Pasifika women to share stories (around sexual assault and the masculine imprint) that may not have been shared within mixed gender spaces due to cultural norms and expectations. Ensuring that the research space reflected Pasifika cultural norms also meant it was possible not only to share stories about negative experiences such as racism, but also powerful stories about how Pasifika women survive the storm that may not have been shared in a different cultural research space. This is an important development in Pacific research

methodologies and methods and I am hopeful that it will encourage other Pasifika/Pacific women to create spaces where Pasifika/Pacific women can share their stories and change the current narrative of Pasifika/Pacific women as consumable objects.

As a result of masi methodology, the stories shared by Pasifika women in this research revealed six promising practices that can be used by institutions and Pasifika women to generate change within higher education institutions, both to enable the institution to serve Pasifika communities better and also to enable Pasifika women to survive higher education institutions whilst they are changing them. These promising practices provide ways for us to transform the storms that operate in higher education while also maintaining our own wellbeing. The implication of these promising practices is that it is now possible for higher education institutions to formalise their support of Pasifika women and begin to consider how they can transform from slowing down Pasifika people's progress and instead become a tool that can be used to speed Pasifika people's progress towards their success.

This research further explored and pushed current conversations on why Indigenous women and women of colour need to be conscious of maintaining wellbeing within higher education institutions. Higher education institutions operate with a white masculine imprint that encourages, maintains, and rewards behaviours that are harmful to Indigenous women and women of colour. Collaborators on this research project pushed understandings of desirable diversity (Ahenakew and Naepi, 2015; Ahmed, 2012) and excess labour (Acker, 2012; 2014; 2017; Carmen, 2004; Fisher, 2007; Mather, 1998) by revealing how these two intersect when a Pasifika woman must perform or camouflage herself within desirable diversity in order to stay or progress within higher education institutions. This understanding of higher education and its impact on Indigenous women and women of colour enables us to further understand what higher education institutional habits (Ahmed, 2012) do to space invaders (Puwar, 2004), so that we can make informed decisions about how to break these institutional habits in order to move forward.

This research revealed that Pasifika women continue to engage in this system due to mentoring and ontological understandings of community success. This is an important moment of understanding for both Pasifika women and the institutions within which they work. Understanding that Pasifika women enter the workplace not just as themselves but as members of communities can compel institutions to respond to Pasifika women's critique of the institution, as they are members of a core 'customer' group that institutions are directed by government (Ministry of Education, 2013) to serve better. It also offers Pasifika women a leverage point for change; if we understand why we remain in institutions we can begin to make stands on our value systems. In talanoa five the collaborator reflected on how, since she had begun making decisions and taking stands on her value base as opposed to others' impressions of her, she had found herself not only in a more powerful position but also more comfortable within her own skin.

This research also contributes to ongoing understandings of success from a Pasifika perspective. Whereas previous work on higher education and success has focussed on student definitions (Airini et al., 2010) this work expands Pasifika notions of success to those held by Pasifika women who work in higher education. This extension expands how we understand Pasifika people's viewpoint of success and higher education. Higher education is a tool to be utilised toward community success; it is a tool that enables Pasifika people, as a Tongan collaborator stated, "*Langa Fonua. To build the land*" (talanoa nine). The implication of this is that higher education institutions need to understand that not only do Pasifika people understand success in higher education as beyond the grades and completion (Airini et al., 2010), but that higher education institutions are a tool for success. Therefore, when higher education institutions underserve Pasifika people, they can be understood as actively working against communal Pasifika success. This underserving of Pasifika people means that higher education institutions as they currently operate risk moving from being a tool for success in the eyes of the Pasifika community to being viewed as a storm that slows the journey.

## LIMITATIONS

This research is limited by its focus on Pasifika women in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is possible to expand this research by examining how Pasifika men experience working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand; this further research would also help us to better understand what is occurring at the intersection of race and gender. It may also be useful to examine how Pacific peoples outside of Aotearoa New Zealand experience working in higher education, giving not only a comparison point but also a deeper understanding of how higher education institutions behave globally.

