

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

SITE: NEW ZEALAND

**Transcript of Norie Ape
Interviewer: Nicky Newton**

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Norie Ape is a Samoan-born, Auckland-raised and now Wellington-based Digital Product Manager (or ‘technology explainerer’) at Te Pukenga [New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology] specifically within the Building and Construction Industry Training Organization [BCITO]. In this role, Norie works alongside cognitively diverse technology teams and connects with the people who use digital services to design, build and implement digital solutions that enable better outcomes in vocational education in Aotearoa [New Zealand] with particular focus on Māori, Pasifika, and disabled learners & employers. In March 2023, Norie attended the 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) in New York as the New Zealand Government NGO Delegate to provide high-level advice on the priority theme of “innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” and liaise with non-governmental organizations across Aotearoa. Norie has experience in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors and is passionate about increasing the number of Māori and Pasifika Women in Tech and leveraging a multi-stakeholder approach between government, civil society and private/industry to connect and collaborate to utilize technology for positive outcomes. Within New Zealand Norie is a member of P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc, National Council for Women, InternetNZ, Digital Equity Coalition Aotearoa, TechWomen NZ, United Nations Association of New Zealand & Pacific Data Sovereignty Network & Pasifika in IT.

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.

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Nicky Newton: Okay. Thank you. I'm doing that. I'm here today with Norie Ape. Norie, I just need to get a confirmation from you a verbal yes. That you give permission for this interview and the materials to be used publicly. Okay.

Norie Ape: Yes, I do.

NN: Thank you, Norie. We've talked about what the structure of the interview will be. The first big block of questions are about the background about your life. As you think about where you are today, how would you depict the journey that brought you to the point? You might want to talk about your central commitments and what your career looks like.

NA: Yes, sure. I work currently as a digital product manager, but that is not something that I've studied for. I actually study foreign policy at University. I come from a large Samoan¹ family by normal standards, not large by Samoan standards. I'm number seven out of nine children, so my family migrated, late 80s from Samoa² to New Zealand.³ I grew up in Auckland,⁴ all my schooling, including my University. I was quite lucky in that education was pretty paramount in terms of the discussion. Also, because of the size of my family, our family meetings were done in-- it's a flat structure, and that everyone position was equal outside of mom and dad. We talked in order of birth. It was quite difficult for me because I had to wait for eight other people to stop talking. Often what would-- and this has been like a real-- when I reflect on the job that I do now, which is bringing together people that work in technology and the people that need to use the technology, service, a lot of the work that I do involves, skills and strategies that I learned growing up. A lot of it is actually what I attribute to my cultural intelligence. Often when I'm speaking to Māori⁵ and Pacific⁶ communities, I would advocate that they

¹ Samoan individuals are individuals who are originally from the Samoan Islands in Polynesia. ("Samoans." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samoans>. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

² Samoa is a country located in Polynesia. It is considered an island country as it is made up of 2 large islands and many smaller islands as well. Samoa is located in the southern Pacific Ocean. ("Samoa." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samoa>. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

³ New Zealand is a country located in the Pacific Ocean. It is made up of two large islands and many smaller islands. New Zealand is considered an island country and is known for being one of the largest island countries as well. ("New Zealand." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

⁴ Auckland is a city located in New Zealand. It is known for being one of the largest cities in the country and being home to a large population of indigenous people. ("Auckland." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auckland>. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

⁵ The Māori people are the original indigenous settlers of New Zealand. They are from the Polynesian islands. ("Māori people." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_people. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

⁶ The Pacific Islanders are people who are originally from the Pacific Islands. This encompasses Oceania. ("Pacific Islander." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Islander. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

have IQ,⁷ EQ⁸ and CQ,⁹ and I attribute CQ as cultural intelligence. In my family, obviously, I'm number eight by the time I get to talk. I just end up getting to the bullet point. No, I've heard this is my contribution. I think this is blah, blah. In Pasifika cultures, you'll have that kind of flat communal structure, but then you'll have a robust debate and discussion. I don't see conflict as bad, I see it as a robust debate. That set me up really well be-- In my family, there's six boys. I work in technology, where only 23% of technology is women. Quite used to it, being in a male-dominated environment, and because of the way that my parents raised us to be open to challenge, but in a respectful way. That helped give me core skills around relationship building, negotiation, team building, stakeholder management. Because when you're number eight, you're trying to pitch to the other seven, "Please listen to my perspective." For a lot of my brothers, their opinion of equal opportunity was that-- and it's a very sibling thing, I won't hold back on roughhousing you, when we're playing sports or when we're competing when we are debating about different things. They're very supportive. Education, then having that open communication channel, because my dad was a-- His Samoan title was an orator. I think the title is called O le Tulāfale.¹⁰ It meant that I always heard like storytelling. In a lot of the work that I do now, it is literally storytelling to executives, to community members, to technologists. To say, this is the problem, this is the opportunity and the challenge, and you facilitate the discussion and say, "Right, what do we know is possible? What are the challenges that we need to overcome?" Then we come up with an option of how we kind of progress. I got into technology probably like eight, nine years ago. I was working in a government agency here in New Zealand, which is the Ministry of Social Development.¹¹ Because I had studied foreign policy, I was able to just open government policy and say, "Okay, this is what we need to do." I communicate in workshops to about 100 people a week, how to apply for stuff. "No, this is what it's saying, you just need to do these five in this order, and then this is what will happen, the next kind of stage." Because of the upbringing of like being in a very service-orientated family as well as the culture, is very servant leadership. Moving, I saw a couple of things in a project that said, how do you make-- I used to complain about the technology being difficult, and designed by somebody that has no idea of what it's like in the frontline. My

⁷ IQ stands for Intelligence quotient, which is a number that allegedly measures an individual's intelligence. ("IQ Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/IQ>. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

⁸ EQ stands for emotional intelligence quotient, which is a number that represents an individual's capability to handle emotions. ("Emotional intelligence." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_intelligence. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

⁹ CQ stands for cultural intelligence quotient, which is a number that represents an individual's ability to change and interact with other individuals from different cultures. ("Cultural intelligence." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_intelligence. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

¹⁰ *O Le Tulafale*, or *The Orator* in English, is a film from Samoa and New Zealand. It is known for being one of the first films that fully incorporated Samoan culture, language, individuals, and more. ("*The Orator* (film)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Orator_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Orator_(film)). Accessed 20 July 2023.)

