

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES OF
WOMEN'S ACTIVISM AND SCHOLARSHIP**

SITE: NEW ZEALAND

**Transcript of Ngāhuia te Awekotuku
Interviewer: Nicky Newton**

**Location: Rotorua, NZ
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Nicky Newton is an Associate Professor of Psychology, who was born and raised in Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Nicky trained and performed as a classical flute player in New Zealand, Australia, and Austria. She played with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in the 1990s, before a hand injury curtailed her career. After moving to the United States, Nicky gained a PhD in psychology from the University of Michigan (2011). She has held research and teaching positions at Youngstown State University, Northwestern University, University of Michigan, and Wilfrid Laurier University (Canada). Most recently, she moved back to Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand, and is currently a Research Fellow with the Health, Work, and Retirement Study based at Massey University. Nicky uses quantitative and qualitative approaches to research relationships between personality, social roles, gender, life transitions, and well-being across the latter half of adulthood. Recent projects include a multi-faceted study of older Canadian women's lives, an examination of stressful events and well-being among mid-to-later life women in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and a case study of the life of an Ann Arbor-based community activist. She recently co-edited, with Jamila Bookwala, *Reflections from Pioneering Women in Psychology* (2022), a volume of 26 essays from trailblazing women in the field.

Ngāhuia te Awekotuku (Te Arawa, Tūhoe, Waikato, Ngapuhi iwi) was a leader of the women's liberation movement in New Zealand in the 1970s. As a student, she was a member of the Ngā Tamatoa Māori activist group at the University of Auckland. As a Māori lesbian, Ngāhuia was at the forefront of a call to focus on reaching Māori and Pacific women, as well as lesbian rights. In 1972, she was famously denied a visa to visit the United States on the basis of her sexuality. She was the first Māori woman to gain a doctorate from an Aotearoa/NZ university. At the outset, women's liberation groups adopted an all-inclusive 'sisterhood is powerful' approach. But it wasn't long before differing perspectives on a range of issues led to disagreements. Many Māori women saw women's liberation as a Pākehā concept with little relevance for them. They argued that Māori women's rights were intertwined with the revival of Māori culture and the assertion of land rights. By 1973, separate Māori and lesbian groups had started to form and as the decade progressed ideological differences divided the movement further. Te Awekotuku has worked across the heritage, culture and academic sectors as a curator, lecturer, governor, researcher, and activist. Her areas of research interest include gender issues, culture and heritage, ritual and performance. She has been curator of ethnology at the Waikato Museum; senior lecturer in art history at Auckland University, and professor of Māori Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. She was Professor of Research and Development at Waikato University, and has researched and written extensively about the traditional and contemporary practices of tā moko (tattoo) in New Zealand, as well as Māori practices and traditions around death. She has served on many government boards in the arts and heritage sector. Ngāhuia is an Emeritus Professor of the University of Waikato, the first Māori female Emeritus in Aotearoa. She remains a leading feminist writer, lesbian rights activist, and advocate for Māori issues. She has published short fiction, poetry, and significant nonfiction. She continues to work and curate in the gallery sector. She is also an active practitioner of traditional chant and ceremony. In 2022, she presented the 3 episode video documentary *Waharoa: Art of the Pacific* that focuses on Māori and Pasifika art in New Zealand. In recognition of her services to Māori culture, Ngāhuia was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2010. In 2016 she was made the inaugural Mareikura or Matriarch of the Pae Akoranga Wahine/Women's Studies Association of Aotearoa/New Zealand. In 2017 she was made

a Fellow of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, and she also received the Pou Aronui Supreme Award from the Royal Society of New Zealand for outstanding service to the arts and humanities. Currently, she is one of three inaugural Ruānuku, or Esteemed Scholarly Elders, of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, the National Centre for Māori Research Excellence.

Keywords: Academia and Women's Studies, Indigenous Issues, and LGBTQ+ Rights

Ngāhuia te Awekotuku: My name is-- [chuckles] title, Emeritus Professor¹ or Professora Emerita, Ngāhuia Te Awekotuku. For most purposes, I'm abbreviated, Te Awe. *Kia ora*,² everyone.

Nicky Newton: Thank you. I guess I really do need to get a verbal "yes," that you give permission for me to interview you today and for it to be recorded? [crosstalk]

NTA: Yes. For the purposes of this project, I consent to being interviewed, and I also agree to be recorded here. *Kia ora*. Thank you.

NN: Thank you. That's wonderful. Let's start with a background about your life. We've talked a bit about how the interview will work, so what did your career look like and what you would deem the most significant lifetime achievements perhaps?

NTA: It depends a lot on whose value systems and what cultural principles a person is considering when I answer that question. I don't know. My life isn't over. I'm still working. I'm still doing stuff. It's for others. In the Māori³ world, we have a saying, which is, we called it, "*Kāore te kumara e kōrero mō tōna ake reka*,"⁴ a sweet potato never ever tells everyone that it's sweet. I've done a lot. I started achieving as a very young, precocious, incredibly motivated child. I didn't grow up with my I was *whāngai*.⁵ I was adopted by another family from a biological family that was interesting. I'll just say that because my biological family are Māori. That was a grandfather who only lasted two years in the village. He was a scientist and a significant Oxford⁶ personage in his own right, Oxford University, born and raised there. He came here, married a native woman, left two daughters, and, basically, went back. That was my biological background. One of the daughters was my biological mother. She was quite

¹ An Emeritus Professor is a professor who stays active in their field after retirement. ("Professor Emeritus or Emerita." Cornell University. <https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/the-new-faculty-handbook/3-titles-and-appointments-leaves/3-1-titles/professor-emeritus-or-emerita/#:~:text=Emeritus%20or%20emerita%20is%20an.active%20in%20scholarship%20following%20retirement>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

² *Kia Ora* is a greeting adopted by New Zealand that means 'hi' or 'hello.' *Kia Ora* literally translates to 'be healthy' in the Māori language. ("*Kia Ora*." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kia_ora. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

³ Māori refers to a group of native Polynesian people who currently live in Aotearoa, which is the indigenous name of New Zealand. ("Māori people." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_people#:~:text=M%C4%81ori%20\(%2F%CB%88ma%CA%8Ar.between%20roughly%201320%20and%201350](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_people#:~:text=M%C4%81ori%20(%2F%CB%88ma%CA%8Ar.between%20roughly%201320%20and%201350). Accessed 1 April 2023.)

⁴ '*Kāore te kumara e kōrero mō tōna ake reka*' is a Māori proverb that literally translates to 'the sweet potato does not mention its sweetness,' which means an individual should not brag about themselves. ("Māori proverbs." Wikiquote. https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Māori_proverbs. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

⁵ *Whāngai* is a tradition within the Māori culture in which children are brought up by relatives instead of their biological parents. ("Whāngai." New Zealand Government. <https://www.govt.nz/browse/family-and-whanau/adoption-and-fostering/whangai/>. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

⁶ Oxford University is one of the oldest research universities in the world. It is located in England and is known for its many alumni who have received prestigious awards. ("University of Oxford." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Oxford. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

old when I was born and my father was in his 60s'. My biological father who was Māori. I was, as happened and continues to, taken by a couple as a *whāngai* child because they couldn't have children of their own biologically. I grew up in a really quite interesting environment because my adopted mother, my wonderful, wonderful mother, and my grandmother were both weavers, musicians, very rich in cultural stuff. I grew up in a community that was pretty much dominated and impacted by tourism. I grew up in the village of Ōhinemutu⁷ here in Rotorua,⁸ which was the center of the tourist industry. That was my PhD. My Doctorate was on the sociocultural impact of tourism on the Te Arawa people,⁹ on the people of Rotorua, and the specific focus was on the impact. This is written between 1975 and 1980, my focus was women. This was before women's studies and before any methodology or critical theory around indigenous issues and women's issues. It was quite challenging and I won a very bizarre, as I've described earlier, they called it a Joint Doctoral Internship to the East-West Center¹⁰ in Honolulu,¹¹ Hawai'i,¹² on the UH Mānoa¹³ campus. We'd also audit programs. We weren't enrolled, we'd audit relevant summer school programs or weekend events at Berkeley¹⁴ and at Santa Cruz¹⁵ because these academics were part of the East-West Center system, so we get invited. By we, I mean a group of us, Polynesians,¹⁶ a couple from PNG,¹⁷ quite a few from Southeast Asia. We'd get as intellectually excitable, young people of color, and as authentic indigenous people. We'd get paraded around through these different institutions which was bizarre, but also for me, quite enriching. Blah de blah. That's my

⁷ Ohinemutu is a village of Māori people living in New Zealand. It is located near Lake Rotorua. ("Ohinemutu." New Zealand. <https://www.newzealand.com/us/feature/ohinemutu/>. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

⁸ Rotorua is a city that is located on the North Island of New Zealand. Rotorua is named after Lake Rotorua, which borders the city. ("Rotorua." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotorua>. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

⁹ The Te Arawa people are subdivisions of the Māori people who live near Rotorua, New Zealand. ("Te Arawa." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Te_Arawa. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

¹⁰ The East-West Center is dedicated to bettering the relationship between the United States, Asia, and the Pacific generally, by conducting research and training programs. ("About." East-West Center. <https://www.eastwestcenter.org/about>. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

¹¹ Honolulu is the capital of Hawaii. It is known for being the center for businesses and the US military in the state. ("Honolulu." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honolulu>. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

¹² Hawaii is a state in the United States. It is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. ("Hawaii." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii>. Accessed 1 April 2023.)

¹³ The Mānoa campus of the University of Hawaii is the main campus of the university and is known for the large amount of research conducted there. ("University of Hawai'i at Mānoa." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Hawai%CA%BBi_at_M%C4%81noa. Accessed 3 April 2023.)

¹⁴ Berkeley, also referred to as University of California Berkeley, is a public university that is regarded as one of the best in the world. ("University of California, Berkeley." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_California,_Berkeley. Accessed 3 April 2023.)

¹⁵ The University of California Santa Cruz is a public university located in Santa Cruz, California. Santa Cruz is one of the many universities that are part of the University of California system. ("University of California, Santa Cruz." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_California,_Santa_Cruz. Accessed 3 April 2023.)

¹⁶ Polynesians refers to a group of individuals who are from the Polynesian islands located in the Pacific Ocean. ("Polynesians." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polynesians>. Accessed 3 April 2023.)

¹⁷ PNG stands for Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea is a country located in the Pacific Ocean that is made up of islands. It is known for being one of the largest island countries in the world. ("Papua New Guinea." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papua_New_Guinea. Accessed 3 April 2023.)

academic background. I had, growing up, going to school, quite a hard time because my adopted family could not understand my need to write and read.

