*White Noise Podcast: Episode 3*One Whānau (family) and Two PhDs, Ethel & Erin's Haerenga (journey) so far with Ethyl Renata and Erin Roxburgh Makea

Erin

Indigenous PhD student is really hard and there's just so much weight on your shoulders all the time

I think diamonds are made under pressure.

*Intro music*

*Jaynaya*

Welcome to White Noise – the podcast of the Indigenous Law and Justice Hub

You just heard our theme song by John Wayne Parsons.  
I’m speaking to you all from the grounds of the Melbourne Law School, on Wurundjeri Country in Naarm. I offer respect to elders past and present, and all Indigenous people joining us, listening at this time of ongoing work and fight for strong cultural futures under colonisation

To share a bit of myself before my name, a practice you will hear taken up in this discussion - I’m a woman who was the only child to wonderful parents (hi Mum and Dad), a granddaughter to a most loving Anglo-Indian nana, a Research Fellow at the Indigenous Law and Justice Hub, and my name is Jaynaya Dwyer.

It is a joy to have a research job at a University. I’m new to it and so grateful to be employed to do so much learning, reflection, and meaningful conversations with colleagues and students, but boy do these sandstone buildings carry a lot of symbolic weight.

*What comes to mind for you when you hear the word research?*

Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou woman and researcher famously writes in the foundational text Decolonising methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples that:  
  
“The word itself, ‘research’, is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary.  
  
When mentioned in many indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful.  
  
It is so powerful that indigenous people even write poetry about research. The ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world’s colonized peoples"

So what is it like , grappling with this legacy for the growing number of Indigenous people working in Universities.   
  
Today I’m speaking with two Māori women and researchers. Erin Roxburgh Makea I first met when she arrived at the Hub as our visiting fellow, traveling from University of Victoria, Wellington New Zealand. Through this arrangement we were also lucky to meet our second guest in this conversation, Ethel Renata, who is Erin’s mum.

These women have been so generous with me.   
At this time we recorded this I didn’t know much at all about te ao Māori at all, and subsequently have had the wonderful opportunity to learn a little more traveling to Aotearoa with a group of incredibly bright and thoughtful law students, looking at Indigenous laws as part of their studies.

Erin and Ethel speak about the way we as women, and they as Māori women make ourselves Invisible and are made invisible – and working to claim space and Voice.

A large part of this conversation is about language. It is something that strikes most people who travel to Aotearoa, and that was certainly what our students reported, feeling delight and sometimes discomfort in light of all of the te reo Māori in use all around us – as anglophones they were not used to not understanding, and it reminded of all of the languages trying to be reclaimed across this land as a result of colonial violence.   
  
Ethel and Erin share with us about their experiences of claiming culture and language, and it reminded me of a poem one of my students shared by Ellen Van Neerven, Mununjali Yugambeh woman who verse is in English and Yugambeh language

‘‘Nana  
I wanted to speak to you in our language  
and tell you I love you’

That verse will resonate with so many people, Indigenous people and people otherwise colonised and feeling the pull and push of assimilation.   
  
For so many as Whiti Hereaka, Māori playright speaking with Jacquie Huggins at Brisbane Righters festival said ‘our mouth should be a different shape.’   
  
This Sense of longing and desire and reaching came through strongly in our conversations.

My guests shared about expectations of Indigenous scholars, their work as educators and how their experiences in education institutions were continuing to shape their identity as Indigenous women. Lets take a listen.

*Intro music*

Erin and Ethyl, Welcome to the podcast.

*Erin*  
 Thanks for having us.

*Jaynaya*

Thank you so much for joining us. As is always our first question on this podcast. Who are you, who is your mob and what are the values that drive you in your work?

*Erin*

Kia ora! Ko Erin Roxburgh-Makea toku ingoa. I'm a lecturer at Victoria Business School and also Ethyl’s daughter.

*Ethyl*

Kia Ora. Ko Ethyl Renata toku ingoa. I am Erin's mom and I'm so thrilled to be here today. I'm just going to share with you our pepeha, which is from Te Ao Māori, that's from the Māori world and it is a way that we introduce ourselves and talk about where we are from and our te puna.

Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou katoa

Ko Hikurangi te māunga

Ko Waiapu te awa

Ko Horouta te waka

Ko Ngāti Porou tōku iwi

Nō Tairawhiti ahau

Ko Poneke toku kainga inianei

Ko Lionel Renata tōku pāpā.