¹¹ The Ministry of Social Development is a department of the New Zealand government. This department is responsible for any issues or policies related to social policies or services. ("Ministry of Social Development (New Zealand)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Social_Development_\(New_Zealand\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Social_Development_(New_Zealand)). Accessed 20 July 2023.)

manager at the time who's a Samoan lady, said, "What are you going to do about it, because you keep talking about this needs to be fixed, and actually if they just did this, this and that, and you're giving the feedback in Auckland. You need to get to Wellington¹²; that's where things happen." I went in for a secondment, and then they paired me up with a technology team. Sitting there just telling, "No, this doesn't work. Nobody uses it in that way. This is the problem. This is what we need to do." I was really embedded in working side by side with technology teams, but also working with people that write policy, working with the actual person that has to receive the service. Oftentimes, as a leader, I'll actually just pull in my technology teams or my policy colleagues to actually sit in on a meeting where the person has to use that technology, where it's problematic, where the person has been declined because the policy is written in a particular way. I'd explain to them, "This is what bad policy looks like. It's not an abstract thing that you send to a minister. This is a real person that is not getting the service that they need as a consequence." The core function of the role is to advocate on behalf of the person that's not in the room. That could be women that are using the service. It could be Pasifika populations and oftentimes, the people are really smart, they just don't know. What you don't know, you don't design, implement and build for. It's just natural, people just don't have that much time. In between that, I have really focused on-- a lot of the things I do now is to advocate for more Māori and Pasifika to get into tech, and particularly women. In New Zealand in particular, only 2.8% of the technology sector, regardless of gender, identifies as Pasifika. Whereas only 4% identify as Māori. Given that the population is I think around 17% to 19%, a tech sector should reflect the country that we have, likewise. I'm in organizations such as the Pasifika Women's Network.¹³ I'm part of the Wellington branch, where I'm the treasurer. I'm also part of the UN Aotearoa New Zealand Wellington branch.¹⁴ I actively will go out to events that are organized by other not-for-profit groups.¹⁵ I will speak about my journey to tech, and I'll explain to a lot of the people in the audience, what it is that I do, and that actually a lot of things that they take for granted, other than using different terms, are actually financially viable for them. I'll explain things like, your ability to be a strong orator is a skill. It's a skill that we pay highly for in the technology sector. A lot of it is demystifying the notion that roles in technology require that you are a software developer. I don't know how to code, but yet I run technology teams. It's trying to remind them that the things that they take for granted, like the ability to build a team,

¹² Wellington is a city located in New Zealand. It is known for being one of the largest cities and capital of the country. ("Wellington." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wellington>. Accessed 20 July 2023.)

¹³ The Pacific Women's Network is an organization that is dedicated to uplifting and promoting women from the Pacific region. ("The Pacific Women's Network." Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/PacWN/about_details. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

¹⁴ The Wellington branch of UN New Zealand is one of the larger branches in this volunteer organization. This branch is specifically known for their guest speakers present at their events. ("Our Branches." The United Nations Association of New Zealand. <https://www.unanz.org.nz/branches/>. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

¹⁵ A nonprofit organization is an organization in which the goal is not to make a profit, but to address a social issue or serve a community ("Nonprofit organization." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonprofit_organization. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

the ability to get communal agreement on things, the ability to tell a story, the ability to lead projects. Often, it's the translation of what they do in their cultural context. I'll say to them, "If you can organize an annual, white Sunday service for children that's got 30 children, you do their singing, the dancing, the uniform, the reciting of their scripture every year, you already have the skill to herd a bunch of adults." Because it's different terms, but you actually already have the fundamental skills. A lot of it is helping them push for-- when I'm in rooms where I'm-- well, most of the time I'm the only person, in the room I will advocate their perspective, but it is more to make sure that my colleagues are aware. When it comes to being in a room around Pacific or Māori, it's to give them awareness and particularly their influences because the children may want to do the change, but if their church leader, parent, or grandparent has no understanding of what that is, then they just won't push the needle. In terms of all the other work that I do, I'm a member of the Pacific Data Sovereignty Network.¹⁶ Often I will be the person that reminds the rest of the academics in the room, "You can't have academic work without somebody in the industry." Otherwise you just-- I had to explain to them, "Right now you're a data consumer." They're like, "What?" If you don't create the box that ingests the information and maintain it and set the rules, you will always receive information that is biased because a person building it has no understanding of the unique needs of Pasifika, of Māori, of women, of disabled people. They just don't. That is not something that they think about. They're given a ticket, they build it; unless they're given extra information on the ticket, they don't do well. I guess there's a consequence. All of it is I try to advocate for my colleagues, which is being an advocate for women's rights or getting-- In my case, it's about increasing the diversity of the tech pipeline, because while it's nice to give that perspective, and I'm more than happy to be that visible person. If in 20 years, we have only got 23% and yet the population is 51% female, that's not acceptable for the industry, and it's not acceptable for particularly the education sector, knowing that the benefits of technology and how we can control our economy, how we can benefit and receive it. For me, it's like you can't-- I've always given the notion of what you can see, you can be. You'll believe it if you can see somebody that looks like you, sounds like you, and is able to use examples that are reflective of the upbringing, an environment that you belong to. For a lot of women, in particular, we already feel that you've got to be 150% before you apply for a job. Often they'll hear me say, "Look, if you could adopt the audacity of a white Caucasian¹⁷ middle-class male, and channel that level of energy, you would know you only need to be maybe 60%." A lot of it is just telling them. I often get approached by a lot of women who want to move into technology, but they feel like they're not 150%. I'm like, "No. If you know how to handle a toddler 9 times out of 10, you know how to deal with your colleagues, because a toddler, does not want to, they want to go to Kindy in pajamas,