NN: Right.

NTA: That was really alien. That was alien. I struggled against that. I never knew my biological family. I never knew until much, much later that in my Māori genealogy and in my White one, there was a very strong consciousness of thinking, writing, publishing, teaching, composing. I didn't know any of that. I came across it much later. It's a bit like a ancestry.com.com adventure in a way. I grew up with weavers, and they were sublime, and they taught me about excellence, but they also taught me about women's and social justice issues in a really acute way. Everywhere I looked, there was shit, there was stuff. The way that Māori women were treated, stories about being thrown out of hotels, never being able to get promoted, even if you worked in a government office for 30 or 40 years, and trained these callow, young, pimply teenage boys, both Māori and Te Arawa and find them, suddenly, your bosses. Those were the experiences of many of my aunts. As a teenager, I was a really-- I don't know. It sounds a bit palsy now, but I was quite a critical thinker. There were just things happening that I didn't like. One of the funny stories from that period is, when I was-- I'm nearly 74. I'll be 74-years-old in a few weeks. That gives you the period in which I grew up.

NN: Yes.

NTA: Fraser McDonald,¹⁸ when I was the Upper sixth, wrote this article on suburban neurosis¹⁹ affecting middle-class White women, and this is a true story. I, actually, wrote him a letter and said, "What about Māori women?" Many years later, his wife, Jackie Fahey,²⁰ who's a stunning visual artist mentioned that to me. It was just hysterical. I was like, "Oh, well, he got my letter. That's really good," because he never replied. They talked about it a lot because they thought it was rather curious. That was sixth former from Rotorua wrote a letter. Yes, I was always in there doing radical things, constantly questioning. I was a lesbian, and that was challenging too because, although there are a lot of non-binary²¹ people in my community, certainly, the women tended to be very sporty and masculine leaning, whereas I was fair. My grandmother would never let me

¹⁸ Fraser McDonald was a psychiatrist who encouraged women to work outside the home to avoid depression via "suburban neurosis." ("Who says I'm a cabbage." *Teara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/23321/who-says-im-a-cabbage> Accessed 8 May 2023.)

¹⁹ Suburban neurosis is defined as a theoretical condition in which it was thought that unsatisfied women would stagnate and would not be able to produce happy babies. ("Desperate housewives and suburban neurosis." welcome collection. <https://welcomecollection.org/articles/XE7KSxUAANmdl0Vg>. Accessed 3 April 2023.)

²⁰ Jacqueline Fahey is a painter from New Zealand. Fahey first started painting in 1950 and has had her work displayed in many galleries. ("Jacqueline Fahey." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacqueline_Fahey. Accessed 3 April 2023.)

²¹ Non-binary refers to individuals who do not identify as either female or male. ("Nonbinary gender meaning." Dictionary. <https://www.dictionary.com/e/gender-sexuality/nonbinary-gender/>. Accessed 11 April 2023)

cut my hair, and I hated sport. I was a bit of an aberration. When I got to Auckland,²² I didn't fit anywhere, which is fine, because that really sharpened my activism. I ended up at Auckland at the university, blah blah. Big long story, which is published in a number of different books and anthologies. Probably the most wonderful and I recommend you get it, and it's got Ngāpare Hopa²³ story, the first Māori woman PhD is, this rather a brilliant book called *Fire That Kindles Hearts: 10 Māori Scholars*.²⁴

NN: Thank you.

NTA: Edited by Selwyn Kātene,²⁵ K-A-T-E-N-E. There are four females in it, and including me. It's much better than me repeating what's in the book. It also includes luminaries like Ranginui Walker²⁶ and Mason Durie.²⁷

NN: Right, yes.

NTA: It's academic biography, and it's actually really good.

NN: Thank you.

NTA: That little background of me rather than me babble on about all this. That's the background on my life. I grew up in a house with the Māori language, with a really active community and cultural, and tribal-- I emphasize tribal consciousness. I had all these other things going on, like the fact that I was gay. That I couldn't stop answering questions, that I really wasn't interested in boys, and that from the third form, I had my eyes set on going to university. That was my big goal. I really wanted to get there, and I did. Then when I got there, geez, [laughs] it was crazy. It was insane. It was Auckland, sex, drugs, rock and roll, the Halcyon days of government supporting tertiary education. If you were a clever kid, and if you were disciplined, then you would get grants and bursaries and scholarships that would pay your fees. If you were up in the A-pass

²² Auckland is a city located in New Zealand. It is known for being one of the largest and most populated cities in the country. ("Auckland." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auckland>. Accessed 11 April 2023.)

²³ Ngāpare Hopa is a Māori woman who is known for being the first Māori woman to receive a Doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Oxford. She was recognized for her contributions to knowledge in New Zealand in 2017. ("Ngapare Hopa." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngapare_Hopa. Accessed 11 April 2023.)

²⁴ *Fire that Kindles Hearts: 10 Māori Scholars* is a book written by Selwyn Kātene that investigates the intersection between academics and Māori culture. Kātene writes about 10 Māori scholars and their experiences balancing their studies and culture. ("Fire that Kindles Hearts: 10 Māori Scholars." Steele Roberts. <https://steeleroberts.co.nz/product/fire-that-kindles-hearts/>. Accessed 11 April 2023.)

²⁵ Selwyn Kātene is a Māori author who has published 6 books. Kātene was previously a professor at Massey University. ("Selwyn Kātene." Massey University Press. <https://www.masseypress.ac.nz/authors/selwyn-katene/>. Accessed 11 April 2023.)

²⁶ Ranginui Walker was an author and activist from New Zealand. Many of Walker's works focused on the cultural identity of the Māori people. ("Ranginui Walker." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ranginui_Walker. Accessed 11 April 2023.)

²⁷ Mason Durie is Professor of Māori Studies at Massey University. He is recognized for his work on the health of the Māori people. ("Mason Durie (psychiatrist)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mason_Durie_\(psychiatrist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mason_Durie_(psychiatrist)). Accessed 11 April 2023.)

category²⁸, then you had your accommodation covered. It was a time when, if you didn't get a full scholarship, you could, basically, if you're a female, wash dishes at any of the restaurants in downtown Auckland, and get enough money for one night's work to pay your rent for the week, as well as take all the food home that you wanted. That's what the girls did. The boys would go to the Hobbs²⁹ on a Saturday morning in Seagull³⁰ where they would be working on the docks, and made a hell of a lot more than we did washing dishes. It was a very different university environment. We were so privileged. We were also really excited by what was happening internationally, even though, of course, we were here in Aotearoa [New Zealand], way down in the South Pacific, dependent primarily on a very flaky, shadowy, strange television that not many people had in those days-

NN: I know. Oh Lord.

NTA: -covered on snow. It was really bizarre, or else print media, which in those days, *the Herald*,³¹ *the Star*,³² *the Dominion*.³³ Christchurch³⁴ and Otago had really quite interesting accounts of Vietnam,³⁵ of civil rights in the US, of different struggles, and, of course, the freaking bullshit going on in South Africa,³⁶ which is what drew me in as a Māori kid in Auckland in 1966 with the No Māoris, No Tour³⁷ issues. A group of really brave Māori students like Syd Jackson,³⁸ Hone Ngata and Maxine, who organized the No

²⁸ Maintained a high grade-point average in U.S. parlance.

²⁹ Hobbs Bay, also known as Gulf Harbor, is a marina in New Zealand. It is known for being a vacation destination for the wealthy. ("Gulf Harbour." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_Harbour. Accessed 20 April 2023.)

³⁰ Seagull refers to Seagull Rock, which is an island located in Hobbs Bay off the coast of New Zealand. ("Paraki (Seagull Rock)." Geoview. https://nz.geoview.info/pararaki_seagull_rock,6222864. Accessed 20 April 2023.)

³¹ *The New Zealand Herald* is one of the most popular newspaper publishers in New Zealand that is published mainly in Auckland. ("*The New Zealand Herald*." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_Zealand_Herald. Accessed 20 April 2023.)

³² *The Star* is a New Zealand newspaper publisher that circulates around Christchurch, New Zealand. ("*The Star* (Christchurch)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Star_\(Christchurch\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Star_(Christchurch)). Accessed 20 April 2023.)

³³ *The Dominion Post* is a newspaper that originates from Wellington, New Zealand. ("*The Dominion Post* (Wellington)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Dominion_Post_\(Wellington\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Dominion_Post_(Wellington)). Accessed 20 April 2023.)

³⁴ Christchurch is a city in New Zealand that is located on the southern island. It is one of the largest cities in the country. ("Christchurch." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christchurch>. Accessed 20 April 2023.)

³⁵ Vietnam is a country in southern Asia. It is one of the most populated countries in the world. ("Vietnam." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam>. Accessed 20 April 2023.)

³⁶ South Africa is a country located in Africa. It is bordered by the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. It is one of the most populated countries in the world. ("South Africa." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Africa. Accessed 23 April 2023.)

³⁷ The No Māoris, No Tour campaign was created due to Māori rugby players being banned from playing in South Africa because of the segregation laws. The rugby tour continued and became the last tour in which Māori players were excluded ("No Māoris, no tour." Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/ephemera/35087/no-Māoris-no-tour>. Accessed 23 April 2023.)

³⁸ Syd Jackson was a Māori activist and supported the Māori protest movement. He was also a representative for the rugby union and a part of the trade union. ("Syd Jackson (Māori Activist)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syd_Jackson_\(M%C4%81ori_activist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syd_Jackson_(M%C4%81ori_activist)). Accessed 23 April 2023.)

Māori, No Tour Movement, which I jumped in on, although I was 17 and really naïve, and didn't have a bloody clue, but it was so exciting. Of course, that rolled into Vietnam and, of course, civil rights and a whole bunch of other stuff, which, inevitably, and I remember so clearly, our first meetings in Auckland when the English British book notes from the second year and Robin Morgan's,³⁹ *Sisterhood Is Powerful*,⁴⁰ turned up at Resistance Bookshop⁴¹ that was the centre of the Auckland Revolution⁴² in early 1970. We were students, but we made the cups of tea, and we ran around and worked on the gestetners, and did the typing, and all the men ran around, households like Tim Shadbolt⁴³ and were actively famous. We were the workers. It was like, "No, this isn't good." A group of us, we attended Auckland Women's Liberation⁴⁴ in the university in late 1970, had our first meeting and were, literally, chased out and verbally assaulted. Nobody got groped or touched or hurt. The first meeting we called was invaded by the engineering students.

NN: They were all men, of course. Yes.