This research is limited by its inability to define the disciplines from which collaborators speak from. During the talanoa it became clear that different disciplinary backgrounds had different experiences and also different interpretations of their experiences. This limitation is due to the small amount of Pasifika women working in higher education in Aotearoa, it would have been possible to identify the collaborators if divided by discipline. Future research could consider this option when there is a critical mass of Pasifika women working in higher education institutions.

This research also did not differentiate between academic and professional staff experiences within higher education institutions. This is an important differentiation as these groups experience different levels of power that would reveal more about how higher education institutions operate and the hierarchy within. However, the small number of Pasifika women working within higher education institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand meant that it was not possible to gather enough data from these two different groups. This would be an interesting research project in the future, once there are more Pasifika staff within the institution.

The term Pasifika enables this research to be used as a leverage for change as it speaks to a greater number of women's experiences; however, it also silences distinct groups within the process. Therefore, it

is important that further research moves outside of the Pasifika framework and instead looks at individual Pacific nations and their experiences of working in higher education. As shown in reflections of what being a Pasifika woman is ((*tauhi va (nuture)*, *taui le alofa i le alofa (reciprocate love with love)*, and *nai tavi ni na marama matuvuvale (hold the family)*), there are shared values, but how these values are practiced and explained differ from each nation and as such it is important for these narratives to be heard.

The use of the term Pasifika also suggests that the need to create or construct a homogenous voice. This limits the research's ability to present a complex picture as it is possible that a complex picture will threaten our decision to journey. Pasifika as a term is used to leverage change, and in most instances to leverage change a homogenous voice must be presented. The aim of this dissertation was to present work that could be a leverage point for change, however, this does not limit future work on this research from presenting the different complexities of the data.

This research is also limited by my own knowledge on Pasifika customs and traditions. Initially I had hoped to analyse these transcripts using a lens developed by reflecting on *tauhi va (nuture the va)*, *taui le alofa i le alofa (reciprocate love with love)*, and *nai tavi ni na marama matuvuvale (hold the family)*, however, the foundational knowledge just simply was not there within the scholarly work and my own knowledge systems. These initial sayings point to a Pasifika women's lens that is built from a relational standpoint, an understanding that all that we do is driven by our relationships with others. It is important that we begin to consider how Pasifika women understand themselves in the world as this will provide further insight into how we experience the world.

This research did not analyse data based on generational concerns or experiences within higher education. As higher education institutions shift and adapt to the current political situation different generations of Pasifika women will have different experiences within the institution. Once again this is a

critical mass issue and perhaps once there are more Pasifika women within higher education institutions it will be possible to collect stories and have discussions about generational experiences and solutions.

This research was respectful of tangata whenua and chose not to share stories of Pasifika peoples relationships with Māori without first working with our extended family to ensure that stories shared are appropriate. Much like other families it is important to the Māori and Pasifika relationship that we are strategic about what is shared outside of the family and that we recognise that in our efforts to support each other there are some conversations that should be kept within.

This research was also limited by what could be shared. Pasifika women touched on things that were later not included within the transcripts. This is in part a way of protecting ourselves but also of protecting others. There are certain things that are not shared, either in solidarity or in awareness that not everything is for the institution. There are some things we work on together as a community that are not for those from outside.

COME/LET US JOURNEY/COME/LET US JOURNEY/COME/LET US JOURNEY

## CONCLUSION

*WE KNOW THE STORMS; WE WILL SURVIVE THEM/WE KNOW THE STORMS; WE WILL TRANSFORM THEM/WE KNOW THE STORMS;  
WE WILL CONTINUE/HAVE FAITH; COLLECTIVELY WE ARE STRONG/HAVE FAITH; COLLECTIVELY WE CAN TRANSFORM/ HAVE  
FAITH; THE ISLAND IS STILL THERE*

Talanoa ten both inadvertently and intentionally provides a summary of this dissertation:

*Well, I didn't come to play. This is something I have to keep going and doing. Because then who's gonna look after the people who are coming after me? If I go, then someone else has to do this whole road again. And that sucks. So as long as I can, I'll hold the line, and talk to people, and say all sorts of inappropriate things about the university, and challenge the space, because it's not a sacred space. It's not a holy space. It's an institution. It's a company. It's not gonna care for us, in the way that our family or our culture is gonna care for us.... ... So, we're allowed to challenge - and actually we're probably remiss if we don't - as Pacific women try to fit in a non-Pacific, and somewhat non-women, world of academia.*

This dissertation maps Pasifika women's experiences of working in higher education institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand. It rewrites the "world from the experience of not being able to pass in the world" (Ahmed, 2012, p. 176). By rewriting this world, we reveal more about higher education institutions and how they operate to exclude certain bodies and ideas in order to maintain the current system. We also write our own story, one where we are navigating to our success and higher education institutions can either serve that success or slow us down; but we will get there.

This dissertation was able to record these stories through introducing the women-centred Pacific research methodology, the masi methodology. The masi methodology centres Pasifika women within the research process and values their voice as authoritative. Collaborators answered the five questions outlined at the outset of this research:

1. How do Pasifika women define success for themselves and their communities?

*What does the Island look like?*

2. What experiences do Pasifika women have working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand?

*What do the storms look like?*

3. How do Pasifika women respond to clashes between their community's goals and the universities' goals?

*Do we harness the storms/transform the storms/or look to the horizon?*

4. What can we learn about how to prepare institutions to support Pasifika females who work in higher education?

*How do we transform the storms?*

5. What change making techniques can we share with our community to enable faster change within a slow-moving system?

*How do we transform the storms sooner?*

The use of the talanoa method alongside the masi methodology meant that collaborators were also able to add to the research, sharing stories of how to survive higher education institutions and the storms they create and foster.

This research defines success beyond current student-centred understandings of Pasifika success in higher education. Instead, it builds on understandings of success to be inclusive of Pasifika staff and finds that for Pasifika women working in higher education in Aotearoa, success is contributing to our

community's success without giving up part of our own identities. Success is being in a position of influence and power that enables the collective to ensure that Pasifika people are served well by the current system

Pasifika women currently experience higher education as a space that is defined and structured according to a white masculine imprint that enables and enforces excess labour, non-performative diversity, infantilization, hyper-surveillance, lateral violence, and sexual assault (storms and cyclones). This space is influenced by the wider systems (weather systems) of neoliberalism and colonisation. Pasifika women are aware of the neoliberal weather system, but they are not overly concerned about transforming it at this moment; instead they have invested into the system in order to navigate to the success outlined above. Colonisation has made, and continues to make, a mark of Pasifika communities. Pasifika women in higher education no longer wish to share their knowledge, as the colonial values that higher education is both influenced by and prescribes to means that their knowledge is devalued and misinterpreted.

Pasifika women know that there are clashes between their communities' goals and the universities' goals. However, they see higher education institutions as a tool to be utilised when navigating towards success. Therefore, higher education institutions are spaces to be transformed, harnessed, and survived in order to navigate to our community's success. Pasifika women are prepared to make short-term compromises to serve long-term goals.

This research identified six promising practices in which both higher education institutions and Pasifika women can engage in order to both transform and survive the current white, masculine higher education institution:

1. Mentoring for Pasifika women
2. Collective approaches to change-making
3. Pasifika women at all levels and roles in the institutions

4. Development of institutional awareness
5. Collaborative approaches to wellbeing
6. Having a Pasifika strategic plan

These promising practices reflect collaborators' desire for structural change, which is made possible by having individuals at all levels of the institution who are supported by the collective, while also ensuring that those within the system can survive while it transforms.