¹⁶ The Pacific Data Sovereignty Network is an organization of individuals dedicated to helping advocate for Pacific people in New Zealand. ("About Us." Pacific Data Sovereignty. <https://pacificdatasovereignty.com/about-us/>. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

¹⁷ Caucasian refers to individuals who have descended from Europe. ("Caucasian Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Caucasian>. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

even though they would be completely trashed." Likewise, if you've come from a family that's small, large, you know how to manage relationships, it's just translating all of it. Some of it is advocating for the different experiences for Pacific and Māori people in particular in the way that technology is used. The second component is also making my colleagues that are in networks that are not in technology aware of how fast the technology moves, and if they don't implement policies, standards, and push for particular things. When I was at the Commission on the Status of Women 67,¹⁸ I had to advise them that key things that we needed to keep in were indigenous¹⁹ women's perspectives. Acknowledging the knowledge and the intelligence that comes from their upbringing, their cultural norms. But it's also important that women are included in not just the legislation, but also in the design and the build, implementation, and the maintenance of any technology service because like in most cases, and especially COVID,²⁰ women are always disproportionately affected when there's an economic downturn. If they're involved in the design, build, and implementation of the maintenance and the governance of it, in its outset, it's already designed differently because you have cognitively diverse perspectives in that space. That's really the challenge is, I just note it from technology, that again it is only 23% of the sector is female. That means most of your services are designed by men, not that they're bad, they're just not aware. If they're not aware, they'll just never know. They'll just keep building what they're building.

NN: It sounds like you've got a career that's part agile management, part advocate. Yes, that's a great combination. You're the link.

NA: Quite lucky, yes. I realized when I was at CSW. I see a bunch of the policymakers and I said, "Oh, you actually need a proper technocrat."²¹ They're like, what? I was like, "Not people that are evidence-based and use data for making decisions. No, no. You actually don't have relationships with the technology giants." If you look at Google, their annual profit is more than one-third of the global South. They own more, just as one company, than your global South's annual GDP combined. "Oh," I was like, "That is not a private entity. That is a giant." It's better you build a relationship with them, just like you do state to state, state to company. They want to do better. They are not specialists in legislation and policy. They want you to help them come up with policy legislation that gives them guiding and standard. They're like, "Oh." I was like, "Is there a code of ethics

¹⁸ The Commission on the Status of Women, or CSW, is a subcommittee of the United Nations that is dedicated to uplifting women. The committee was first created in 1946. ("Commission on the Status of Women." UN Women. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

¹⁹ Indigenous people refers to people who are the first settlers of a country. ("Indigenous peoples." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_peoples. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

²⁰ COVID-19 is a viral disease that mainly affects the lungs. Symptoms of this disease are very similar to that of the cold or flu. It is especially dangerous because it can be spread very easily. ("About COVID-19." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/about-covid-19.html>. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

²¹ Technocrat refers to an individual who is an expert in their respective field. ("Technocrat Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/technocrat>. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

for AI?²²" If that is the case, what is the standard that they need to adhere to? We have privacy standards, and now they're shifting, because they have standards but nobody in tech comes in thinking, "I'm going to be an excellent policy writer." That's just not what they go in for. Oh, so they're in for money, and the only bit that stops them from making money and apply and change in the way they do it is whether or not they have to comply to something. If the policy and legislation is flexible enough and drives a particular outcome. Literally, I will get contacted by companies such as Amazon²³ and Salesforce²⁴, and Microsoft²⁵ to say, "Hey." They come to me for two parts. One part is the role that I am in, which is helping design the future digital experiences and outcomes for Te Pūkenga²⁶, which is New Zealand's largest vocational educator. Secondly, because of the advocacy work I do outside. They'll literally say, "Hey, you know actually a bunch of community groups that are doing these initiatives. We have a philanthropic arm where we're trying to educate more people and get more people into tech, but we don't know anyone." More times, I'll just say, "Actually there's a group in Auckland. They actually run events. They're funded by different arms, but my recommendation to you is please turn up and give them—Don't just turn up with your banner. Come with things like, do you have vouchers that can get people certified at no cost? Do you have tablets? I was like, "When you're talking about Māori and Pasifika, one-third of them don't have a device. The rest don't have access to broadband internet. Do you have services where it doesn't cost them to go online to use this service?" Because we use the example of COVID. I was like, you've got lots of children that had to leave school. Not enough money in the house. When you've got populations that are like, oh, if they have to decide between eating and going to school, it's a burden. A lot of it's just expensive. Yes, great. You've got heaps of money because you got heaps of money, you should actually be turning up with-- I often try to explain to them that Māori and Pasifika populations, like any relationship, it's a long relationship. You can't just turn up and leave. That's the treatment they get from central government. I'll...come closer to an election, I'll come and ask you all this information, gather the stuff, [crosstalk] write a beautiful report, and nothing. They're like, "Oh." I say, "Look, I don't have a problem telling ministers, this is not a relationship that is one and done. You must continue it. It is a long-term relationship." So again, it's different. My upbringing means that I'm not particularly concerned at challenging because I don't see it as a negative thing. I see it

²² AI stands for Artificial Intelligence. It refers to the intelligence of computers or machines. ("Artificial intelligence." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artificial_intelligence#. Accessed 21 July 2023.)

²³ Amazon is one of the largest American companies. It is known for its artificial intelligence, online shopping, and more. ("Amazon (company)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon_\(company\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon_(company)). Accessed 21 July 2023.)