Ko Tuahine Renata tōku māmā

Ko Erin Roxburgh-makea taku tamahine  
  
Ko Thomas Roxburgh taku tama  
  
Ko kevin Baines taku tane  
  
Ko Ethel Renata tōku ingoa

 (Translation)

*Greetings, Greetings, Greetings to you all!  
My mountain is Mt Hikurangi  
My river the Waiapu River  
The waka that I affiliate to is Horouta  
My tribe is Ngāti Porou  
My marae is Tinatoka  
I am from Gisborne  
I live in Wellington  
My father is Lionel Renata  
My mother is Tuahine Renata  
My daughter is Erin Roxburgh Makea  
My son is Thomas Roxburgh   
My husband is Kevin Bains*

*My name is Ethel Renata*

Thank you for having us today.

*Erin*

Kia ora koto, I'm going to do the same mehi as my mum, but the one that I choose to do is not as long or as detailed as my mum’s.

Kia Ora Tatu

Ko Hikurangi te māunga

Ko Waiapu te awa

Ko Horouta te waka

Ko Ngāti Porou tōku iwi

Nō Tairawhiti ahau

Ko Poneke toku kainga inianei

Ko Michael Roxburgh tōku pāpā.

Ko Ethel Renata tōku māmā

Ko Erin Roxburgh Markea tōku ingoa  
  
(translation)

Greetings, Greetings, Greetings to you all!

My mountain is Mt Hikurangi

My river the Waiapu River

The waka that I affiliate to is Horouta

My tribe is Ngāti Porou

My marae is Tinatoka

I am from Gisborne

I live in Wellington

My father is Michael Roxburgh

My mother is Ethel Renata

My name is Erin Roxburgh Makea

I think also just to break down our pepeha a little bit. When we go through it, you always start by, I think mum’s said by locating yourself, but we locate ourselves with the land, which I think is something that's really common with Indigenous peoples. So now our pepeha, we always start by well I and you did it in the same order too- I introduce my mountain, introduce my maunga introduce my river, so my awa, our meeting house that way we belong to. Introduce our hapu, which is smaller version of an Iwi, and then introduce our iwi. Then I introduce my mum and dad. Mum, you talked about your mum and dad and your children as well in there. So always start with the land first though, don’t we.

*Ethyl*

Yes. So for us, when we talk about Hikurangi being our maunga that really is acknowledging Hikurangi as an ancestor or a tupuna of ours. Our awa, our waterways, so again that is a place where traditionally we would have used to gather foods and to travel upon. So our awa, is also seen as our ancestor. I think for us what that really shows is also our values around kaitiakitanga. How we take care of the land because we are really taking care of our ancestors. So they really are a part of who we are.

*Erin*

And kaitiakitanga, in English, very broadly means like guardianship or stewardship, so not ownership of the land. But like mum said, us taking care of our ancestors.

*Ethyl*

So how we would take care of a family member -so that is really how we see those features of the landscape that we live with them. I also talked about the area of Tairāwhiti because that is the area sort of around Gisborne area on the North Island of Aotearoa, and that is where our iwi is located. It is actually located in Ruatōria which which is about two or three hours away from Gisborne. I also talked about where we currently live, which is Te Upoko o te Ika Maui. Some people also call that Wellington. And I referred to Te Upoko o Te Ika Maui because that really relates to a story or matauranga Māori knowledge that we have of how our country was found and it was fished up by Maui. Who is also like a really important person in Te Ao Maori, and Te Upoko o Te Ika means the head of the fish.

*Erin*

I think also, to answer the second part of the question, so what values drive our work are actually quite embedded in the mehi that we gave. When I think about my values, there is two that I always try to live by and anything I do. The first one is manaakitanga, a Māori value which can loosely mean generosity, hospitality. But I always just kinda take it as that's how I want to have the relationships in my life. As bringing people along with me and being kind and empathetic and having mutually respectful relationships. Another one would be whanaungatanga and which again is about interconnectedness of the world and of people and the environment. I always just try and carry that through everything I do in my work, I guess.  
Is that what you? What would you say?

*Ethyl*

I would agree. I think one of the things that is embedded within our pepeha is our whakapapa, so it does absolutely connect to the environment and where we are from, but also who we are and how we are located within our whanau and acknowledging our ancestors and acknowledging who we are today and who is in our family; and it is also acknowledging that in the future we will be those ancestors, so really creating a legacy and family tree that future generations can also follow as well.

*Jaynaya*

Really, yeah, demonstrates that richness of language hey, when you are explaining these concepts I am sure there is so much more packed in there then what you are translating as well. I was wondering if you could please tell us, each of you, about your experiences growing up and how they inform who you are today?

*Erin*

You first mum, because I think, without speaking out of turn, I think you grew up in a very different Aotearoa-New Zealand to what I grew up in.