NTA: Of course, they were. They thought it was hysterical, and they thought that we were just a bunch of girls that needed sorting out. Then over that summer of 1970, '71, another group formed, and they were primarily young mothers, school teachers. In those days, if you got pregnant and became a mother, you gave up your career and you couldn't finish your teacher's training. You were stuffed. Even at that time, you could not open a bank account without your father's or your husband's signature. It was like a goddamn Taliban.⁴⁵ This was Aotearoa/New Zealand 50 years ago. Anyway, those are the sorts of things that we were up against. Then when varsity began in 1971, we

³⁹ Robin Morgan is an activist, writer, and a member of the American Women's Movement. She had many published works and is a founding member of many feminist organizations. ("Robin Morgan." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Morgan. Accessed 23 April 2023.)

⁴⁰ *Sisterhood is Powerful* by Robin Morgan is a collection of articles and creative writing by feminists that was edited by Robin Morgan. This anthology was published in 1970. ("*Sisterhood is Powerful*." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sisterhood_Is_Powerful. Accessed 23 April 2023.)

⁴¹ Resistance Bookshop is a bookstore located in Auckland that was started around 1969. ("Resistance Bookshop (Auckland, N.Z.)." National Library of New Zealand. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22423383>. Accessed 23 April 2023.)

⁴² The Auckland Revolution refers to the dawn raids in which the New Zealand government would stop Pacific people whenever and wherever to ask them for their visa or passport. ("The dawn raids: causes, impacts and legacy." New Zealand History. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/dawn-raids>. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

⁴³ Tim Shadbolt is a politician from New Zealand. He was the mayor of Waitemata City and is currently the mayor of Invercargill. ("Tim Shadbolt." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Shadbolt. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

⁴⁴ The women's liberation movement had many groups around New Zealand, including one in Auckland. These groups started in the 1960s, but gained traction during the 1970s. The liberation movement addressed issues such as abortion and domestic violence, issues that weren't talked about as much previously. ("Women's movement." Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/womens-movement/page-6>. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

⁴⁵ The Taliban is a political movement in Afghanistan. The Taliban ruled most of the country from 1996 to 2001 until they were overthrown by the United States. As of now, the Taliban is in control of Afghanistan, though no other country formally recognizes the Taliban. ("Taliban." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taliban>. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

started agitating. Sue Kedgley⁴⁶ appeared from Wellington.⁴⁷ All of that's recorded in her memoirs and her book *50 Years of Feminist*.⁴⁸ I don't have to repeat that but I was very much part of that. As a queer,⁴⁹ as a gay woman, even though I had a couple of extremely unsuccessful attempts at seeing what it was like on the other side of the fence it never worked. As a gay woman and a Māori, *Tamatoa* started at the same time as women's liberation. I moved between both organizations. Doing my MA, [laughs] finishing my Master's at the same time, which was a bit insane. I was doing it in English and Art History, which was even more bizarre.

NN: Oh, yes. Right. It's-- [crosstalk]

NTA: Yes, horrific. I wanted to do Hone Tūwhare.⁵⁰

NN: Wow. Yes.

NTA: Was told that he published nothing of worth. What on earth did I want to do something like that for? Then I fought to do [Janet] Frame⁵¹ and then I had no supervision, and I am deeply ashamed of that thesis. It's shocking. I learned though, in that experience how not to treat a graduate student.

NN: Yes.

NTA: It was in the English in the Department, where sexism was absolutely rife, where sexual dallying with students was ubiquitous and normal, where some of the greatest intellectual powerhouses in a generation in really obscure topics were never promoted because they were female. We only had one extremely eccentric ageing medievalist called Annie Sheppard,⁵² who only made it to Aspro⁵³, and that was with a struggle.

⁴⁶ Sue Kedgley is mainly known for being a politician in New Zealand, but is an author as well and is a GFP interviewee. Kedgley previously worked for the United Nations as well. ("Sue Kedgley." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sue_Kedgley. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

⁴⁷ Wellington is a city located in New Zealand. It is one of the largest cities in the country and is mainly known for being the capital of New Zealand. ("Wellington." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wellington>. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

⁴⁸ *50 Years a Feminist* is an autobiography of Sue Kedgley. The book mainly addresses the last 50 years of feminist activism in New Zealand parallel to Kedgley's life. ("Fifty Years a Feminist." Massey University Press. <https://www.masseypress.ac.nz/books/fifty-years-a-feminist/>. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

⁴⁹ Queer is a term used to describe individuals who do not identify as heterosexual or cisgender. ("Queer." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queer>. Accessed 24 April 2023.)

⁵⁰ Hone Tūwhare was a celebrated New Zealand poet known for his vibrant poems the brought a Māori perspective. ("Hone Tūwhare." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hone_T%C5%ABwhare . Accessed May 31, 2023.)

⁵¹ Janet Frame was a fiction writer from New Zealand who was known internationally for her many works and won New Zealand's highest civil honor. ("Janet Frame." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janet_Frame Accessed May 31, 2023.)

⁵² Elizabeth Annie Shepherd was a faculty member at the University of Auckland in the English Department. She lived from 1908 – 1991. ("Sheppard, Elizabeth Annie (Dr.)." National Library of New Zealand. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22391496>. Accessed May 31, 2023.)

⁵³ Associate Professor; it is the rank above Assistant Professor, but below Professor. Normally it is associated with having tenure, or a guarantee of a lifetime position.

NN: Oh, Lord.

NTA: They didn't have full professors, females at the University of Auckland⁵⁴ until the 1980s. That is how vile it was. It was like, "Where the hell are our role models?" Being a Māori female, well, Jesus, they just didn't exist. If they did, they were doing social work.

NN: Right. Understood.

NTA: Anyway, I don't know how I got onto that. Anyway, so yes, so Auckland was a real crucible of roaring political energy. I became disillusioned with feminism.

NN: Yes, I was going to ask about that, actually. If I could just jump in there. You spoke a little bit about your working between maybe feminist and Māori activism. Does that remain a conflict or what happened? You became disillusioned. What happened after that?

NTA: Well, I was only briefly disillusioned. [laughs]

NN: Okay.

NTA: Not completely. I still actively carry the word. I'm still a feminist activist. That's primarily because we live in a patriarchy. Whether it's Aotearoa New Zealand, with its decorative, high achieving, fabulous, globally acclaimed, recently resigned Prime Minister, female, and before her clerk, Helen Clark.⁵⁵ Then, of course, Jenny Shipley,⁵⁶ and this celebration of a female Governor General⁵⁷ and the female Chief Justice of the Supreme Court,⁵⁸ and the female head of whichever corporations and banks, and bloody, bloody, blah. That is such thin flattery, and in no way does it, actually, question, or subvert, or interrogate, or change. In my opinion, this is just my opinion, the basic tenets of patriarchy that sit beneath the surface. Until we can change that-- what is

⁵⁴ The University of Auckland is a public university located in Auckland, New Zealand. It is known for being one of the best universities in the country and world. ("University of Auckland." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Auckland. Accessed 26 April 2023.)

⁵⁵ Helen Clark is a politician in New Zealand who is best known for her time as prime minister of the country from 1999 to 2008. She has had many political positions in the New Zealand government. ("Helen Clark." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helen_Clark. Accessed 26 April 2023.)

⁵⁶ Jennifer Shipley is a politician in New Zealand who also served a prime minister of the country from 1997 to 1999. She is known for being the first female prime minister of the country. ("Jenny Shipley." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jenny_Shipley. Accessed 26 April 2023.)

⁵⁷ The Governor General is an appointed leader who carries out the orders of the Monarch of the United Kingdom. The Governor General position is only applicable to countries that are subject to the Monarch of the United Kingdom. ("Governor-General of New Zealand." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor-General_of_New_Zealand. Accessed 26 April 2023.)

⁵⁸ The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Zealand is the head of the Supreme Court of New Zealand. This individual also can act as the Governor General if one has yet to be appointed. ("Chief Justice of New Zealand." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_Justice_of_New_Zealand. Accessed 26 April 2023.)

happening in the Middle East,⁵⁹ what is happening in Ukraine?⁶⁰ What is going on in South Asia? Until we can shift that and until the likes of Trump⁶¹ and the Proud Boys⁶² and half the assholes that protested at Parliament in January and March last year, maybe March last year, until they understand the brutality, the misogyny, the hatred of their own belief systems, the planet is fucked.

NN: Right. Yes.

NTA: My job as a successful academic, as a raging feminist, and more importantly, as a Māori woman living in what is, actually, a traditional and tribal environment, where we have very gendered roles, it is my responsibility or one of the reasons I'm here on the planet, to try and question that, expose its weaknesses, find a way of changing it. How do I change it? In my own way, through my work. I worked until I got Gold Card⁶³ in 2013, 14. I worked as a university teacher. I did that job because I had an immense sense of privilege, being paid huge salaries to work and be with and talk to and more importantly, listen to the next generations of young, female and Māori thinkers and scholars and professionals. For me, that was a massive investment of time and energy. I have to mention someone else, two other people here who really had a significant impact on my intellectual life. This is in the straight Pakeha⁶⁴ world, not the Māori world, because I'm going to talk about my Pakeha journey, not my Māori one. Two people that really were outstanding as thinkers, as initiators as magical beings, was the extraordinary professorial combination of Jim⁶⁵ and Jane Ritchie,⁶⁶ and particularly

⁵⁹ The Middle East refers to 18 countries in the geographic region that ranges from Northeast Africa across southwestern Asia to India ("Middle East." Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶⁰ Ukraine is one of the largest countries in Europe. Currently, Ukraine is at war with Russia which officially started in 2022. ("Russo-Ukrainian War." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russo-Ukrainian_War. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶¹ Donald Trump is a businessman and a politician in America. He is best known for serving as President of the United States during the 2016 to 2020 term. ("Donald Trump." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Trump. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶² The Proud Boys is an organization that is specifically made up of male individuals who support Donald Trump. This organization is known for supporting political violence and is known as a terrorist organization in both Canada and New Zealand. ("Proud Boys." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proud_Boys. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶³ A gold card is a specific card that is given to individuals 65+ in New Zealand. This card allows these individuals certain discounts on goods such as groceries or health insurance. ("SuperGold card." Age Concern New Zealand. https://www.ageconcern.org.nz/Public/Information/Money_legal/Super_Gold_Card/Public/Info/Money_and_Legal/Gold_card.aspx?hkey=55346385-71c3-4328-b80f-44e3975eb3eb#:~:text=The%20SuperGold%20Card%2C%20also%20called,the%20country%20over%20their%20lifetime. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶⁴ Pākehā is a Māori word for individuals in New Zealand who are white/European background ("Pākehā." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C4%81keh%C4%81>. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶⁵ Jim, formally known as James, Ritchie is a psychologist based in New Zealand. ("James Ritchie (psychologist)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Ritchie_\(psychologist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Ritchie_(psychologist)). Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶⁶ Jane Ritchie is a psychologist from New Zealand who specializes in child-raising. She is currently a professor at the University of Waikato and is known for being the first woman to have graduated from a

Jane. Jane Ritchie, I honor as one of the founders of Second Wave Aotearoa New Zealand Feminism.⁶⁷

NN: It's not a name you hear a lot.