²⁴ Salesforce is an American company that specializes in software, specifically cloud based software. It is one of the largest companies in the technology industry and was established in 1999. ("Salesforce." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salesforce>. Accessed 24 July 2023.)

²⁵ Microsoft is an American company that specializes in computer software. It is one of the largest companies in the software and technology industry and was established in 1975. ("Microsoft." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft>. Accessed 24 July 2023.)

²⁶ Te Pūkenga is an organization that helps individuals from different places in life learn different subjects. ("About Us." Te Pūkenga. <https://www.xn--tepkenga-szb.ac.nz/our-work/about/>. Accessed 24 July 2023.)

as-- if I know that I'm comfortable to challenge a leader, whether it's a cabinet minister or it's the deputy chief of where I work or even the chief executive, I know that my question and perspective is in reference to the people in the room who are not confident to ask the question or who just haven't thought that that was a question. Likewise, I have to remember, all those Pacific people that never get to that room. I love it. My boss loves it. He's just like, "I'm not available today." On the 27th of April, I'm at an all day, it's called Vaka Con²⁷. It's like a Pacific youth conference to bring all these technologists that work in tech, to talk about their tech journeys and to answer questions to young people, their teachers, their family and influencers to basically explain, "This is how I got into tech. Here's what it looks like. Do you have questions?" And because of their mandate and the stuff they're doing, they have a lot of the big tech companies coming there because those tech companies want diverse teams, because the Harvard²⁸ study says, "Cognitively diverse teams are 40% more innovative and effective." It comes down to when you have different upbringings, you actually problem-solve differently. It's that normal story, normally. Once you've passed that, actually your diverse perspectives and particularly if you have more women in the room, actually causes you to collaborate and come up with very innovative options, and you don't overcook things where you're no, I need this fan dangle machine when actually, "No, actually, this is all you need." I know because I've seen this in this environment and that's how it works. I'm lucky, my boss, 9 times out of 10 will just say, "Oh, that's great." He's very much pro-women. A lot of it is actually, if you have the X, if more women can see other women being leaders and they look and sound like them, but also that the allies and the men in their workplace or their family are like, "Yes," it makes such a big difference. It's sad to say that even at this day and age, I still meet young women that are in their 20s and I think, "Man, it must be better because you're in this environment." They still have the same fundamental fear of, "Oh, I'm not 150% of that job. I don't know how to do it. I'm not good enough." I'll say to them, "Hey, if your boss--" One example is a young lady, she's like, "I've got all these job offers and this one pays more." I said, "Okay." For you to be happy, you need to like the work, you need to like the team, the culture, the place that you're at, and you need to be paid well. If one of those is missing, you will not like it. At some part of it, you will get frustrated at some point. Often approached by a lot of younger women or even women that are career changers, and they're like, "How did you get in?" I say, "Look, I'm not saying it's a breeze. I'm saying that you're actually better equipped because you are female, because the social norms that we are told is bad, like your collaborative nature, in a technology space is financially rewarded, because you are very collaborative, innovative. There's no somebody beating their chest." I was like, "I especially love the mums that I work with because you talk to them and sometimes, they'll just switch that mum voice." I'm not a

²⁷ VakaCon is a technology conference aimed towards Pacific individuals to explore different kinds of technology. ("Vaka Con." eventfinda. <https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2023/vaka-con/porirua-mana>. Accessed 24 July 2023.)

²⁸ Harvard University is a private educational institution located in Massachusetts. It is known for being one of the best universities in the world. ("Harvard University." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_University. Accessed 24 July 2023.)

mother, but I know the sound. There's the tone changes. You're like, "Oh, okay." People just stop. "Oh, yes. We're going to work now." [laughter] I've actually seen that in rooms where that's happened. I've seen a lot of people I've met with. There's a-- particularly in the Māori and Pacific. If your ancestors can traverse the largest ocean in the world, I was like, "They're already rocket scientists because they looked at the stars and went, "Yes, okay, we're going to get to New Zealand. No, we're here. We're going to different parts of the islands."" I said, "That's long before the Vikings²⁹ left." That's long before Columbus³⁰ was playing Tiddlywinks³¹. That is an ancestor you have. Secondly, a lot of it is getting the imposter syndrome³² out. The second one is knowing that there's someone that they can reach out to. Secondly, I will just always highlight the challenges that Māori and Pacific and particularly women face in using technology or being aware of the opportunities in the world of work that come from knowing that there are options.

NN: You're working both ends. You're working the end user end and the developer end, which is-

NA: I'm lucky. I get to play on both sides. As a consequence, my favorite thing is when my team will say, "No, actually, it should be done like this." I was like, "Okay, cool." They're like, "What?" I was like, "If you think that that's the best option, just explain why and why you think this logic kinda applies. There's never a wrong answer. There's just the best option at that time that met the need." And all of this is just helping them understand this thing is a thing. It's not me, it's not my DNA³³. The thing that I do outside of work, that's the advocacy and mentoring, that's the stuff that I really enjoy. It happens to be that I get paid to do something very similar, but on the technology end.

NN: I think you've answered many questions [laughter] that I have already. Let's move on to the second lot of questions, which is really about what drew you to the work, but you've already talked about that. What I'm interested in in this lot is, how does the change in your work affect your life, and how does the change in

²⁹ Vikings refers to the group of individuals who were from Scandinavia and traveled by sea to other regions in Europe around the 8th century. ("Vikings." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vikings>. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

³⁰ Columbus refers to Christopher Columbus, who was explorer during the late 1450s. He is known for expanding European colonization across the Atlantic Ocean. ("Christopher Columbus." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Columbus. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

³¹ Tiddlywinks is a game in which players flick discs into a pot and attempt to stop opponents from flicking their discs into their pot. ("Tiddlywinks." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiddlywinks>. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

³² Imposter syndrome is defined as a psychological condition in which individuals don't feel like themselves and doubt their abilities. ("Impostor Syndrome." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impostor_syndrome. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

³³ DNA stand for deoxyribonucleic acid and is the material in the human body that is responsible for transferring information from one generation to the next. ("What is DNA?." MedlinePlus. <https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/understanding/basics/dna/>. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

your life affect work? Is it a two-way street or is there one direction that's stronger than the other?