*Ethyl*

Yeah, absolutely. Before I mentioned that my whanau come from, or my family, come from Gisborne which is sort of a smaller city in the Northern Island of Aotearoa. In the 1960s there was something called the urban migration, where a lot of Māori moved and were encouraged to move to the major cities, so my parents chose to do that. The society at that time was really encouraging of people to come to the city for better life prospects work wise, and for better life opportunities. I also have decided to refer you to this as part of a pouri time. So pouri means a very sad time as well. So my family, my parents did this with the very best of intentions. But I guess a number of things occurred and it was a fracturing of whanau ties through distance, not through any kind of dramas other than through distance. So Gisborne is about six or seven hours drive from Wellington. So it's quite a difficult place to get to. So we were living in the city, assimilation was part of the process or part of the way to success. Theoretically, according to the dominant cultural group which is pakeha.

*Erin*

Oh, pakeha means non-Māori people.

*Ethyl*

Yeah. So loss of language. It was better to be more like Pakeha than to be Māori. Language and cultural identity were things that started to fracture and definitely for myself losing those connections.

*Erin*

There was also at the time I think I remember you saying that a lot of Māori had lived in cities and there was an end because Māori did start to move into the cities, there was a lot of racism as well in the capital cities, wasn't there? When Nan would have moved into the city, it was hard to find housing and Māori often lived in very similar areas because of that levels of racism. And the work that drew people into the cities, which I think came out of the, what's it called the Manpower Act. Post-world War Two, where Maori were drawn into the cities to work in quite laborious factory work, low-paid, exposed to a lot of health and safety issues at work. Yes. The dream was solved, wasn't it? But it was quite different.

*Ethyl*

Yeah, And I think that has been perhaps the common feature, really the colonization for Indigenous peoples. And there is this allure of potential possibility and success, but actually in effect, the trade-off that you had to do for that was really quite high for my generation. So my mother was a native speaker of te reo Māori. And when I reflect upon where we are today, I'm still extremely grateful to her for the way in which she brought us up. So we were brought up with kaupapa Māori ways of being in the world. And I'm really grateful to her for that.

*Jaynaya*

Oh, do you want to add to that to carry through to your generation?

*Erin*

Yeah, my experience is slightly different, but I do think in the last 20 years, there's been a lot of change in Aotearoa, I would say, like being someone that is fair-skinned through primary school, I used get asked all the time what percentage Māori are you or things like that. But I do think even through high school, that was something that actually stopped, and I haven't been asked that for a long time now. And I do think that, while there is a lot of tension still, that being Māori as something that's being more and more celebrated today in Aotearoa, and I think that I'm very encouraged by and well-supported, even in my school to do what I'm doing. Obviously, growing up with mum around me and nanny kuia, we would always had our te ao Māori wrapped around us when it wasn't necessarily always through language, but I do think through values that lived by, and practices and our tikanga that we had I definitely always felt like a Māori woman for sure. Yeah.

*Ethyl*

For me growing up was very much about assimilating and really we did not also, in my education, didn't really encounter any stories of Māori at all. Even though I actually grew up down the road from a marae. It wasn't our iwi though, it was another iwi, but there was a marae, a beautiful meeting house down the road from where I grew up. So when I reflect back upon those times, it was the way the world was. It was also probably during that period of time or later through the renaissance period of te ao Māori that I became more aware, because I don't think that you're really aware. You don't really know what you've lost. I think that is the thing that made me very aware when having my own children. It was like an awakening, really anything. Also a time period for me to be brave because I think I was really conscious of not speaking out too much as a Māori woman. So you become quite invisible and you just kind of blend in with people. I'm thankful to the people who were brave through the renaissance period, the period of regeneration of te ao Māori and bringing that awareness, those pioneers, and I also look at my mother who did eventually become a teacher in a total immersion school. And by that time that I was in my twenties so that kind of moved out of that little bit of a sphere of influence.

*Jaynaya*

And could you each share with us a little bit about your experience in relationship to Te Reo Māori, so your Māori language?

*Ethyl*

Yeah, you go first.

*Erin*

I think a lot of people of my generation. Well, I'd say one of my biggest regrets is actually not learning Te Reo Māori from my nanny when she was alive because she is a native speaker. But it's definitely something later in life. I'm trying to put lots of effort into doing it. And again, thank you to all the people that went through language revitalization because in Aotearoa, we are so blessed with the amount of resources we have at our disposal to learn to learn te reo Māori. I'm definitely on my learning journey. I'm probably, I wouldn't say I am conversational, but trying to be. But back home we have had podcasts. There is a wonderful book called Māori Made Easy, I was doing tutoring last year. I do think though one of the things that can be really tough is actually getting into Māori language classes. Especially in the public sector, now it's almost become a requirement that people have kind of a level of competency. And so often Māori people like Mum and I who are trying to reclaim our language, are competing to get into Māori classes with the Pakeha people. Which is, it's beautiful if people want to learn our language. It is a funny feeling.