This dissertation also made space for the collaborators to share not only how to change institutions, but also why that change is necessary. Importantly, this sharing was not about pausing our journey to fix these issues. Instead, using Pacific duality, this was about being within the storms and continuing to move through them whilst also recording the storms to change them and to make sure that those who come after are prepared for them. Collaborators provided hidden conversations that enable us to build on understandings of excess labour, desirable diversity, performance and camouflage, why Pasifika women choose to survive and transform as opposed to avoiding higher education, and finally how to harness the white masculine imprint to move Pasifika ahead.

This dissertation also points to further research needed to help us understand higher education institutions from those people who experience it from the margins (hooks, 1991; Samu, 2014). We need to consider how lateral violence operates and impacts those on the margins. We should also consider diversifying the #metoo narrative with stories from Pasifika women who have indicated within this dissertation that, yes, #metoo.

Pasifika women continue to engage in higher education as we believe it will help us to navigate to our island. We are at a moment in time where higher education institutions need to acknowledge how they slow our journey and make steps to change the very core of what they are. Pasifika people will continue to

navigate towards our island whether or not higher education institutions join us in the drua (double hulled canoe) or create storms to slow us. What remains to be seen is if higher education institutions will be courageous enough to leave their own shores.

*ALICE*

*CAN YOU SEE THE ISLAND?*

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# APPENDIX ONE: STUDY DETAILS

## STUDY DETAILS

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**Title of Study:** Pacific women's experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa

**Name of Co-Investigator:** Sereana Naepi

**Name of Primary Investigator:** Vanessa Andreotti

**Department:** Educational Studies

**Chair of Department:** Ali Abdi

**Committee Members:** Sarah Hunt, Amy Metcalfe

### General Description of Study

This research is concerned with shifting structures in higher education to ensure Pacific student success and seeks to better understand Pacific women's experiences working in higher education particularly in reference to agitating for change. This research is being conducted by an Indigenous Fijian and Palagi researcher who is a member of the project's 'community of concern'.

This research focuses on how higher education institutional structures can prevent change that can benefit Indigenous Pacific students. This research will investigate Pacific women's stories about working in higher education agitating for change in Aotearoa New Zealand. Participants will be asked to reflect on their experiences working within higher education as Pacific women. This project has been designed to gain the perspective of both individual Pacific women and the community who work in higher education across Aotearoa New Zealand, in order to form a broad base of knowledge about how this network of people approach issues of organisational structure and its intersection with racism, sexism and resistance to change.

## **Methods of Data Collection**

Phase One: Participants will be invited to participate in a talanoa with the researcher over skype for an average time of 90 minutes. However, the participant can decide to have a shorter or longer talanoa depending on if they have more or less to share.

Phase Two: Participants will be invited to attend a two hour talanoa in either Auckland, Wellington or Otago. The talanoa will consider themes from the phase one talanoa and also the overall research project.

## **Consent**

Paper consent forms will be signed by participants in the in-person interviews, and a copy will be left with participants. If participants choose to participate in video interviews, a copy of the consent form will be sent to participants in advance via email, and it will be verbally reviewed prior to the interview. The participant will be asked for their verbal consent before the video recording begins, and will be asked to verify their consent at the beginning of the video recording.

## **Electronic Collection of Data**

Talanoa will be digitally video recorded. Video recordings, transcripts and notes will be stored on a password protected and encrypted computer for five years after the completion of the study. Consent forms will be kept in a locked drawer in principal investigators office at UBC. At the end of five years, the research data will be destroyed.

## **Study Participants**

Study participants will be recruited from the researcher's existing networks through email invitations. Information about the research will be sent directly from the researcher to potential participants, and the researcher will also ask her contacts to forward the invitation to their contacts. Therefore, the invitation to participate will not be available to the general public, and will not be considered in the public domain.

Participants will include female Indigenous Pacific adults (over age 18) working to support Pacific learners in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Respondents will be given the option of participating with various levels of personal anonymity, including the use of their name or a pseudonym. In general, data from the interviews will be analyzed for trends, and findings will be reported without naming individual people or communities. However, some case studies may focus on specific regions of Aotearoa and specific levels of higher education.