NA: It's two ways. I've always been super clear with my boss and the chief digital officer who's now my DCE³⁴, which is this is stuff that I do mostly outside of work, but from time to time, I will be during work hours doing that. A lot of it is setting the expectation with-- I'm lucky in that all my employers have been supportive of it. I'm in vocational education, so it's a happy marriage of their goal is to improve learning experiences, particularly for Māori, Pacific, and disabled learners, and I always add women. My goal is to make sure the technology is the same that we often were saying when I was at the CSW is, "You're supposed to use technology for good." Nobody ever came out and said, "I'm going to design this new fan dangle widget that's going to harm people. Nobody ever goes out to intentionally do that. I guess it is a two-way thing in that you can negotiate with your employer. "Hey, I'm intending to do this." This means I'm not working that day. Most of my employers have said, "No, that's fine. You don't need to take a day off." "What you're doing is part of your core values, but also it's good for us that we have people out there that are trying to help communities to know their options, move towards it. Then if they decide, give that additional support." I think I spend more of my time connecting with others and letting them know their options. Often I get approached by embassies as to, "Oh, hey, we're thinking about rolling out this initiative in the Pacific." I'm like, I've had to educate them to say, "just so you know, it's the height of arrogance to go to a Pacific Island³⁵ and tell the Pacific Islanders that work in technology in there, how to do their job." They're like, "Oh." I said, "Just send me the brief of what you have. I'll post it into a LinkedIn³⁶ group that I'm a part of that's actually called Pasifika and Tech." They're like, "Oh, why is that?" "Because then I'll just give them your details. They'll contact you direct." When I was at the CSW⁶⁷, I met with a bunch of Pasifika women that work in tech, and we set up a Pasifika Women tech network. I said to them, "Look, my goal for you ladies is that you contribute towards policy decisions that have an effect at a global level, but also at a domestic level. Because if your governments don't know you exist, they'll keep writing their policies the same way. Secondly, all of these tech giants are constantly looking for partners to implement the changes that they want. They're committed to diversifying their pipeline, but they don't know anyone. If they don't know anyone, they'll go to the same people they've gone to all the time. Secondly, the key focus for me is that because they're in the islands,

³⁴ DCE stands for digital currency exchanger. A DCE is an individual who is switches different types of money/tender with other types for a profit. ("Digital Currency Exchanger (DCE)." Investopedia. [https://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/digital-currency-exchanger-dce.asp#:~:text=A%20digital%20currency%20exchanger%20\(DCE\)%20is%20a%20person%20or%20business,vice%20versa%2C%20for%20a%20commission](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/digital-currency-exchanger-dce.asp#:~:text=A%20digital%20currency%20exchanger%20(DCE)%20is%20a%20person%20or%20business,vice%20versa%2C%20for%20a%20commission). Accessed 26 July 2023.)

³⁵ Pacific Island refers to any island/country in the Pacific Ocean. ("Pacific Islands." Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Pacific-Islands>. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

³⁶ LinkedIn is a social media website that allows individuals to share news or updates related to their employment. ("LinkedIn." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LinkedIn>. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

so there's a couple of them from Fiji³⁷, Samoa, the Marshall Islands³⁸, New Zealand, Australia³⁹, and Papua New Guinea⁴⁰. I said, "Look, you're on the ground. Actually, it's in your best practice to benefit the women and girls that you live in, that they can see somebody local has done something." They've created a project, they've rolled it out, and it's helped them be informed, educated on what options are available to them. I just tell my boss and they're like, oh. When I came back, their requirement was that I just needed to give them a seven-minute presentation to like "Hey, how was it? What did you learn?" My main message to them was, "Hey, did you know that there's a UN tech envoy and that there's a global digital compact?" They're like, "Yeah," "And that only 8% of the respondents are from technology." "What?" I was like, "No, you are all technologists. Here's the link. Please go check it. Some of you work with pretty hard, ah, academics. You could all work together and supply feedback. Again, if all you're getting is perspectives from people in civil society⁴¹, but not someone that actually works in technology, then you miss the opportunity to be in a panel where you're joining virtually, giving feedback, and making sure that everyone that's in there having the discussion has diverse perspectives. One of the things that I pushed when I met a lot of the UN women was, "What is your position as UN women on indigenous data sovereignty?" They went, "Oh, we're just focusing on getting the political democracy set up." I was like, "Okay. I think the reason I say this is many tech companies are struggling. They don't know what it means to meet that, but they would love for you to help them with the policy because they don't know that. They don't know the Indigenous populations. You have an annual forum that has indigenous peoples." If Indigenous peoples have data sovereignty, the companies, they get to control what information is used about them. They get to protect their culture, but also they get to shape how the information is used. The tech giants finally have somebody that can give them a policy of what to do because they don't know that. Again, that is not their job. They don't write. They got to go to Google⁴² and write policy all day.

NN: [laughter] Exactly. What about you personally? Have your work practices changed as a consequence of your life changes or vice versa?

³⁷ Fiji is a country in the Pacific Ocean near the coast of New Zealand. It is made up of many islands. ("Fiji." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiji>. Accessed 26 July 2023.)