*Ethyl*

So for me growing up, I didn't really, the only time I really ever heard te reo spoken at home was when my aunties would come and visit. Or there was an elderly Māori gentleman who my mum would also speak Māori to. I think she didn't share or speak to our te ao Māori because there was really a strong prevalence in society at that time that the best language for us to learn was English. There was another language that we were also told that would help us if we wanted to travel in the world, and that was French. It was kind of interesting. And I really only started to learn te ao Māori when I went to college and I leaned to it for a few years there and that was the choice that I made as a subject to really to study. But I guess a big part of that also was a waka. So that's a Māori cultural group. And I think belonging to that, you've got a real sense that you were with other people who are Māori also. So I think that made a big difference because growing up in the city, we were definitely in the minority, actually even at the time when I went to college. I think one of the things about learning languages is that you really need to be immersed in it and living with it. I've tried many times in my life to learn te ao Māori and actually with that comes its own little trauma as well because you also get judged by other people around the amount of Māori that you can speak or can't speak. For me to enter into the PhD and to really look at kaupapa Māori as my framework. I was really worried about, actually I have spent a lot of my life worry about what people think. Am I Māori enough? I don't speak enough Māori, what will people think of me? I now understand that these feelings are really feelings of historical trauma. That there are many reasons why it's been difficult for me to move forward. Juggling, I guess, the processes of colonisation and the voices of colonization that are within my head. So I take on board a lot of responsibility for this myself. But actually, I'm trying to reclaim that as well, not just as a PhD candidate or student, but also as a primary school teacher. I bring a lot more te ao Māori into my classroom, my, my lead teacher for play space iwi learning within our school. And so I definitely within my classroom, I benefit from that, but so do my students because they are hearing the amount of Māori that I can speak and I have decided that even if it's small amounts - It's enough right now to share and to pass it on to other students.

*Jaynaya*

As a mother, how would you describe your approach to imparting culture on your own children?

*Ethyl*

I would describe this as whakapapa as Kaupapa Māori, as the knowledge that my mother shared with me. And I think it is through this journey of my research that I've really been able to, and I'm going to quote something that Erin said and that is about having the language. Having the language to describe what it is that my mother gave to me, which was this beautiful gift of being Māori and having a Māori way of being in this world. And I think, and I hope that that is what I pass on to my own children. And my mother was really a very strong Ngati Porou woman. I always feel her near. She's been passed away for some time and I'm so grateful that you and Thomas got to know her. And I think identifying as Māori, being proud to be Māori and to be a Ngati Porou woman as well. For us to be proud of our iwi and to know where we are from and where our marae is and to say our pepeha and to be able to visualize our maunga. And our marae and the other thing that's really important also to me as valuing Erin and Thomas for who they are and what they have to bring.

*Jaynaya*

Your both currently undertaking PhD research at the same time – that’s lovely Exploring the different ways the conditions for Māori culture to thrive and be imparted on future generations. Can you tell us a bit, each of you, about your research project and your motivations to undertake a PhD?

*Ethyl*

My motivation has really come from my context of being a primary school teacher. But actually when I think before that really, I think about my life experiences and I think knowledge is power. And I think the knowledge that I get really was through under taking my masters and then really learning about the history of Aotearoa. And then also looking more broadly at, I guess, the processes of colonization for many Indigenous people. And then sadly beginning to see that there are a lot of similarities. And in fact, I think it was really an awakening. It was a little bit of an epiphany in many ways. And at the school I teach at, there are not a lot of Māori students actually. But it doesn't matter because whether your Māori or not, as a bicultural nation, we have a responsibility to ensure that everyone is aware of the importance of Māori as the tangata whenua. So I guess those things were sitting in my head and my research question is really looking at how Māori student’s cultural identity can be nurtured through the use of digital technology in English medium primary schools. So we do have total immersion schools or kura kaupapa, but I teach in an English medium primary school. So that means English medium. English language is the medium through which we teach all our curriculum areas. And I just noticed, actually working with Māori students in my classroom, that the prevalence of digital technology coming into our classroom and then how students were using that with their pepeha, which is what I shared at the beginning. And that really stimulated my PhD. I think I finished my masters and I felt like there is still something more I have not finished.

*Erin*

My PhD is looking at the official title, it is a multimodal study of governance in Māori organizations. I video recorded board meetings from post-settlement governance entities to look at. Basically it looks at the ways in which Māori people layer tikanga Māori into their corporate governance style and what tensions exist there. And I think one of the key drivers for me is I always feel like this really burning need to contribute in lots of ways. And I just remember being an undergraduate business student and my honours year. They actually, one of my amazing academic mentors, Dr Deborah Jones gave me this article to read, and I just remember it opened my eyes up so much- it was called I’m comparing and contrasting management styles written by a Mika and O’Sullivan 2014 and I just remember thinking if I could write an article like this, just contribute to sparking someone else's knowledge. I'd love to do that. And I was sitting in my job as a policy analyst, and I was hating it and I felt like just wasn't contributing to the world in the way that I wanted to. And so I went back - well I went forward to do my PhD and it was my current supervisor Dr Jesse Pirini who did say that I should look at governance because I have experienced experience and governance and something I can relate to with my research participants. I'd say my main driver always and all of this is just contribution to knowledge. And people always ask me all what is a PhD going to answer -And I was like, well, I hope it's not going to answer anything. I hope that it will lead to more questions and someone else writing PhDs in this area.