NTA: No. Yet, if you go back to the 60s', and the 70s', and the 80s', who was publishing, who started women's studies, the very first major in a New Zealand academic institution? Who got all that moving? Who was responsible for the criminalizing of physical punishment of children in the home? Who kicked off a hell of a lot of changes in broadcasting and in the academy and in the preschool movement? Who, actually, and this is a really important one I want to say this, got a research grant to look at Māori children's learning, particularly preschool children. With her neighbors, and the mothers, and the grandmothers, and the aunts of Māori staff at University of Waikato⁶⁸ started in 1972, '73, the very first preschool at University of Waikato on campus for Māori children in which the language of instruction was Māori. The untrained, unqualified, absolutely inspiring teachers for the grandmothers, and the mothers, and the aunts. That was the beginning of kōhanga reo,⁶⁹ and that was Jane. She got written out of the history. Yet I think that so much of feminist intellectual history here in Aotearoa, can be tracked back to her. People make comments like, "Oh, but she was a Beaglehole."⁷⁰ Yes, she was a Beaglehole and her mother was Pearl.⁷¹ She is part of an impressive intellectual dynasty. She is the most extraordinary woman. She's still around, she's still writing, she's still doing stuff. She lives in Raglan.⁷² She'd be worth checking out. She is amazing.

NN: Thank you. I had no idea.

university in New Zealand with a PhD in psychology. ("Jane Ritchie." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Ritchie. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶⁷ The second wave of feminism in New Zealand specifically fought for the economic and sociopolitical equality of men and women in the country. ("THE SECOND WAVE OF FEMINISM IN NEW ZEALAND." Second wave of feminism nz. <https://secondwaveof feminismnz.weebly.com/>. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶⁸ The University of Waikato is a research university located in Hamilton, New Zealand. It was established in 1964. ("University of Waikato." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Waikato. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁶⁹ The word for kindergarten of, by, and for Māori.

⁷⁰ Beaglehole is a last name that originates from the Celtic language. Many individuals with this last name originate from New Zealand and are academics. ("Beaglehole." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beaglehole>. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁷¹ Pearl Beaglehole is the mother of Jane Ritchie and was a New Zealand academic as well. ("PEARL BEAGLEHOLE (PERSON)." NZETC. <https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/name-110204.html>. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁷² Raglan is a small town located on the coast of New Zealand, near Hamilton, New Zealand. Raglan is specifically recognized by its beaches that encompass volcanoes and black sand. ("Raglan, New Zealand." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raglan,_New_Zealand. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

NTA: Her colleagues at Waikato at that time included other luminaries like Margaret Avery,⁷³ Rosemary Seymour,⁷⁴ Charlotte I can't remember Charlotte's surname, who was a lecturer in Chemistry. There was a group of really interesting academic women at Waikato. Gabriel Day, Paul Day's,⁷⁵ wife. There were women there, Pakeha women who were absolutely visionary and really brave. They really were. Here at Auckland, there was also a community of feminist academics, but they weren't as feisty and outrageous as the ones at Waikato, I've got to say that. There was also a strong gay element at Waikato led by two human geographers, Annie McGee and Lynn Star. There was, at that time, a lot of good stuff going on.

NN: If I could interrupt. Let's get back to you. I want to ask you a specific question - [crosstalk] Your gay identity, your identity as a lesbian woman, there's a famous story, and I'm sure my colleagues in the States⁷⁶ would actually like to hear the story of-

NTA: The visa.

NN: Yes, the visa.

NTA: I was finishing the MA,⁷⁷ and I was active in Ngā Tamatoa⁷⁸ and in women's liberation, and constantly questioning heterosexual privilege and even in the Māori context, and the racism. For me, the objectification of me and my girlfriends because we were gay. We were queer, and we were peculiar, and we were camp,⁷⁹ and da, di, da. This opportunity came up, so I applied. I was nominated and I got it. It was a State Department funded-- By this stage I had gotten married to a dear friend whom I still occasionally had contact with, and that was another whole story about his mother and

⁷³ Margaret Avery was a professor at the University of Waikato, specifically the leader of the History Department at the university. Every year, the university hosts a lecture in her honor. ("Margaret Avery Memorial Lecture: Pastoralism, Piety and Paint." The University of Waikato. <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/news-opinion/media/2012/margaret-avery-memorial-lecture-pastoralism-piety-and-paint>. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁷⁴ Rosemary Seymour was a feminist academic from New Zealand. She has published a women's journal and founded a women's association in New Zealand. Rosemary is best known for her role in creating the first Women's Studies class at the University of Waikato. ("Rosemary Seymour." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosemary_Seymour. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁷⁵ Paul Day was a professor of English at Waikato University. He wrote a book on John Mulgan, and was taken as a prisoner of war at El Alamein when he fought during World War II. ("Day, Paul Woodford." National Library of New Zealand. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22383443>. Accessed May 31, 2023).

⁷⁶ The United States of America is a country located in North America. It consists of 50 states and many other territories. It is known for being one of the most populated countries in the world. ("United States." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁷⁷ MA stands for a Master of Arts. ("What is an MA Degree?" Southern New Hampshire University. [https://www.snhu.edu/about-us/newsroom/education/what-is-an-ma-degree#:~:text=There%20are%20two%20prominent%20types,Master%20of%20Science%20\(MS\)](https://www.snhu.edu/about-us/newsroom/education/what-is-an-ma-degree#:~:text=There%20are%20two%20prominent%20types,Master%20of%20Science%20(MS)). Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁷⁸ Ngā Tamatoa was a group of activists dedicated to the rights of the Māori people. ("Ngā Tamatoa." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ng%C4%81_Tamatoa. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁷⁹ Camp refers to a type of style that is regarded as over-the-top and often used in entertainment. ("Camp (style)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp_\(style\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp_(style)). Accessed 27 April 2023.)

things being crazy and both of us not being able to say no to her. We got married, and it was stupid because within a month of being married, I fell into bed with a rather charming female friend and realized then that was a real mistake. We were still mates and still occupied the same house, but I moved into another flat with my new girlfriend. Anyway, I applied for what was called the Student Leader Grant and I got it. The basis of my application because they ask what you wanted to do and what groups you wanted to meet with and what campuses. I was interested in the Panthers,⁸⁰ in the Gay Liberation Movement,⁸¹ that was emerging in. Most importantly, in the American Indian Movement⁸² that was based on the East Coast. My spread was, basically, between both coasts, between San Francisco,⁸³ Black Panthers, and gay stuff. Lots of gay stuff happening in San Francisco and then New York⁸⁴ and the Treaty Nations of the East Coast, and I got it.

NN: Nice.

NTA: Summarizing it, suddenly there was dead ear, nobody contacted me. I was supposed to have meetings at the Consulate da, di, da, and it was leaked in about January. I was supposed to leave for the States in March 1972. By December of the previous year, I'd heard that there were problems, and then by January the problems were described, and it's that the Americans were reluctant to grant me a visa because I was not appropriate material for the scholarship. Then someone else who was part of the negotiating between inside USA who were part of the program at the New Zealand University Students' Association⁸⁵ and Foreign Affairs, and the Americans leaked the information that the problem was my sexuality. I thought, "Well, I don't believe in any of this shit," and by then we were very feisty and brave. We were doing a lot of work, particularly as Tamatoa, and it was just after the 1972 big protests at Waitangi.⁸⁶ We

⁸⁰ The Panthers, or the Black Panther Party, was an organization founded by college students in Oakland, California. The goal of the party was to help prevent the use of excessive force by police. The Panthers also helped create programs for community health, education, and more. ("Black Panther Party." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Panther_Party. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁸¹ The Gay Liberation Movement was started in the 1960s and lasted until the 1980s. The goal of this movement was to respond to gay discrimination by exhibiting gay pride. ("Gay liberation." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay_liberation. Accessed 27 April 2023.)

⁸² The American Indian Movement was started in 1968 and was created to fight against discrimination Native Americans face. ("American Indian Movement." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Indian_Movement. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁸³ San Francisco is a city located in the US state of California. It is one of the most populated cities in the state and is known for being the starting location for many social movements. ("San Francisco." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁸⁴ New York is a city located in the state of New York. It is one of the most populated cities in the United States and is the home of the United Nations. ("New York City." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁸⁵ The New Zealand University Students' Association is an organization that represents university students. The organization is dedicated to making students aware of government changes that affect them. ("New Zealand University Students' Association." National Library of New Zealand. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22377189>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁸⁶ During 1972, Māori activist groups walked out of a ceremony in Waitangi in response to the governor who said that discrimination and racism did not exist in the country. ("Waitangi Day." New Zealand

were really quite bold and ready to outrage. I decided I was going to go, personally, to confront the American Consul. This is true, this is not made up. I got two escorts and one was a relative who at the time was doing his Science Degree and is very tall, good-looking, dark, Māori with a massive afro. He wore a leather jacket and dark glasses. The other person that came with me was Hana Te Hemara,⁸⁷ Jackson's brother, Patrick, who was so effeminate, and dainty, and articulate, and very funny, and with a mess of shoulder-length curls, and, definitely, non-binary. We went to the Consul and asked to see him and my relation with afro just, basically, told that he was handsome, assumed the role, and we had to get through armed guards. Oh, Jesus. Anyway, we got into the Consul because we'd been protesting outside for so many months against Vietnam, but we got in. They let us in. Oh, my goodness. I met this dude, and he had flags all around him, and he had this folder and he opened it. He sat at the section and he said, "You have been refused," and I'll put this up, something like, "The scholarship opportunity has been withdrawn. We are refusing you a visa on the grounds of known sexual deviance."

NN: Oh, Lord. 1972.