## **Designation of the Study as Minimal Risk**

The project should be designated minimal risk because participants are being selected based on their daily involvement in addressing systematic issues within higher education institutions. Therefore, participants will not encounter any risks beyond those encountered in their daily work and life.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me on [sereana.naepi@alumni.ubc.ca](mailto:sereana.naepi@alumni.ubc.ca)

## APPENDIX TWO: COLLABORATOR CONSENT FORMS

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR COMMUNITY TALANOA

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#### **Pacific women's experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand**

You are invited to participate in a study entitled *Pacific women's experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand*. This research is being conducted by Sereana Naepi (Co-Investigator) as part of her doctoral program in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia (supervised by Dr Vanessa Andreotti as principal investigator). If you have any questions arising from this talanoa, Sereana can be contacted at [sereana.naepi@ubc.alumni.ca](mailto:sereana.naepi@ubc.alumni.ca) or on skype Sereana87.

#### **Goals of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to record Pacific women's experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand and to investigate strategies for change making in higher education institutions. The primary goals of this study are to develop promising practices for higher education institutions to better support Pacific women working in their institutions, to develop promising practices for Pacific women trying to effect change in higher education and to develop a Pacific theoretical framework for understanding higher education organisational structures.

This research is important because of the goals we have as a Pacific community to see our community succeed in higher education. By reflecting on our methods for change making and how institutions can better support Pacific women we can develop promising practices that may enable more rapid change in higher education institutions.

## **Participant Selection**

You are being invited to participate in this research because of your work in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Participants in this research include academic and professional staff who work to support Pacific student's success in higher education.

## **What participants will be asked to do**

You are invited to participate in a community talanoa over a two hour period. You will be asked to comment on "Pacific women's experiences in higher education, with a particular focus on change making" in relation to the results from phase one of this research (one on one talanoa). Your comments can include stories, critiques, narratives, or anything else you feel is appropriate within a talanoa format. The community talanoa format is designed to bring Pacific women who work in higher education together to discuss both your experiences and also ways in which the community can agitate for urgent collective change within higher education institutions.

## **Description of the benefits and risks**

The benefits of your participation include the opportunity to share your experience working in higher education to support Pacific students and communities and to connect your own experiences with those of a network of people working toward similar goals. The risks are no greater than those you encounter in your daily work, primarily the possibility of having an emotional response to the issues being discussed. It is also possible that there will be people at the community talanoa who you have kinship or employment relationships, it is not expected that you will share anything that will jeopardise these relationships, or that these relationships will be used to silence you.

## **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you have the right to refuse to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You may withdraw from the study at any time and may remove your interview data without consequences, by informing the researcher of your decision to withdraw.

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail [RSIL@ors.ubc.ca](mailto:RSIL@ors.ubc.ca) or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

## **Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this research will be shared in Sereana Naepi's doctoral dissertation, which will be available at the University of British Columbia library. This research may also result in the publication of scholarly or popular articles, as well as conference presentations. Sereana Naepi will contact you at the completion of the study to offer you a copy of the research results, or you can contact Sereana directly for a copy of the results.

## **Data storage**

Talanoa will be digitally video recorded. Video recordings, transcripts and notes will be stored on a password protected and encrypted computer for five years after the completion of the study. Consent forms will be kept in a locked drawer in principal investigators office at UBC. At the end of five years, the research data will be destroyed.

## Future Contacts

Sereana Naepi will contact you with updates on the study via email and you have the opportunity to provide feedback towards the research in this way.

## Anonymity

Due to the nature of a community talanoa your anonymity cannot be guaranteed as others will also be participating. It is expected that those who participate in the community talanoa will not share the names of people who attended and the information that they shared.

Please indicate below which level of anonymity you prefer in the written research results:

- A.  I agree to be identified by name and to be credited in the results of the study.
- B.  I prefer the use of a pseudonym in the written results but allow for my name to be credited in the study, so that data associated with me will not be directly linked to my name
- C.  I prefer the use of a pseudonym and the removal of my name in the results.