*Jaynaya*

You've hinted at some of the challenges, but what are some of the challenges for people thinking about undertaking a PhD?

*Ethyl*

Challenges really can lie, perhaps within yourself and your self-belief really, and I think to trust in yourself around the topic that you are interested in, because I think if you are interested in a research question and Erin really talked about what sparked her curiosity and also how it linked to an area that she was already interested in. That is the same with myself and my own PhD and my research question definitely came out of my context. And I think being brave is really important because so many times you are always kind of questioning yourself and to get good support around you is also really critical. And if things aren't going right for you, then to also be brave to try and find a solution rather than getting up. I know that that is really can be quite a common challenge for many PhD students that I know. I listen to the voices of your ancestors. And I truly believe that some of the challenges that I've had, that there has been a strong sense of determination that has come through at times when I felt quite bleak, so I just believed that that is possibly my mother encouraging me to just to keep carrying on and to keep going because she has a really strong Ngati Porou woman.

*Erin*

I think some of the challenges specifically about being an Indigenous researcher, are that inherently in our research we are multi-disciplinary, right? And so even if I were to think about my topic, I am based in the School of Management at the business school. But not only am I looking at those like business theory and western management theory because I'm looking at Iwi entities and I have interlayered governance on top of that. On top of that, look at the history and the context of the Treaty of Waitangi, so it adds a sort of anthropological and sociological lens to it. And then also having to become a bit of like a little like legal expert in the Treaty. And so you have to be this multi-disciplinary researcher able to go across different schools, which as you can both probably appreciate at a university is really hard because of how faculties don't always want to work together. And I also think as an Indigenous researcher, you are expected to be everything and nothing at the same time. To be someone who can go and sit in a in an Iwi meeting and be comfortable in that environment and then come back to university. But don't push back too hard when it doesn't suit us. But can you be this Māori person when we need you to be. I think navigating all of that as an Indigenous PhD student is really hard and there's just so much weight on your shoulders all the time, which I think diamonds are made under pressure. That's good, but it's just looking after yourself, and your hauora is really important. And knowing that you can't be everything to everyone all the time and that's not a failure, I think.

*Ethyl*

I think really one of the things and Erin you just sort of talked about it before and it is about being Māori and what is? There are so many expectations of what Māori needs to be or who you need to look like, or what? This is common conversation I have with a colleague that I had at my school and it's about sometimes being the right Maori at the right time. And it is just quite insulting to us, actually. In this terminology that I've heard used, which I think is very apt and at times at it is like a process of whitewashing. Where actually you are Māori, but suddenly in a group of non-Māori people you become the same. So therefore, they don't notice you and then they will talk about Māori things without actually talking to you. And you want to say, Hey, but I am this Maori person. Yes. It is that I think is possibly very common for many indigenous people. It's sometimes you just aren’t the right Indigenous category at that point in time.

*Jaynaya*

Hearing both of you speak about your research, I guess reminded me about these ongoing conversations about research ethics relating to Indigenous people and thinking of course of decolonizing methodologies. I guess I wanted to ask you about your process of thinking about the ethics of your research in the context of continued over studying of Indigenous people.

*Erin*

I mean, I always speak for, but I just feel so grateful that we have some really common and Māori academics who really created space for us to be able to do research safely with Māori because I know that you and I have had conversations about this, right. But always just lean back and all of the ethical guidelines they've set out, which really makes us feel safe in our research. But from a methodological perspective, it is really hard when you're layering in different types of methodologies. And I know that people choose kaupapa Māori, which is the name for the research paradigm, is used in a lot of different ways and I know I am using it in a really different way to you. Like I'm using it as my research underpinnings and then layering it to inform the ethics of my methodology. But I was always very grateful to those leading Māori scholars who created space for us because otherwise I do not know how I would navigate this area and there's some really seminal articles I just always go back to cite and reference because I just feel like they always guide us so well.