³⁸ The Marshall Islands is a country located in the Pacific Ocean. It is a part of Micronesia and is made up of over a thousand islands. ("Marshall Islands." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Islands. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

³⁹ Australia is a continent located in the southern part of the world. It consists of one large island and many other smaller islands. ("Australia (continent)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia_\(continent\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia_(continent)). Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁴⁰ Papua New Guinea is a country located in the Pacific Ocean. It is made up of one large island. It is considered one of the largest island countries in the world. ("Papua New Guinea." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papua_New_Guinea. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁴¹ A civil society is defined as a group of individuals or businesses that are separate from the government. ("Civil society." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_society. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁴² Google is a technology company that started in America. It was established in 1998 and is known for being one of the most popular and powerful technology companies in the world. ("Google." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

NA: Definitely. I think the work: one has been more exposed to different ways that technology is used. I'd say, I spend a lot more time now going to tech conferences. I'll get us to talk about what is leadership. It is often the reflection that because of-- Some of the data includes, worldwide only 5% of all tech jobs have female leaders. If you add that I'm also a Pacific Islander. I often say that I'm probably like 0.01%. Often when I'm going to these panels, I'm giving the Pacific experience, a female and tech experience, a female tech leader experience. I've found that the tech sector is hungry for different perspectives. They just don't know anyone, so they'll leverage the same people repeatedly. In terms of my job, I think being more involved in other activities, being more exposed to things like Pacific Women's Network, Pacific Data Sovereignty, Māori Data Sovereignty⁴³, and even meeting with groups that are running these initiatives, they are there on the ground. They are NGOs⁴⁴ on the ground doing the work and helping them where I can and connecting them where I can. It's made me probably a better advocate, and it's made me more vocal when I'm in work to say-- I've gone to meetings where I said, "This is great, but you've built this tool as a government agency, assuming that people can afford data to access your tool. You've assumed that people that will look at your services have money, and that innovation only occurs in the cities and not the regional parts of New Zealand, or that kids in South Auckland will never come up with an idea to run a business that is using natural products like honey, just assuming."

NN: You recently went to the CSW67. Because I think this fits in with the changes, what was your experience of being in such a big forum as that?

NA: I think overall I went in thinking that my main role was to make sure that our NGOs that were attending or connecting in virtually were actively engaged in contributing. What we found is-- I didn't really register because they said it, but I didn't really register, what they were saying was that I would be in the room negotiating, giving advice as to the use of terminology, and what kind terminology was correct, and should they further simplify the terminology. There's one example where the team were like, oh. Because they're not experts in tech or education, they have foreign policy gurus. They're very smart people, but most of them are trained in human rights, which is what the UN⁴⁵ does. It was just things like, "Oh, is computational thinking the right level when

⁴³ Māori Data Sovereignty is a group that believes that Māori information should be regulated by Māori individuals. The group supports this belief by supporting and promoting Māori individuals. ("What is Māori Data Sovereignty?" Te Mana Raraunga. <https://www.temanararaunga.maori.nz/>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁴⁴ NGO is an acronym that stands for non-governmental organization. An NGO operates separately from any government and usually aims to help solve a problem in the world. ("What is an NGO?" NGOSource. <https://www.ngosource.org/what-is-an-ngo#:~:text=NGO%20stands%20for%20non%2Dgovernmental,all%20parts%20of%20the%20world..> Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁴⁵ UN stands for the United Nations. The United Nations is an organization that consists of many countries around the world. All countries part of this organization are dedicated to helping solve problems that afflict many countries. ("About Us." United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

it comes to the way of educating women and girls?" I said, "Yes." They're like, "Oh. What does it mean?" I said, "It just means complex problem-solving and chunking up problems into bite-sized steps to achieve the overarching goal." They're like, "Oh, should we write that?" I said, "No. If you further distill it, it loses the academic rigor that came with the term of computational thinking." I was like, "You're in a room with 186 other country delegates⁴⁶. There are key words that we must hold the line on. You will be trading different terms." Some of the key terms, I was really happy that they held the line on, was in reference to things such as Indigenous women and girls and their rights. Also, in regards to one of the key things I was pushing for, which they're grateful that they kept in was around that technology services were accessible, usable, that the connectivity issues weren't problematic, but also that they were affordable because it's pointless if none of it's affordable. As I remind them, "Hey, in parts of Africa, they literally trade Databricks⁴⁷, as in if you like a top-up⁴⁸, they're trading in top-ups to get food." It was just like, oh, actually, and they have connectivity issues where really remote parts of Africa, but even in the Pacific, there's connectivity issues where the cables aren't that great. It was interesting meeting other groups and their request was, "Hey, Norie, as somebody that works in tech, what's your opinion on Starlink⁴⁹?" Which is, "Oh, it's Elon Musk⁵⁰." We have to weigh up the issue. There's already enough junk in the sky in terms of satellites. That's an existing set of stuff flying around. Also, we need to consider when will a new, undersea cable be put in to improve the connectivity of digital services in the islands. Or does the government secure a service that gives you-- It might be more expensive for the government, but they'll shoulder most of the cost-- and then you'll have good access and satellite. These are the decisions that government agencies need to decide, but it's government's job to actually consider what is the infrastructure required. The difference between digital and is that our infrastructure needs to be done. It's just like the roads. If you don't build the motorways or the roads, if you don't build the digital one, it only goes so far. Even in New Zealand, we have sections where the connectivity is rubbish. That's why when we had that cyclone up in

⁴⁶ A country delegate is an individual who represents said country in other countries/organizations or in international settings. ("Delegate (American politics)." Wikipedia.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delegate_\(American_politics\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delegate_(American_politics)). Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁴⁷ Databricks is a company that developed computer software for programming and data storage. It is mainly used for data science. ("Databricks." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Databricks>. Accessed 9 August 2023.)

⁴⁸ A top-up is when an individual adds more money to a store credit, for example. In this instance, individuals are adding more money to stocks to initiate a trade. ("Top-ups definition." Capital.com. <https://capital.com/top-ups-definition#:~:text=What%20are%20top%20Dups%3F.facilitate%20a%20merger%20or%20acquisition>. Accessed 9 August 2023.)