For those who chose A or B, please answer the following:

I wish to be given the opportunity to provide feedback on any publications which contain quotes attributed to me. Yes  No

Institutions that you discuss will not be named. They may be referred to as the level of higher education institution (i.e university or polytech) and if they are located in the North Island or South Island (due to demographic differences).

If any concerns arise about anonymity following the interview, or you wish to change the level of anonymity you chose, please contact Sereana Naepi so that your data can be appropriately anonymized. Changes of this nature will only be possible prior to the publication of the researcher's PhD dissertation.

### **Confidentiality**

Regardless of the level of anonymity you choose above, the only people who will have access to the research files is the researcher, Sereana and the research committee. Please note that because of the community talanoa method confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, however, it is expected that those who participate in the community talanoa will not share the names of people who attended and the information that they shared.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name of Participant*                      *Signature*                      *Date*

I have been working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand for \_\_\_\_\_ years

The Pacific nation(s) I identify with: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to be updated on the project Y/N

I wish to receive a copy of the final thesis Y/N

I wish to receive a summary of the final thesis Y/N

Please update me and send information to this email \_\_\_\_\_

*A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*

## PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR PHASE ONE TALANOA

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### **Pacific women's experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand**

You are invited to participate in a study entitled *Pacific women's experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand*. This research is being conducted by Sereana Naepi (co-investigator) as part of her doctoral program in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia (supervised by Dr Vanessa Andreotti as principal investigator). If you have any questions arising from this talanoa, Sereana can be contacted at [sereana.naepi@alumni.ubc.ca](mailto:sereana.naepi@alumni.ubc.ca) or on skype Sereana87.

#### **Goals of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to record Pacific women's experiences working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand and to investigate strategies for change making in higher education institutions. The primary goals of this study are to develop promising practices for higher education institutions to better support Pacific women working in their institutions, to develop promising practices for Pacific women trying to effect change in higher education and to develop a Pacific theoretical framework for understanding higher education organisational structures.

This research is important because of the goals we have as a Pacific community to see our community succeed in higher education. By reflecting on our methods for change making and how institutions can better support Pacific women we can develop promising practices that may enable more rapid change in higher education institutions.

### **Participant Selection**

You are being invited to participate in this research because of your work in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Participants in this research include academic and professional staff who work to support Pacific student's success in higher education.

### **What participants will be asked to do**

You are invited to participate in a talanoa over skype of approximately 1.5 hours. However, given the nature of talanoa it can go under or over the time stated dependent on if you the participant feel you have shared everything you wish to discuss in relation to this topic. You will be asked to comment on the theme of this research "Pacific women's experiences in higher education, with a particular focus on change making". Your comments can include stories, critiques, narratives, or anything else you feel is appropriate within a talanoa format.

### **Description of the benefits and risks**

The benefits of your participation include the opportunity to share your experience working in higher education to support Pacific students and communities and to connect your own experiences with those of a network of people working toward similar goals. The risks are no greater than those you encounter in your daily work, primarily the possibility of having an emotional response to the issues being discussed.

## **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you have the right to refuse to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You may withdraw from the study at any time and may remove your interview data without consequences, by informing the researcher of your decision to withdraw.

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail [RSIL@ors.ubc.ca](mailto:RSIL@ors.ubc.ca) or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

## **Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this research will be shared in Sereana Naepi's doctoral dissertation, which will be available at the University of British Columbia library. This research will also be shared at the community talanoa for discussion with other Pacific women who work in higher education. This research may also result in the publication of scholarly or popular articles, as well as conference presentations. Sereana Naepi will contact you at the completion of the study to offer you a copy of the research results, or you can contact Sereana directly for a copy of the results.

## **Data storage**

Talanoa will be digitally video recorded. Video recordings, transcripts and notes will be stored on a password protected and encrypted computer for five years after the completion of the study. Consent

forms will be kept in a locked drawer in principal investigators office at UBC. At the end of five years, the research data will be destroyed.