*Ethyl*

I'm using kaupapa Māori theoretical framework and also methodology. And through my methodology chapter, I guess we are guided by- These is certainly not all, but some of the principles which are embedded within kaupapa Māori and that is tino rangatirantanga. That is the principle of self-determination. So we reflect that in our way of undertaking our research, we had taking this in a way through a te ao māori point of view, but also in the way in which we work with our research participants and taonga tuku iho. That is the principle of cultural expressions - So really ensuring that the voices of Māori’s are respected and people are able to talk in a way that is comfortable and reflects who they are, anything for the term Māori, I had research participants who were sort of aged and I had students who were aged from ten to thirteen. So really ways of making our students who are identified as Māori and making them feel comfortable. And I had to get permission from the whanu for them to take part and I spoke with the children as well to make sure that they were comfortable to take part before I did the interviews. I spent a lot of time in their school, a couple of weeks, before I even started my focus groups. And this is really honouring the Māori voices that we shared with us by honouring whanu. Whanu, that's the principle of the extended family structure. So many of our whanu, their family makeup could look very different to a westernize perspective. Like really just accepting and appreciating what people had to bring into share. And I also interviewed Whanus well.

*Erin*

I also had something to add. When I listened to a podcast with Sue-Anne and a lot of what she's saying that they do, Yoorrook Justice Commission is really similar with Kaupapa Māori where It is actually the participants that we're working with have the self-determination of what they want their research and stories to look like. And even after we called them or leave, all of it goes back to the participants. And if they wish to say no, six months or six weeks before my PhDs were due, I would take it out.

*Jaynaya*

A few episodes in and our first cross episode reference. Erin, you have joined us at the Indigenous Law and Justice Hub. We are so excited to have you for the last month as you complete your PhD research. As a visiting scholar, could you describe your motivation for visiting the Hub and your experience in Naarm as a visiting scholar?

*Erin*

Yes, I think my motivations for visiting the Hub were always that or even from when I was really young and my grandma, Maureen. She always used to read me picture books about the dreaming you know. And so I think I've always felt like there was this kind of ignorance that I heard about Indigenous culture in Australia and then I didn't know a lot. And so I think for me wanting to explore another culture, it was I wanted to come here first. And obviously the connections worked out that I ended up being able to come, come here and work with you guys, which is really awesome. But I think my motivations are really open before I came, I didn't really know what to expect and I'm very grateful to have come in contact with the Hub, you know, and I think that sometimes these things are fate or it's the Atua pushing in the right direction. I think I've been exposed to a lot of knowledge over the last month that has really sat with me in a very emotional way, I think. Yeah, we told you about my nan a lot because she's always around. It's funny. I don't think I've felt her for awhile, but I think after having hearing somebody experiences of First Nations people here in Australia, and Nanny was always a very fiery and passionate woman. And I really have felt her kind of strength and learning about these things to be with me a lot and it has made me reflect that you guys at the Hub in a lot of other advocacy. First Nations people are really at the forefront of all of this work and there's so much emotional labour that I think a lot of people have to do. And I am just kinda privileged to have been around it and see it over just the last month. But there's just so many people doing such amazing work. And I think for Indigenous people as well, and just everyone really wearing their heart on their sleeve. Which is, I think is a reflection that has really stuck with me. And actually as I said, I think the fate, fate has brought it all together because one of the questions my supervisors have been asking me and my feedback is where are you? I think after being here – has really made me. You guys put all of who you into your work and what you do and are across so many things. And I realized I need to do that more and put myself into, into things more. And they shout out to you guys, but just welcoming me in and letting me learn about all of this knowledge because it really is a lot of trauma that's involved in that. But there's also a lot of strength and solidarity. I think that everyone at the hub and all the other intersections and the amazing people I've got to meet from going to talk at the First Peoples Assembly or we did the walking with the Yoorrook Justice Commission, meet some amazing people and even questioned who I was. They were just like right here, here with the Hub. That must mean you're, you're a good person and a sage person and welcome in and they just have shared everything with me. Definitely some learnings to take from here for my work to just the keep being passionate and keep fighting and put who I am into what I do.

*Jaynaya*

Ethyl, you spoke to us about reconsidering some of your earlier writing in your research. Now you have spent more time thinking through the process about strength-based approaches and de-colonizing approaches. To both of you, how has your PhD journey changed your identity and relationship with yourself?

*Ethyl*

For me, I think I was talking about my original research proposal. And I describe myself as ‘coming from a low socioeconomic background’. And I was just recently looking at that as I was writing out my methodology chapter and I had been going through a process really for myself of trying to understand really how I identify and describe myself. When I saw those words, Yeah, I guess I was upset with myself for describing myself in a way that I think was really a deficit theorizing approach and in fact I think that when I've been able to do is to position myself in a stronger way by acknowledging the time period that went on in my life as I was growing up to acknowledging kaupapa Māori as a way that my mother definitely installed within me. Māori values and also a pride in being a Māori woman in being Māori person. And I think those are the strongest elements that I have really learnt about myself through this process of just learning about kaupapa Māori and being really proud to claim being a Māori woman. And Māori is my cultural identity.