NTA: Yes. 1971, when I was being outrageous and published an article in Craccum entitled, *Lesbianism: The Elegance of Unfettered Love*,⁸⁸ and I argued that is the theme in this position. This is July 1971, I was running stuff like that. It was a way of getting back all the straight girls, but anyway, I was, absolutely, incandescent with rage, and with the two boys, we very, graciously, exited and rushed up Albert Park⁸⁹ and Tim Shadbolt, thank, God, wasn't around that day. Usually, at lunchtime, they'd have an open mic, and Shadbolt and his mates would grab the mic, and show off, and jump around and, basically, start a lot of '60s nonsense. I grabbed the mic, it was free and explained what happened. Said, "I was a known sexual deviant." I explained that we needed a Gay Liberation Movement here and now, and who was willing? The words I used was, "Which one's of you are mad enough and brave enough to come and talk with me? I'll be at the coffee bar down the stairs." There was this little pokey, dark, gruesome place underneath the stairs in the Stalinist-style⁹⁰ University Student Union. I sat there with Patrick, Hannah's brother, and by then my cousin had gone off. He didn't want to have anything further to do with people like that. About eight people came. Around that time, I was in a relationship with someone really significant. This is another big name,

History. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/treaty/waitangi-day/waitangi-day-1970s>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁸⁷ Hana Te Hemara was a Māori activist and was known for her role in the founding of the Māori activist group, Ngā Tamatoa. ("Hana Te Hemara." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hana_Te_Hemara. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁸⁸ Craccum is the student-run magazine at the University of Auckland. ("Craccum." Craccum. <http://craccum.co.nz/> Accessed May 31, 2023.)

⁸⁹ Albert Park is a park located in Auckland, New Zealand. The park was created during the 1880s. ("Albert Park, Auckland." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Park,_Auckland. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁹⁰ Stalinist-style refers to the architectural style that was most prominent under the rule of Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union. ("Stalinist architecture." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stalinist_architecture. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

Caterina De Nave.⁹¹ She and I were living together. We called the first meeting at a house we were sharing with a group of other senior students. At the first meeting, we got over 40 people.

NN: Wow. They were really ready.

NTA: There was a need. The Homosexual Law Reform Society⁹² was still going, but because it was profoundly illegal for men, there was still a really high risk in coming out, but that's how Gay Liberation began. I finished the MA, I couldn't get a job, bloody blah. Then, kept activating doing my job, or not so major, but I remain very much a feminist and Māori activist. I was beginning to compartmentalize. I think that's really important admission that those of us living at the center, on the intersections of sexuality, of ethnicity, of language, of age, of all those things. One of the principle strategies, I believe, of survival, was to just line everything up very neatly in parallel boxes. I really believe that and that's how I've survived. That's why I'm here. If I'd let them enmesh me and engulfed me, I would be dead like so many of my mates, like so many women and men I know. I just separated all that and be, absolutely, mindful and focused on whatever life I was living at that time.

NN: Right. It's a strategy. Obviously, you're still with us, so it's a strategy-- [crosstalk]

NTA: Yes. It worked, and it worked for others in the Movement, particularly Māori, and Pacifica, and gay. That's just what we did anyway. I went to how Hawai'i, how did I get into the United States?

NN: Yes. I was wondering like-- [crosstalk]

NTA: I changed the name by deed poll. This is pre-computers. Yes. I don't know if it is a good thing to say, but I am talking about 50 years ago. Also, my visa crisis was during the Nixon period.⁹³ It was very different. When I applied the second time around with my new name, which I had changed, it was, actually, given to me by the tribe in 1974 when I graduated with an Honors Degree in English and Art History. I didn't want to be my adopted name, and I did not want to be the married name. I went back to my biological family and my *iwi*⁹⁴ and said, "This is a good degree. It should have a Māori

⁹¹ Caterina De Nave was a producer and director from New Zealand. She is known for being the creator of the longest running soap opera in New Zealand and for being the first woman to lead her own department at the Television New Zealand company. ("Caterina De Nave." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caterina_De_Nave. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁹² The Homosexual Law Reform Society was an organization based in the United Kingdom that worked to change laws that criminalized homosexuality. ("Homosexual Law Reform Society." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homosexual_Law_Reform_Society. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁹³ The Nixon period refers to the time in which the president of the United States was Richard Nixon, 1969-1974. ("Richard Nixon." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁹⁴ A Māori term for the largest social unit in society, such as a nation or tribe. ("Iwi." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iwi> Accessed May 31, 2023.)

name." That was really arrogant, and brave, and reckless. Well, I didn't quite put it like that. I was much more humble and genuinely needy. The old people got it. They got it, and they gave me the name I had. That's how I got it. That went into the application process with a whole lot of glowing recommendations from people like Jim and Jane Ritchie, and others. Jane's an American citizen.

NN: Oh, okay. Right.

NTA: I got through the process and ended up in Hawai'i. That was really interesting because during that period when we were doing the auditing of other campuses as part of the program, I checked out, God, the feminist networks in the States, and they were so White. It was horrible. It was just, it was like, "Aaargh. No, not my idea." I won't name them. I was at Berkeley. I went in, and then I heard that there was this-- I'd heard about them, the Daughters of Bilitis.⁹⁵ A very, almost legendary lesbian circle based in San Francisco. I went to one of their meetings, and, again, it was like, "Oh, my, oh," it was like, "What?" There was lots of social stuff. In Hawai'i and in those other American cities, there was an enormous, pumping, intense gay social scene. Booze was flowing in rivers, and everybody was stoned. It really was a crazy time, and stern, blue-stocking feminists that stood away from all that and wanted to confer, and plan, and stuff.

Pakeha White Anglo-Saxon⁹⁶ Protestant women. Well, not my cup of tea, you know? Certainly not my ideological and class origins, because my background, although my biological family, as I said earlier, is quite posh. I never knew them. My upbringing was with weavers. I had my first job as a cleaner when I was 11, 12. We had to work. We had to work. If you were super clever to get to university, you could get a good scholarship, which is what I managed to do. Yes, I was staggered by the Whiteness of it. [laughs] Of course, then I'd leave these strange gatherings of pompous feminist women, and shabby White females wearing dungarees and big boots and fall back into my academic cohort

⁹⁵ The Daughters of Bilitis was an organization in the United States that was started in San Francisco during 1955 and 1995. This organization fought for the civil and political rights of lesbians. ("Daughters of Bilitis." Wikipedia.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daughters_of_Bilitis#:~:text=The%20Daughters%20of%20Bilitis%20\(%2Fb.to%20raids%20and%20police%20harassment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daughters_of_Bilitis#:~:text=The%20Daughters%20of%20Bilitis%20(%2Fb.to%20raids%20and%20police%20harassment). Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁹⁶ Anglo-Saxon refers to individuals who have ancestors from Germany. ("Anglo-Saxon Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Anglo-Saxon>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

of Samoans,⁹⁷ Tongans,⁹⁸ Tahitians,⁹⁹ Filipinos,¹⁰⁰ Vietnamese¹⁰¹ begging me. There were a few women. It was quite different.

NN: Did you ever manage to blend that? I know I'm asking for--

NTA: Not till much later

NN: Right.

NTA: No, because during my period in Hawai'i, and that was from 1975 to 1980, was an 18-month really intense fieldwork phase where I was based here, was about 18 months, almost two years. I came back to Rotorua to, actually, get my material. I interviewed all of my great-aunts, the youngest would've been 65. These were women, and my aunts, and my great relatives who had been involved with tourism from 1900.

NN: Gosh.

NTA: It's a really significant thesis in the way because I wrote it for their stories, and I wrote it so that the material can go back to their families, which it has. I'm pleased to say it has. I was here for nearly two years, and the women scene in Hawai'i was, again, quite fragmented, although there was also a lot of crossing over. The Hawai'ians, the Samoans, the Tongans, the local women, gay women were very working class, incredibly rough, heavy drinkers. That's who I ran with when I didn't attend lectures and be an academic. In the university context, there were some really quite remarkable women, primarily in the Arts Faculty. They included Marilyn Hammon (sp?) who taught English, and Adrienne Kaeppler,¹⁰² Ethnomusicology, Anthropology, and Alice Dewey,¹⁰³ who was in Anthropology and was part of the "Dewey Dynasty."¹⁰⁴ Did I say, and Barbara

⁹⁷ Samoans refers to people who originate from the Samoan islands, which are a part of Polynesia. ("Samoans." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samoans>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁹⁸ Tongans are individuals who originate from the country of Tonga, a Polynesian country. The country is made up of many islands in the Pacific Ocean. ("Tonga." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonga>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

⁹⁹ Tahitians refers to people from Tahiti, which is a Polynesian country. ("Tahitians." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tahitians>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰⁰ Filipinos refers to people from the Philippines. ("Filipinos." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filipinos>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰¹ Vietnamese refers to people or anything that relates to the country of Vietnam, which is located in southern Asia. ("Vietnam." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰² Adrienne Kaeppler was an academic who specialized in art and dance from Pacific cultures. She spent most of her academic life working for the Smithsonian Museum in the United States. ("The life and legacy of Adrienne Kaeppler." RNZ News. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/463201/the-life-and-legacy-of-adrienne-kaeppler>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰³ Alice Dewey was an academic who specialized in the culture of the country of Java, an Indonesian island. She was also a professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. ("Alice Dewey." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice_Dewey. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰⁴ This refers to the fact that she was the daughter of Sabino Dewey, who was the adopted son of the famous American philosopher, promoter of public education, and public intellectual: John Dewey.

Smith,¹⁰⁵ who was extraordinary and an outstanding musicologist. That was over there, and then there was all the gay stuff over here, and all the rough girls, and the drinkers, and the party girls, and this sort of major social art, gay life. I was sort of caught up in the middle of all that, doing stuff. Then came back here, and what was raging like a fire in Aotearoa, New Zealand, having convulsed itself through a whole series of other things around Auckland and Wellington, and feminism, and the first convention, and then the 1975 Women's Convention in Hamilton,¹⁰⁶ which I missed. Was '75 the International Women's Year? We had Margaret Mead¹⁰⁷ come up and speak. She came at the invitation of Jane Ritchie. Jane was the convener of that convention.

NN: Wow.

NTA: That's why she is a key figure. I wasn't here for that. During that period, we saw really weird shit happening. I'll just say the violence, the racism, the craziness, the extreme positioning of separatism, Lesbian separatism according to Charlotte Bunch,¹⁰⁸ who came here and preached it, who actually came here and ranted and raved, and captured this busload of dizzy White lesbians. Margaret Mead came. Oh, there were a whole sort of series of them, but for much of that time I was in Hawaii and I was in California.¹⁰⁹ There was also, by the time I came back in 1980, the emergence of what became known as the Black Women's Movement,¹¹⁰ that was a total transplant from San Francisco and the extreme oppression of women of color. Throughout my feminist intellectual life, I have been drawn to and fascinated by the thinkers who are women of color, but also thinkers and writers who are women of First Nations¹¹¹ origin who are native, and there are so few of us. There are so few of us, and we end up being captured,

¹⁰⁵ Barbara Smith was a professor at the University of Hawaii and is known for her work in the field of ethnomusicology. ("Barbara Barnard Smith." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Barnard_Smith. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰⁶ The 1975 Women's Convention was held by the United Nations and included many workshops focused on women and feminism. ("United Women's Convention." Victoria University of Wellington Library. <https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Salient38141975-t1-body-d12.html>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰⁷ Margaret Mead was an anthropologist and academic who was known for her work on Pacific and Asian cultures and their views on sex. Mead had a public presence and was considered controversial.