### **Future Contacts**

You also have the opportunity to participate in a community talanoa where the themes from the expert talanoa will be discussed with more Pacific women who work in higher education in Aotearoa. Sereana Naepi will contact you with information regarding these community talanoa.

### **Anonymity**

Please indicate below which level of anonymity you prefer in the written research results:

- A.  I agree to be identified by name and to be credited in the results of the study.
  
- B.  I prefer the use of a pseudonym in the written results but allow for my name to be credited in the study, so that data associated with me will not be directly linked to my name
  
- C.  I prefer the use of a pseudonym and the removal of my name in the results.

For those who chose A or B, please answer the following:

I wish to be given the opportunity to provide feedback on any publications which contain quotes attributed to me. Yes  No

Institutions that you discuss will not be named. They may be referred to as the level of higher education institution (i.e university or polytech) and if they are located in the North Island or South Island (due to demographic differences).

If any concerns arise about anonymity following the interview, or you wish to change the level of anonymity you chose, please contact Sereana Naepi so that your data can be appropriately anonymized. Changes of this nature will only be possible prior to the publication of the researcher's PhD dissertation.

### **Confidentiality**

Regardless of the level of anonymity you choose above, the only people who will have access to the research files is the researcher, Sereana, the research committee and a transcriber. Please note by using the medium of skype, your confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, as skype is not considered to be a confidential medium.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name of Participant*                      *Signature*                      *Date*

I have been working in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand for \_\_\_\_\_ years

The Pacific nation(s) I identify with: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to be updated on the project Y/N

I wish to receive a copy of the final thesis Y/N

I wish to receive a summary of the final thesis Y/N

Please update me and send information to this email \_\_\_\_\_

*A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*

## APPENDIX THREE: PUBLICATIONS DURING PHD

### BOOK CHAPTERS

- Naepi, S. (2018). Pacific Peoples, Feminisms and Higher Education. In Icaza, R., Rutazibwa, O. and de Jong S. (Eds.), *Decolonization and Feminisms in Global Teaching and Learning*, Routledge
- Airini., and Naepi, S. (2018). A Notch in my Heart: University practices that help Canadian first-generation student success. In Bell, A and Santamaria, L. (Eds.), *Understanding Experiences of First Generation University Students: Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Methodologies*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London
- Naepi, S., Stein, S., Ahenakew, C., and Andreotti, V. (2017). A Cartography of Higher Education Attempts at Inclusion and Insights from Pasifika scholarship. In Major, J. (Eds.), *Global Teaching: Southern Perspectives on Working with Diversity*, Palgrave Macmillan
- Ahenakew, C., & Naepi, S. (2015). The difficult task of turning walls into tables. In A. Macfarlane, M. Webber & S. Macfarlane (Eds.), *Sociocultural theory: Implications for curricular across the sector* (p.181-194). Christchurch, NZ: University of Canterbury Press.
- Naepi, S. (2014). Ethics of Protection. In McMaster, C. & Murphy, C., (Eds.) *Postgraduate study in Aotearoa New Zealand: Surviving and Succeeding* (p.13-21) New Zealand, NZCER Press

### ARTICLES

- Naepi, S. and Airini (2018). Be the Real Me: Learning from Knowledge Makers. *Knowledge Makers* 3. 58-62
- Naepi, S. (2017). The Lessons We Carry with Us, *Knowledge Makers*, 2. 85-86
- Naepi, S. and Airini (2017). Foreword, *Knowledge Makers*, 2 2-5
- Naepi, S. (2016). Indigenous Feminisms: A South Pacific Perspective, *Canadian Graduate Journal for Social Justice*. 1. 1-10
- Naepi, S. (2016). Answering the Call, *Knowledge Makers*, 1. 55
- Naepi, S. and Airini (2016). Foreword, *Knowledge Makers*, 1. 2-4
- Naepi, S. (2015) Navigating the Currents of Kaupapa Māori and Pan-Pacific Research Methodologies, *Mai: A New Zealand Journal of Indigenous Scholarship* 4(1). 71-84