*Erin*

I think for me actually, what has really empowered me. I think that through the PhD process, you're forced to do a lot of learning and a lot of reading. And I think what it's done, it's given me the language to talk about things I used to feel frustrated with, but I didn't know how to talk about. I feel like now I feel really confident to be articulate about Māori in society in New Zealand and the systems and structures that operate do not work for us. And I think actually, that it has really reaffirmed to me that I do have something to offer a Ahteo Māori. And I think in a really smaller way as well it has reconnected me with my marae as well. I had gone back there for a long time and my marae were participants in my research and it just I felt like such a comfortable and beautiful homecoming. So I think for me it's just empowered me to speak out for our people and to understand really what went wrong and the trauma of colonization, but also given me the language to talk about how we're doing really, really awesome things. And I'm grateful that I can be that person.

*Jaynaya*

Such important workand you are both educators, Ethyl you’re a schoolteacher and Erin, you now a lecturer at University of Victoria, Wellington. Can you share with us some of their reflections and your separate contexts on educating for respect for First Nations people and understanding ofte ao Māori within colonial education institutions

*Ethyl*

Ki Ora, I think some of the empowerment that I've been able to take away from my research and bring into my classroom, so I think this has been a really interesting and very organic process because my research came out of my classroom context. Through my research I've actually been able to take that back into my classroom context and the students, and whanu who I work with. I feel now when I am thinking about kaupapa Māori and how I work with students, I own it as part of who I am and it's not separate from me as a teacher. Therefore, I think about critical aspects of learning and think about our New Zealand histories curriculum, which is actually a part of what we are integrating or bringing in with a really strong and fresh approach throughout the whole of the New Zealand education curriculum anyway, and think about the use of legitimizing te reo Māori thinking about place names. For example, Wellington is Te Upoko o te Ika Maui and sharing those stories with our students and learning about local iwi. Also thinking about how Māori view children and characteristics from a Māori framework which was being designed by Dr Lesley Rameka. So Maui was really a guess like an Atua or a god for Māori. And we look at his characteristics. Characteristics of rangatieratanga being a leader, thinking about children's determination. whakatoi, which is also thinking about cheekiness and curiosity. So these are characteristics that we have learned about maui through various stories that are shared about him. But I, when I think of my students, think about those particular characteristics whether they are Māori or non-Māori and how does that look inside? Think that brings a Māori perspective into my teaching practice and pedagogy and how I approached my work.

*Erin*

I have a few examples. I think one of the most powerful ones, and I didn't realize what a difference this would make is when I was I'm tutoring a third-year paper and I always make sure it's really important that I do my pepeha. I talk about my teaching philosophy, which has always that, I'm not smarter than anyone else, I've just been at university longer. And I got this email at the end of one of the trimesters from one of our Māori students. You'll know who he is if he listens to this, they just sent me the most beautiful email saying that he felt really grateful to be in a room with someone else, that was Māori and he hadn't had any other Māori tutors or lecturers and that made him feel like he could be himself in the room. And it made me really realize the importance of in these colonial spaces being ourselves and small things like doing your pepeha, sharing a bit about yourself, using Māori examples makes a big difference to our students because it means they can see themselves in those positions. I think it's that you convey what you can see. I think from a student perspective that's really important and that, and a cheesy that definitely the future you know, I think a lot of the time, whilst we're in academic institutions and without being too critical, a lot of academics forget to keep learning about things that aren't in their space. Like for example, at the end of your candidateship, the first year you do a presentation to your school. And I was really lucky because I had like 50 or 60 people come. And I always try, have to try and explain succinctly the history of colonization and the Treaty of Waitangi is the context for my study. And a few of the comments people made after was like, ‘Wow, that was really interesting. I did not know about that.’ I'm sitting here thinking, how did these people not know? How if I taught them something about the Treaty? Those reflections, but yeah, I think it's always really important to show our students because we don't know what they bring into the room either in with this one student, I just hadn't really anticipated what a difference that would make on him. And I do think I'm working with some amazing colleagues and I'm really fortunate that at my school I have Dr. Ben Walker and Dr. Jesse Pirini who is my supervisor and two other Maori academics in the business school. I know these four or five of us, but three in one school. So I'm really supported and I just try and infiltrate everywhere. The academics at my school are amazing too though, just let me do that. But those are some of the reflections that I've had is that our students need to, need to see us know celebrating Indigenous knowledge more. I think. I mean, I don't know if this happens in other contexts, but I get asked all the time, are you comparing Māori governance to Western governance? There's a lot of this. I'm not sure if it happens here too, but a lot of back Home and Business Scholarship, people wanting to use business frameworks with a Western bias to compare or legitimize Māori knowledge. I just I think that's one thing I'm really trying to be really clear with my PhD and when any other Māori students do research. It is research on its own, tikanga protocols and kawa the law of the Marae. They adjusted legitimate is the eleven principles of good governance set out by the institute of directors. And you don't need to compare it to show how it's the same, because it's not the same. It's just governance, in a te ao Māori awy. But there's some other reflections I've had with students and academic stuff, but yeah.