("Margaret Mead." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Mead. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹⁰⁸ Charlotte Bunch was an early member of the Feminist Separatism movement, which had roots in lesbian feminism and believed that in order to achieve equality, women had to completely separate from men. ("Feminist separatism." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminist_separatism#:~:text=dynamics%20of%20patriarchy,-Lesbian%20separatism,goals%20or%20enhance%20personal%20growth. Accessed May 31, 2023).

¹⁰⁹ California is a state in the western United States bordered by the Pacific Ocean. It is one of the most populated states in the country. ("California." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California>. Accessed 28 April 2023.)

¹¹⁰ The Black Women's Movement started during the 1970s and 1980s. This movement originated in response to the discrimination experienced by black women in the education field, healthcare, and brutality by police. ("The Black Women's Movement." Google Arts & Culture.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/the-black-women-s-movement-black-cultural-archives/hAUBVgWeiBZ-Ig?hl=en>. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

¹¹¹ First Nations is a term for indigenous people who were the first people who settled in a specific area. ("First Nations." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Nations. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

and manipulated, and exploited, and seduced by trips to the United Nations, and trips here, and trips there, and we actually lose sight, many of us, of the job.

NN: Yes, doing the work.

NTA: Yes, which is basically, reflecting upon, and improving, and empowering, and uplifting our own women. For me, that's the big lesson. That's the big job.

NN: Getting us back to what is supposed to be the first question of this interview-- [laughs] Ah, dear.

NTA: Oh God, no, no.

NN: Oh, no, no. No, we'll truncate because you've answered already. Would you say that that's maybe not your most significant lifetime achievement? Because as you say, you you're still living, you haven't finished yet. So far, what would you say is the thing that you are most proud of, perhaps?

NTA: I don't know. I really don't know.

NN: Maybe we should go back and sort of like--

NTA: Just read this. [chuckles]

NN: I'll read that. What are you working on now [crosstalk] in Hawaii, and you had this whole intersection of the whole cultural--

NTA: Yes. I came back. [crosstalk] I got a Ph.D. I also got incredibly ill as I got the degree. It was the first to be awarded by a New Zealand University, so it was conferred on me at the request of the tribal elders in my grand house, in the meeting house, Tama-te-kapua,¹¹² and the University of Waikato Council, and people from Hawaii. Everybody came. It was an incredibly, stupendously, magnificent day, and I was very ill. That was a huge one. Because I was so ill, it happened some months after I got the degree, like after I'd passed and it was all there, but I was in and out. I actually had a bout of cancer, which was removed, it was all taken away, so I'm good.

NN: Okay, good.

NTA: It was quite close. Of course, at the same time, the Springbok Tour¹¹³ was raging, but I didn't get involved in that. I was quite cynical and would say things like, "I think

¹¹² Tama-te-kapua is a character within a Māori legend in which he was the captain of the canoe that first arrived in New Zealand from Polynesia during 1350. ("Tama-te-kapua." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tama-te-kapua>. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

¹¹³ The Springbok tour was a series of protests in 1981 in New Zealand due to the New Zealand rugby team visiting the Springboks, a South African rugby team. These protests lasted for 56 days. ("1981 Springbok tour." New Zealand History. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/1981-springbok-tour>. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

our lives would change if all these angry White people would come up and march with us to Waitangi."

NN: Yes, I understand. Rugby, hey, rugby, it's New Zealand's sort of--

NTA: I know. It's all safe to stuff phone books up your jersey and wear a crash helmet and run around shouting for people, for human rights, for land, and language, and justice, and good health in another country. What about here? What about here? That's what I'd say, and, of course, that just get kicked out the door. "How incredibly unfashionable. How incredibly narrow. Who the fuck are you to tell us what we should be doing?"

NN: Oh lord.

NTA: "What sort of protester are you?"

NN: Oh yes.

NTA: I thought, "I'm not going to get my head broken open for someone, and be bleeding all over the ground for a population that's thousands of miles away, when I see the grief, and the poverty, and the injustices, and the arrests going on here." No, it didn't make sense. I try and say that to people and they still think I'm being politically unsound. "Well, hey, tough. I don't care." That's why I went on a march here in Aotearoa because we needed the people, the Auckland Hamilton showing off, jumping up and down, putting a phone book up my jersey. There were other more immediate. Did all that action in South Africa in any way impact on social justice here in Aotearoa? That's still quite debatable, even though we have made a lot of progress. Anyway, coming back to our-- Sorry, that was a bit of a diversion. Oh, so when I got cancer, this is important-

NN: All right.

NTA: -I wrote to Audre Lorde.¹¹⁴

NN: Oh, you did?

NTA: Yes.

NN: Oh.

NTA: Because she had just published *The Cancer Journals*,¹¹⁵ which was about her experience as a Black woman in the medical system-

¹¹⁴ Audre Lorde was a lesbian feminist writer and an activist for civil rights. ("Audre Lorde." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audre_Lorde. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

¹¹⁵ *The Cancer Journals* by Audre Lorde is a series of essays in which Audre Lorde describes her experience with breast cancer. This book was published in 1980. ("Audre Lorde." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audre_Lorde. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

NN: Oh, Lord.

NTA: -although her disease was in a different part of her body from mine. We ended up corresponding.

NN: Oh, nice. Yes. Oh, wow. Did you have similar stories of the medical world?

NTA: Yes, we did. Yes, except that mine was diagnosed early enough, and it was all removed, but the story was just take it all out. [laughs] This is long before laser surgery¹¹⁶ and all that. This is 1981.

NN: I was trying to get at-- I guess my question was the experience of the medical professionals. This isn't in the script, this is totally off script. Was there anything interesting about your experience? I'll say it, were you treated fairly and listened to?

NTA: Why I'm smiling like the Cheshire Cat¹¹⁷ is that I demanded a female gynecologist and I got one.

NN: Wow.

NTA: She was brutal and homophobic and ghastly. Oh shit. She was awful. It was so ironic. She was an absolute lesbophobe¹¹⁸ and quite a famous woman too. I promptly ran back to the titled White man and his young health surgeon, [laughs] who was very, very good. The young health surgeon who was a trainee OB-GYN guy was really good. He was this little Jewish guy that was really good at his job and really compassionate. He absolutely got what had happened to me with this, just the old woman, and all the stainless steel equipment and freezing cold hands and all of that. I had cervical and uterus and went through two lots of suturing. This ghastly old woman was just--

NN: I'm so sorry.

NTA: You could see she preferred to work with ladies that had had lots of babies and that were good heterosexual mothers. I was the kind of wild creature that came in wanting to be examined by a woman.

NN: You got what you asked for, I guess.

¹¹⁶ Laser surgery is a type of surgery in which light beams, are used in place of surgical instruments. ("What Is Laser Surgery?." Stanford Medicine. <https://stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-treatments/l/laser/types/laser-surgery.html>. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

¹¹⁷ The phrase 'smiling like a cheshire cat' is an idiom that means to smile widely. ("Grin like a Cheshire cat." Grammarist. <https://grammarist.com/idiom/grin-like-a-cheshire-cat/#:~:text=To%20grin%20like%20a%20Cheshire,beholder%20is%20not%20aware%20of>. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

¹¹⁸ Lesbophobia is defined as discrimination against individuals who are lesbian. ("Lesbophobia." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbophobia>. Accessed 1 May 2023.)

NTA: [crosstalk] It immediately sets up a really ugly dynamic, because how dumb of me. How dumb is that? God. Anyway, these two blokes did a good job, and I'm here to tell the story.

NN: Good.

NTA: Because I was sick--

NN: You've got your degree and I'm trying to move--

NTA: I've got the degree [crosstalk].

NN: -hasn't been necessarily feminist focused, has it? It's been more sort of--

NTA: No. Oh God. I'll just say that I got the Ph.D. I was unemployable. It took me four years to get a job. I was the only Māori woman in the country with a doctorate. I applied for something like 27 jobs. Never got them. They appointed a Māori boy with a BA. It was one of the most difficult periods in my life. Really it was. Anyway, then I ended up working in-- I landed on my feet very fortunately as the curator at the Museum of Art History¹¹⁹ in Hamilton, and worked. I did get a postdoctoral fellowship to Oxford, but that was a year. I was in Britain¹²⁰ then. Even that, which was hugely prestigious didn't get me a job. I applied for all these museum jobs. I applied for Māori studies jobs. I applied for lectureships and tutorships and blah, blah. Nothing. Civil service jobs, nothing.

NN: How did you sustain yourself through four years of not getting a gig?

NTA: Oh, nearly four years. I cleaned motels. I went on the doll for a short time and was almost physically violent at the doll office because the woman that interviewed me did not believe I had qualifications. I had to take him my degrees. Actually, I didn't, I walked out. I just thought, "Fuck you." This is really funny talking about this, but I dived for agar with my cousins. I stayed with my family at Mōtītī¹²¹ on the coast in the Bay of Plenty¹²². We dived for this special seaweed. We'd go out there and do that. I did that for a couple of seasons. I picked and packed kiwi fruit.

¹¹⁹ The Waikato Museum of Art and History in Hamilton, New Zealand was established in 1987 and houses art from the country. ("Waikato Museum." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waikato_Museum. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹²⁰ Britain, also referred to as the United Kingdom, is a country located in Europe. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and is known for being the first industrialized country in the world. ("United Kingdom." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹²¹ The island of Mōtītī is located near the north island of New Zealand. Few people live on the privately-owned island. ("Mōtītī Island." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C5%8Dt%C4%ABt%C4%AB_Island. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹²² The Bay of Plenty is located near the coast of the north island of New Zealand. It is 160 miles long and was named plentiful due to the amount of food available to Māori villages off the coast of the bay. ("Bay of Plenty." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bay_of_Plenty. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

NN: Oh gosh.

NTA: I did a lot of motel cleaning.

NN: Oh, lord.