⁴⁹ Starlink is a satellite controlled by SpaceX. The satellite helps provide internet connection to many countries. ("Starlink." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starlink>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁵⁰ Elon Musk is a businessman. He is known for owning, founding, and investing in a variety of companies that are very well-known such as Tesla, Twitter, SpaceX, and more. These companies have made him one of the richest people in the world. ("Elon Musk." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon_Musk. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

Bay of Plenty region⁵¹, where a couple of the Iwi⁵² members donated money so that they could buy a bunch of Starlink modems⁵³ just to connect because there was no internet access whatsoever because all the cables were broken. The actual experience was fantastic. Some of the days were pretty long. The last week, I think, we had 2:00, 3:00 AM finishes, and then start at 10:00 AM. The opportunity to meet with other women and government agencies that were doing things was fantastic. I was particularly amazed by not just the women that came from New Zealand to talk about their challenges and how they were finding technology was working or wasn't working for them, was also hearing about how much the other states or NGOs were doing was so little. It was a good reminder, actually got a lot of infrastructure in New Zealand, but some of the groups that I met before going, their request was, "We're struggling to figure out how to do this," and I actually just said to them, "You do know that companies like Salesforce, Microsoft, actually have a philanthropic arm where they will give time, money, and resources to not-for-profits that have a shared value or outcome that they're trying to achieve." Anything that's about empowering women or giving them options to be on a service that helps them be safe is always a good thing. They're never going to say no to that. They will just try to figure out: how do they help you? They literally have a philanthropic arm per tech giant to figure this out. Even the educational institutes will have a team that will come-- like we had the flooding, and one of my directors while I was in New York⁵⁴ was like, "Hey, Norie Is it okay if I talk to your team about how we can figure the solution out?" I said, "You don't need my permission." Technologists are fundamentally problem solvers. You've got a real problem, which is you want to help all these learners that are affected. Just ping them, have the session, you have my full support. I just won't be able to reply in time, so it's better you just approach and direct, go ahead. I've already pinged them to say, "You'll get a phone call, make the move."

NN: You were explaining to me before we started recording about-- and part of it being the person, being in the room, being included in the room at the conference. Can you reiterate that again, your cultural background came to the fore with your experience, correct? So what you were used to doing was not quite how it was set up there, so just can you elaborate?

⁵¹ The Bay of Plenty region is an area of New Zealand around the Bay of Plenty. This region is known for being one of the more populated regions of the country. ("Bay of Plenty Region." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bay_of_Plenty_Region. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁵² Iwi is a Māori word that usually means tribe, and signifies the "largest social units in New Zealand Māori society". In New Zealand, Iwi are able to exercise political power over the management of land and compensation for treaty-guaranteed rights that have been deprived. ("Iwi." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iwi>. Accessed 10 June 2024.)

⁵³ A modem is a technological device that changes the type of signal from one device so another device can receive it. ("Modem Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/modem>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁵⁴ New York is a city located in the state of New York. It is known for being one of the largest cities in the United States. ("New York City." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

NA: Oh, yes. Sure. Obviously, I think one of the challenges was having to learn rapidly the structure and format of how things in the UN are done. It was great being in the room in terms of the negotiation and having the discussion of, "Well, actually this doesn't make sense in terms of the way that you're wording it," and giving advice to the New Zealand delegates as to how things needed to be worded or structured in a particular way, and whether or not it was a particular policy that we wanted to be quite firm on. Some of it was also helping the UN, the New Zealand delegates understand the other Pacific States, like Australia. It was actually to help them understand some of the cultural norms and the Pacific Islands as to like "sometimes they say this and then they say, no." I said, "Oh, because there are social norms that you have in the Pacific Islands that you're not aware of because you're not a Pacific Islander." They're like "oh." I said "Do they ask you about like, "How's your mom and dad or your children," because they know you've got parents, they know you've got children." They're like, oh, okay, so they're like, no. I said, "Yes, that's a social norm and Pacific Cultures or Māori, Pacific, how's your family and where are you from?" When you give your pepeha⁵⁵ and you're telling them, "My mum and dad, this is the mountain, this is the river, this is where I'm from," they actually don't know you. They know you as "delegate from New Zealand," they don't know you. The relationship has to be much more mature because after that, if it's not to that level, it's a transactional relationship, and so you want to go down to the layer of, "We also just happen to be policy people, but we are fundamentally humans."

NN: This gets back to the long relationship thing [crosstalk.] At all levels, there's this long relationship.

NA: Yes. A lot of the stuff that when you're in there, there are like some pretty established relationships at the state to the state level. The UK⁵⁶ and the US were side by side, the entire negotiation, whereas the African bloc separate; the Pacific Islanders - which I know why they do it. They would always say it was 18 states, and it's a reminder that there are 18 states. It's not one homogenous group. There are 18 different states there and they have an equal vote. They've decided as a group, the African bloc is a large state. Again, because they are from traditionally developing states, they have to use the notion that I am this population, I represent these groups, and therefore my voting bloc has more-- Like I knew conceptually because of my studies in foreign policy that that's how you would play it at that state, and what was interesting was being in the room. The last day of negotiations didn't finish till 4:30 in the morning, on a Saturday.

NN: Whoa!

⁵⁵ Pepeha is a Māori term that is used to describe a specific manner in which an individual can introduce themselves. It describes where an individual is from and who they are. ("Pepeha." Tākai. <https://www.takai.nz/find-resources/articles/pepeha/>. Accessed 9 August 2023.)