*Ethyl*

I just add on like, even in my context and in primary school, we have very few Māori educators. Like Erin says, I think what's really, really critical and cause that we have more Indigenous teachers, we have more Indigenous academics so that our students can see themselves because I think Erin you said you can be what you see.

*Erin*

Well, I think it's going to stay is While Māori make up 14% of the population in New Zealand. Actually, only 2% of that, 14% hold an undergraduate degree. And then below they only 0.7% hold a postgraduate degree in some way, shape or form. And I know that in the business school we are struggling for postgraduate students anyway, but we really need to get more Indigenous knowledge coming through.

*Jaynaya*

Well, that's a great link to the next question is, in your experience as educators and students, what should Universities be doing to support First Nations students to continue to strengthen the Academy with first nation knowledges.

*Erin*

Yeah, I think firstly and I will say that my head of school, to shout out, Dr Tod Bridgeman is amazing for this. I think that the academics themselves need to be really supported. And probably as you guys experienced at the Hub, you are just being, that's dry, a lot of the time with requests on what you need to do and not do. And I, even as an early career academic, I can see how you get burnt out. And so I think it's about the academic institutions actually providing us with support and mentorship to be able to. Because I think as Indigenous people, you want to contribute and first thing, because it's not driven by our individualistic needs. You want to help. And so we know the research, there's a lot of burnout and in academia with Indigenous researchers. I think institutions need to support us a lot better and provide mentorship into those spaces. But again, I think it always comes back to just everyone needs to do, including the academics need to do the research and not use the, this was coined in a journal article recently. Not use the ‘dial a Māori’, it is even things like educating themselves and they're asking us to come into the room, like I would much prefer that, then just guest lecturers. I think those are probably really important things. I mean, it is a minefield working as an Indigenous person and a colonial institution all the time. But I think another thing that I like, enjoy immensely about the hub is, I think for Indigenous people, we need connection. So used to working in a collective and sound boarding and relationships that just important priority above everything. And I think a lot of the time sometimes I feel like that's what I've missed. That we have power in our Māori and Indigenous network - our MAI network back home. But I think just acknowledging that for indigenous people, organizing things and publishing things, just to get the career ladder, it's not always what we want.

*Ethyl*

Because I think Erin just mentioned our Māori and Indigenous scholars network. And again, I want to acknowledge Graham Hingangaroa Smith and Linda Tuiwai Smith. Because I'm pretty sure that they were actually at the forefront with a few other Māori academics at that time who got this network set up. Erin also talked about how much she loved being here and I think being part of community. And I've written down whanaungatanga because really that is about building relationships. And I think from an Indigenous perspective we are, I'd like to think this is all of human nature, but I don't think that it necessarily, I mean, I think that we haven't designed to be a part of a community, to be part of a group. I think that that is really critical actually for developing relationships and an academic certainly as a primary school teacher, that is really at the forefront of our leaning in that it's building those learning relationships. But I also believe that it's equally as important in an academic institution as well, because it is about valuing the knowledge that people bring. But in order for you, you really have to know what it is that they bring, what is it about them that is unique? What is their story to tell? And based in a cultural context, I think many of the challenges and I say that I've experienced myself at times is ensuring that I know what my connections are and sometimes I don’t. But I always had this belief and it's something that my mother always said to me, is that it's really important to know who you are, where you're from, and who your family. That's not always easy for people to know that. So always it's enough to be Māori. If you say you are Māori, then we accept that in people's journey to find out like that it's part of our responsibility. I want to share this little whakataukī, and it is a little proverb that I have embedded in my research proposal. It has proverb that I have embedded in my research proposal. So it's: ‘poipoia te kakano kia puawai’, Nurture the seed and it will bloom. And I think that, that is our responsibility as educators, whether you're at university or at primary school, really, is to find that spark and you have referred to spark quite a few time in your kororo today. It is that little fire that lights and I think that can happen at any age.

*Jaynaya*

Thank you so much to you both for sharing so generously today. I'm sure this conversation will stay with our listeners for awhile. It's a lot to unpack here and I really appreciate you taking the time to join us on white noise today and some words to leave us with.

*Erin*

I'm going to finish us off with a karakia. So that means like prayer or incantation. And I think now until Māori this through colonisation, there's kind of two types. But the one that we're going to talk about today is, I don't know how to describe it in English, is always just to, for us to close the session and finish the energy really, really well and see us off for the day.

Kia hora te marino   
Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana  
Hei huarahi mā tatou katoa   
hui e! Tāiki e!

In English, it's translated to mean:  
  
May peace be widespread.   
  
May the sea be like Greenstone  
A pathway for us all this day. Let us show respect for each other,  
For one and another.   
Bind us all together!

*Ending song*