NTA: It was hard. I had a doctorate. I had a Ph.D., and through that whole time I'm walking around saying to myself, "Tell me, where is the pot of gold at the end of the Ph.D. rainbow?" For me, for a lesbian, a Māori female, it doesn't exist. That was hard, but I just kept going. I just had a brilliant mummy. I had good friends.

NN: That was what I was getting at. Actually, how did you sustain yourself?

NTA: Oh, emotionally. I had a good family around me and had real old time lesbian feminist friends from the early days that kept me going. Even though it was a really fractious time in the New Zealand feminist environment with the catastrophic melodramas around *Broadsheet*¹²³ with the Piha¹²⁴ Congress. Which I went to in February, 1978, and watched the brutality and manipulation of all these scanty White women by Māori women, whom I had no respect for at all. Not at all. Ripeka Evans¹²⁵ and Donna Awatere¹²⁶ are still out there bullying and bugging about probably how women are eating out of their hands. I mean, Jesus, I saw what happened at the Piha Congress and was so relieved that immediately after that, about two weeks after Piha, I went back to the States. Because I think if I'd stayed here, I would've become very angry very quickly.

NN: Yes, right.

NTA: No, the really unhealthy developments I observed when I'd come home to do field work was the elevation financial support and almost causation by wealthy middle class White feminists of a renegade group of really obnoxious Māori. I could name the names and tell you who the misguided, well-meaning, genuinely good Pakeha women were, some of them are still here. Many are still in considerable positions of power. It's like the whole issue of white guilt, white privilege and to a lesser extent, heteronormative and heterosexist privilege was really manipulated and manipulated brilliantly by particular female leaders, Māori and Pakeha, particularly Māori in Pacific. It just blew

¹²³ *Broadsheet* was a feminist magazine at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. ("Broadsheet." The University of Auckland. <https://broadsheet.auckland.ac.nz/> Accessed May 31, 2023).

¹²⁴ Piha is a settlement located on the coast of Auckland, New Zealand. It has a well-known beach and is a popular destination during the summer. ("Piha." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piha>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹²⁵ Ripeka Evans is a New Zealand activist for Māori people and owns her own company in which she writes articles for documentaries and magazines. Ripeka Evans is most known for her role in the Springbok tour. ("Ripeka Evans." Komako. <https://www.komako.org.nz/person/200>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹²⁶ Donna Awatere is a Māori activist and was a part of the parliament of New Zealand. She was a part of the Springbok tour, and wrote for a feminist magazine as well. ("Donna Awatere Huata." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donna_Awatere_Huata. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

me away. It was like, "I can't stand this shit." I was writing to Audre Lorde. I found my way again to North America and hooked up with Beth Brant, Native American poet¹²⁷, Paula Gunn Allen,¹²⁸ Native American poet, both feminists. Paula Gunn Allen was with Judy Grahn,¹²⁹ who was a very famous lesbian poet. Michelle Cliff¹³⁰ was with Adrienne Rich.¹³¹ These luminaries in the American feminist scene, and I wrote to them and hung out with them. Then coming back to my work, I ended in the museum sector. Which I've returned to, I'm back there now. I ended up working in the academy, was offered a job by University of Auckland to start a Māori and Pacific Artistry program. That was in 1988, but up until then, I was also in very rich contact with a number of Native American and to a lesser degree Black feminists. I've got lots of stuff published in different anthologies and collections through those years. Poetry, short fiction and essays. I published my own collection of short fiction in 1989, then did a monograph on Māori research ethics and [unintelligible 01:23:02] and Māori women's politics and art and stuff in 1991. I predated the likes of Linda Smith¹³² and I was years before then, but I was alone. I was by myself.

NN: You had a [crosstalk].

NTA: I was queer. No, that's part of it. I was a lesbian, I wasn't safe. I don't care now.

NN: There really is no categorizing you, I was just thinking like, you started with Janet Frame,¹³³ then you moved to your life and your art, your work. Your work and your life have changed so much, but there really are interwoven. This gets back to your beginning.

NTA: Yes. The consistency, like the thread that weaves through, the river that runs through is, I'm going to say it, to my commitment is to constantly challenge. If I can in my lifetime, change patriarchy is to interrogate, expose, shift that value system. I know

¹²⁷ Beth Brant was a Native American (Mohawk) writer and poet, from Michigan. She represented lesbian Native American women in her writing and activism ("Beth Brant." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beth_Brant. Accessed 3 May 2023.)

¹²⁸ Paula Gunn Allen was a poet and an activist. Though Paula Allen identified with many ethnicities, she associated herself mainly with her Native American roots. Paula Allen is best known for her poems in which she wrote about traditional stories from Native American people. ("Paula Gunn Allen." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paula_Gunn_Allen. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹²⁹ Judy Grahn is a lesbian poet. Additionally, Judy Grahn teaches at many universities. ("Judy Grahn." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judy_Grahn. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹³⁰ Michelle Cliff was a Jamaican-American prose and poetry writer. She wrote about her complex identity and the problems she faced as a result of it. ("Michelle Cliff." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelle_Cliff. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹³¹ Adrienne Rich was a feminist poet and essayist who received many awards for her work. Her work addressed many political issues such as civil rights activism and feminism. ("Adrienne Rich." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adrienne_Rich. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹³² Linda Tuhiwai Smith is a prominent Māori scholar, born in 1950. ("Linda Tuhiwai Smith." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linda_Tuhiwai_Smith).

¹³³ Janet Frame was an author from New Zealand who received the highest civil honor of New Zealand. Much of Janet Frame's work was acknowledged throughout the world and she received many awards. ("Janet Frame." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janet_Frame. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

it's like holding up the moon or it's huge picture. It's global picture, but I just think in small ways, in tiny ways on the Marae, as I had recently, in the context of teaching Māori girls at the local high school. How we dress. Why do we dress a certain way? These are interventions. These are ways of interrogating that way of thinking. In my tribe, women have to take their shoes off to go into a carved house. Men do not. They're allowed to keep their shoes on, because they're men. Why? Because they're men. There's no rationale, except they've got a pair of balls. Now, that's what it's become, but there is actually a backstory. Which is quite an interesting one, which I won't go into the details of. At some of the Marae¹³⁴ with which I have a very strong relationship, the men have to take their shoes off. If they don't, then the men inside who are the speakers, the orators, the chiefs, they tell them to take their shoes off.

NN: Oh.

NTA: That's the kind of shift I'm talking about. It's working towards that. I think that all of the issues of social justice, of poverty, of inequality, of 21st century life have their roots in the patriarchal system and the patriarchal male power over control, Trumpian excess and ideology. All of that, it tracks itself back to powerful White men, or powerful men if I consider South Asia, and the Middle East, and South America and Africa.

NN: We've not followed the script at all, but you've talked of many points.

NTA: No. I'm all over the place.

NN: We don't really need to ask you the question, but I wanted to point out, you recently fronted a documentary. Is that correct? I've not got a TV, so I didn't see it and I haven't streamed it yet, but I may well. Can you tell us a little bit about the documentary and how it came about?

NTA: Okay. I've worked in the arts sector for a very long time. As I said, my grandmother, my mother, my aunts are wool weavers of very great renown in the Māori world and many of the men in my family are carvers and painters. I've always been part of that world, and I've always been creative, but primarily with words. That's my gift. I'm a word person. I'm a bit hopeless for the facts, but I'm pretty good with words. There are heaps of stuff in the arts sector. Helen appointed me to the Council of Creative New Zealand,¹³⁵ way back in the day when she was PM.¹³⁶ Then after that, I became the chair of the Māori Arts Board. During her tenure, I was one of a group of brave, outstanding, rambunctious Māori and Pacific arts advocates and cultural and heritage

¹³⁴ A marae is defined as a dedicated area for religious purposes in Polynesian cultures. It is regarded as holy. ("Marae." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marae>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹³⁵ The Council of Creative New Zealand is responsible for the organization, Creative New Zealand. The organization supports the arts of New Zealand. ("Our Council." Creative New Zealand." <https://creativenz.govt.nz/About-Creative-NZ/Our-Council>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹³⁶ The Prime Minister, or PM, of New Zealand is the leader of the New Zealand government. ("Prime Minister of New Zealand." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_New_Zealand. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

specialists who were there during the incredibly productive years of her tenure. It all collapsed when the tenure shifted. During that time I did a lot of work at the UN¹³⁷ and particularly in intellectual property, and the ownership of Māori imagery. That's that. I got involved, I've published a few books on textiles and tattoo and stuff, but I've always been a performer. I grew up on stage as well as being a weaver my family were entertainers. My mother was a backup singer for Howard Morrison.¹³⁸

NN: Oh, Lord, I remember that.

NTA: Yes, he's my cousin. He is first [crosstalk]. That's the life I grew up in and as a cynic would say, incredibly objectified. Like we were the safe Māori.

NN: Yes, exactly. I understand.

NTA: That the Pakeha world enjoyed. I stepped out of that world because again, I was challenging it. I've always done art stuff, curating exhibitions, helping people working in art history, working at Elam,¹³⁹ doing all that. Some really charming and absolutely extraordinary people turned up one day in my life and invited me to come into a television series on contemporary Māori and Pacific art. They'd seen me on different platforms, and I've done lots of stuff internationally. Last year I was in the Venice Biennale¹⁴⁰ and that's an interesting thing that connects with what we are talking about. In 1992, and I think the American audience will find us interesting. In 1992 at the Auckland Art Gallery,¹⁴¹ we had a major, major, major survey show brought from the Chicago Art Institute¹⁴² of the works of Gauguin¹⁴³. So there was a mass of Gauguin exhibits, and there was a symposium, and the more I'd look at Gauguin over the years from when I was a teenager, the more I'd see my relations who were cross-dressing transects, or trans people within the Māori and Polynesian context, which is quite different from others. Anyway, so I wrote a paper questioning the sexuality and gender,

¹³⁷ The United Nations, or UN, is an organization consisting of countries around the world dedicated to collaboration between countries to find solutions to problems around the world. ("About Us." United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹³⁸ Howard Morrison was a singer from New Zealand. He performed on television and in concerts as well. ("Howard Morrison." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howard_Morrison. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹³⁹ Elam is a school of fine arts located in Auckland, New Zealand. It is a part of the University of Auckland as well. ("Elam School of Fine Arts." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elam_School_of_Fine_Arts. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁴⁰ The Venice Biennale is an international festival of culture usually hosted in Italy. ("Le Biennale de Vienza." La Biennale. <https://www.labiennale.org/en> Accessed May 31, 2023.)

¹⁴¹ The Auckland Art Gallery is a public collection of art located in New Zealand. It is known for housing the largest collection of Art in the country. ("Auckland Art Gallery." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auckland_Art_Gallery. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁴² The Chicago Art Institute was established in 1879 and is a museum consisting of many works of art. It is known for being one of the oldest, as well as largest, art collections in the world. ("Art Institute of Chicago." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_Institute_of_Chicago. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁴³ Paul Gauguin was an artist from France who is known for his use of color in his paintings. ("Paul Gauguin." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Gauguin. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

and I posited that Gauguin, a number of his models were fa'afafine,¹⁴⁴ Arioi Mahu transnians.¹⁴⁵ In my presentation at the symposium, I showed images of Māori and Polynesian queens next to Gauguin's works. I also did the academic stuff and brought out all the references from the 18th and 19th-century voyagers and missionaries and stuff about sexualities in the Māori world. I've done a lot of work on that. A lot of published stuff. Masses of it out there and serious academic stuff, I've got to say. Just not frivolous, but I'll just say that, and part of that when I was Dean of Māori and a professor at Victoria University¹⁴⁶ with a bunch of us, we put together a major in lesbian gay studies. One of the basic programs, put basic courses was on Māori sexualities. That was in the late '90s with Alison Laurie,¹⁴⁷ and, oh God, a bunch of us. There were five professors at the university who were all gay. Oh, Jack Body¹⁴⁸ is another one, but we were all people of influence in the institution. For five years, I taught at Vic and was HOD¹⁴⁹ of Māori. Anyway, that's another whole digression, but I did this paper and then it disappeared because the book it was going to be part of was dropped for a number of reasons by Chicago¹⁵⁰ and Auckland. The paper was there, and so I distributed it to my mates, and one of them was Yuki Kihara.¹⁵¹ She turned that paper into the Venice Biennale¹⁵² exhibit, which was shown last year, and represented Aotearoa/New Zealand. My paper, which is part of the catalog of Yuki's show, and which I wrote an epilogue to, I wrote an update because 30 years ago, that was the Venice Biennale

¹⁴⁴ Fa'afafine is an indigenous word that refers to the fluidity of gender roles in Samoa culture, including the "third and fourth" gender groups; they both care for the elderly at the end of life and become sex educators. ("Beyond Gender: Indigenous Perspectives, Fa'afafine and Fa'afatama." Natural history Museum. (<https://nhm.org/stories/beyond-gender-indigenous-perspectives-faafafine-and-faafatama#:~:text=Fa%27afafine%20and%20Fa%27afatama%2C%20Samoa&text=Fa%27afafine%20and%20fa%27afatama%20are%20fluid%20gender%20roles%20that%20for%20male%20and%20female%20genders>. Accessed May 31, 2023.)

¹⁴⁵ Mahu trans refers to transgender people from Hawaiian or Tahitian cultures. In these cultures, the Mahu have roles within their cultures. ("Mahu." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81h%C5%AB>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁴⁶ Victoria University is located in Wellington, New Zealand. It was founded in 1897 and is known for its law and humanities programs. ("Victoria University of Wellington." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria_University_of_Wellington. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁴⁷ Alison Laurie specializes in research relating to women's studies and history. She previously worked at the Victoria University of Wellington. ("Alison Laurie." ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alison-Laurie>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁴⁸ Jack Body was an awarded but controversial New Zealand composer whose work focused on South Asia. ("Jack Body." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Body. Accessed May 31, 2023.)

¹⁴⁹ HOD is an acronym that means head of department. ("HOD definition." Law Insider. <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/hod#:~:text=HOD%20means%20the%20Head%20of%20Department>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵⁰ Chicago is a city located in the state of Illinois. It is known for being one of the most populated cities in the state. ("Chicago." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵¹ Yuki Kihara is an artist from New Zealand who has had a solo exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NY ("Yuki Kihara." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuki_Kihara. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵² Venice Biennale is a cultural exhibition that occurs every year featuring works of art from all around the world. The exhibition is located in Venice, Italy. ("Venice Biennale." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venice_Biennale. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

exhibition for New Zealand. That was the New Zealand Pavilion.¹⁵³ I was up there in November last year.

NN: Oh.

NTA: October last year [crosstalk], I'm working on that.

NN: I'd love to get my hands on that paper, and I'm sure my colleagues in the US would as well. The original.

NTA: Yes, it's published. Yuki published it. I'll just get it. One minute...The name of the book which was published by Thames and Hudson.¹⁵⁴ Which is very posh is *Paradise Camp*.¹⁵⁵

NN: Oh, nice.

NTA: *Paradise Camp* by Yuki Kihara.

NN: Thank you.

NTA: The editor is Natalie King¹⁵⁶ and the text is my original paper.

NN: Interesting. Great.

NTA: It's accompanied by a reflective epilogue where I talk about what has happened in the 30 years since that paper.

NN: Thank you. That would be really, really good riveting reading. Yes. Thanks.

NTA: It's mad because, of course, it immediately falls into the densely controversial and winding conversation around trans women and turfs, and the endangering, the reinforced alienation of being woman. I mean, we are a species at risk as I sometimes think, I do, even by the very word in a number of environments, you have to say, I am a cis-woman.

¹⁵³ The New Zealand Pavilion is an exhibition that depicts things such as the culture of New Zealand. ("Country Pavilion Exhibition Booth." Triumpho. <https://www.triumfo.de/expo-pavilion-design/#::~text=Country%20pavilion%20reflects%20the%20culture.industry%20cooperation%20with%20joint%20promotion>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵⁴ Thames and Hudson is a publishing company from the United Kingdom that publishes only illustrated books. ("Thames & Hudson." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thames_%26_Hudson. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵⁵ *Paradise Camp* by Yuki Kihara is a book that depicts a collection of 12 photographs from Samoa after a tsunami in 2009. ("Paradise Camp by Yuki Kihara." Powerhouse. <https://www.maas.museum/event/paradise-camp-by-yuki-kihara/>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵⁶ Natalie King is an art curator from Australia. She has worked on many exhibitions across the world. ("Natalie King." Thames & Hudson. <https://thamesandhudson.com/authors/natalie-king-69485>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

NN: Right, yes.

NTA: For a long time in my life, I cross-dressed certainly when I was living in Europe and parts of Britain, and before I got this [her tattoo].

NN: Right, yes. Was nice.

NTA: Thank you. I had a number two and leathers and Doc Marten's¹⁵⁷ and it was safer to be a guy, certainly in Germany¹⁵⁸ and parts of France¹⁵⁹ and as I said, parts of Britain, just – it was safer. Much safer to be a male.

NN: Can we go and ask-- I would like to ask, so what do you mean about it? What do you mean when you say it's the word woman or being a woman is endangered? Can you expand on that a little?

NTA: The obvious one is women's toilets.

NN: For me, I always worried. There's a toilet in this house that everybody goes to. The cat goes to it. That's it.

NTA: In public spaces, at nightclubs, where people are pissed out of their brains or running on chemical fuel. In the public environment, you want to be able to do what you need to do and not encounter someone. I don't know, for me, as a young butch¹⁶⁰ lesbian, I used to use the men's toilets because the queues in the women's [chuckles] was so horrific. I think that in the current world, which I firmly believe, and this may be an outrageous claim, is funded by pharmaceutical interest. The notion of puberty blockers, of giving a ten-year-old the right to decide what they are, the revolutionizing of sexual identity, is really quite critical. I grew up around people of indeterminate gender in my Māori world. Aunts who dressed and worked and lived like men, going to Auckland in the '60s, hanging out with the butches, going to the women's club, which was started by Māori and Karangahape Road¹⁶¹ in 1971. None of those women, even though they drove buses, they drove trucks, they were butch as, ever identified as men. The idea of them becoming men was actually alien. They were women that loved women. Now, what I see happening now is that in a world of options, you can choose. You can

¹⁵⁷ Doc Martens is a clothing and shoe brand that originated in Germany. The company was established in 1947 and its headquarters are located in the United Kingdom. ("Dr. Martens." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr._Martens. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵⁸ Germany is a country located in Europe. It is known for being one of the most populated countries in Europe. ("Germany." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁵⁹ France is a country located mainly in Europe. France also consists of many territories in various parts of the world. ("France." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France>. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁶⁰ Butch is a term used by the lesbian community to describe lesbians who have a typically more masculine identity. ("Butch (lesbian slang)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butch_\(lesbian_slang\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butch_(lesbian_slang)). Accessed 2 May 2023.)

¹⁶¹ Karangahape road is a road located in Auckland, New Zealand. It is one of the many main streets in the business district of Auckland. ("Karangahape Road." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karangahape_Road. Accessed 2 May 2023.)

choose when you're really young. Yet for many of us, that choice or that sense of self-identification took decades to complete, took years to settle them too. It didn't take surgery and the dropping of God knows how many different chemicals, and the rearrangement of the physical body, and then the reversion, and then we go on, and on, and on. It's a tricky one because I do have relatives who are thinking about transition. I have a cousin who became a man and is a very effective male person. [chuckles] Yet knowing the background of that person, I can understand how they would never want to become a woman because a woman is a victim. There's that whole defining and understanding. It's something that I do think we need more conversation about, but I don't know. For me, the brain is still working on it. I'm still processing it. I meet people who are absolutely rapidly convinced in trans rights.

NN: Or the other way--

NTA: Then others who are totally TERF.¹⁶² [laughs] For me, my position is, I guess it's somewhat fluid, but then I have a cultural position as well as a Māori and as a ritual practitioner. There are things within my world which only biological women can do, and that is determined at birth by biological sex. There are some rituals that are unique to us, and I wouldn't like to see it going anywhere else. What's interesting is that people like the wondrous, lamented late Georgina Beyer¹⁶³ and others from her generation, her community would never dream of going there. As Māori women, trans women, they would never step over that line. They just wouldn't. Whereas I think agitating from the side, there'll be bunches of strange-looking individuals in fluffy chiffon frocks with moustaches, and bright red lipstick, and dangly earrings saying, "Babe, it's you're right." That's where I do question what I see happening out there. I really do. I just realized we've gone on for a really long time.

NN: Yes, we have. [laughs]

NTA: We can conclude.

NN: Absolutely wonderful. Thank you so much.

¹⁶² TERF refers to a member of trans-exclusionary radical feminist movement, which is a controversial form of radical feminism that only considers cis-women to be women in the feminist movement. ("TERF." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TERF> Accessed May 31, 2023.)

¹⁶³ Georgina Beyer was a politician from New Zealand. She is known for being the first known transgender mayor in the world. ("Georgina Beyer." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgina_Beyer. Accessed 2 May 2023.)