⁵⁶ UK stands for the United Kingdom, which is a country in Europe. It is made up of many cities and islands such as London, Ireland, and more. ("United Kingdom." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

NA: They had already had in that week from Monday, 2:00 AM finished, 3:00 AM, 4:00 AM, 4:30, and then Friday. Again, it came down to wording, relationships, so you had a lot of tit-for-tat, but a lot of the reflection is when you look at countries like Russia⁵⁷, they've never had a female delegate because that's the hierarchy of that country. One of the key message-- I did challenge a lot of the delegates in there. I said, "My concern for the UN is not the work that you do, is that you have never had a female secretary-general, and yet the population is 51% female." I said, "You even had the opportunity with multiple female candidates, and you still chose the male." They said, "It's political." I said, "I understand." What do we do to help the women that are going, to be better supported, because I say you can do all this stuff but the reality-- I'm getting used to have lots of very strong allies in terms of the men that are in the UN, but when it comes at the advocacy level and that meshing of civil society with industry and government, my overarching--I did get told some people get disheartened by going, because of the lack of progress, and what I highlighted to as well, the reason they chose technology is if you have the right people in the room, the technology will move very fast to achieve the outcomes that you need. I ended up showing a third of the room how to use – they were yammering on about AI effects and big data - and I said, "Oh, any of you heard of ChatGPT⁵⁸?" They're like, "No." "These are all policy people, representatives of states." They're like, "What do you mean?" I said, "Okay." I just show up my phone. I go, "All right. When you were doing these wordings, all I did was just copy, paste in the end, write rephrase simple English." I was like, "It does all of that for you." "Oh, but it's going to replace us." I said "No. You keep talking about technology causing job losses. It's a particular job that's going to be removed. It doesn't mean that there won't be hundreds of millions of new jobs created." They're like worldwide in technology, we have a hundred million jobs unfilled.

NN: Wow.

NA: I said, "That's current." That's not a forecast, that is current. You keep talking about all these job losses, but we don't have in our education systems, it's not-- Even in New Zealand, how does our education system train our teachers to help our kids to be innovative, and why do kids need to go uni, when they could go from uni, do some micro-credentials, talk to an employer, work and learn, or why don't we educate women and girls, and boys as well, to be entrepreneurial? "The core skills," I said. "You actually have to upend the structure of our education and how we train our teachers because you're teaching them to be younger people, to be problem solvers. You're teaching them to be risk-takers." Those are not things that we've ever structurally put into our how-to-

⁵⁷ Russia is a country located on the continents on Europe and Asia. It is known for being one of the largest countries in the world. ("Russia." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁵⁸ ChatGPT is a type of artificial intelligence that can converse with individuals. There is a lot of controversy surrounding this application as it is very advanced and has the potential to rival the intelligence of humans. ("ChatGPT." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ChatGPT>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

teach teachers. They're like, "Oh, okay, so you can do it." The key, which I found here, which is really good when I actually met with people from Meta⁵⁹ and Google, and Salesforce-- I only deal with the New Zealand lot. I was like, "Oh, it's quite nice meeting the US⁶⁰ lot." What was fundamental in that kind of discussion all the way throughout is, I kept pushing while I was there, was we need to have a multi-stakeholder approach. You cannot do the change you are aiming for, and talked about the Sustainable Development Goals⁶¹ by 2030. I said, "We're 2023, you got seven years." There's a couple of things. Highlight what is actually happening. The good stuff, what's really good. We know the bad stuff, keep doing that. What's working? Who are the NGOs that don't have the infrastructure, that don't have the money, that don't have the people? Change your funding and policies around projects that have women, that purposely, proactively promote services that women are designing, leading for their own businesses. Secondly that the education is changed so that all children are taught that better outcomes, improve everyone, fix things for everyone. Then obviously, if you have that multi-stakeholder approach, it is sustainable, because the people at the table have very different needs. A tech giant's going to think about, how do I make a profit? How do I make sure I'm compliant, and how can I make sure that all the social goals that we have as an organization to use tech for good are being met? Civil society, they know what the ground looks like. They are dealing with bad policy, good policy. You have government. Yes, their fundamental job is to build infrastructure and make it easier, make the legislation not really tight. Sometimes I have to tell policy writers, "No, you're too prescriptive. You should be specifying the outcome of the legislation and the policy. Not that you must use this widget in this way." Because in New Zealand, we've literally had instances in the past where policy writers have said, "This type of information can only be exchanged between this government department, this government department, using a floppy disk."

NN: No.

NA: That policy was still in place until 2016.

NN: Oh, good grief.

NA: Go to policy people, don't say the way that it happens, say what is the problem, and what is the outcome and change that you want technology to facilitate or enable; do not say must be using this tool. I was like, "Just because we put money in it doesn't mean

⁵⁹ Meta is an American company that owns many social media platforms. It is known for being one of the largest companies in the country to be traded publicly. ("Meta Platforms." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meta_Platforms. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁶⁰ The US, or the United States, is a country located in Northern America. It is made up of 50 states and many other territories. It is known for being one of the largest countries in the world. ("United States." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁶¹ The Sustainable Developmental Goals are a set of 17 goals set by the United Nations that the organization hopes to accomplish around the world. These goals address issues such as gender equality, climate change, and more. ("The 17 Goals." United Nations. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

that tool is the be-all and end-all like this. It's got nothing to do with you. It's just lines of code."

NN: I'm going to bring you back now to feminism. Can you tell us how you understand the term feminism and what has it meant for your work?

NA: I've always struggled, because I know that sometimes people have the notion of the bra-burning. I don't have a problem with that. I just think that's a waste of bras mostly. Like, "Oh, damn." Like, "What a waste of a bra." I guess I've been quite privileged in that I have the same group of girlfriends that I've known since I was 13, and I'm 40 this year. One of the key things that we have reflected on is: for me, feminism is the relationships that I have with women. I've always attributed it to the notion of empowering women. I always assume that you will achieve gender equality when women are empowered. When they know what they have, they know where they can go to, or if-- they know that it's okay to be angry that day, or they have a group of friends that are their core circle. I have a group of six or seven women I've known since I was 13. We talk about everything. We do not work in the same sectors. One's a personal trainer, another one runs out of a government agency, is the manager of a multimillion-dollar fund. They're so different, it's like, "Oh." One's an occupational therapist. It's always been for me, feminism is about empowering women. If they don't know what they can do or they don't know they can reach out to someone, have a virtual coffee in person, or whatever, or a phone chat, they really don't know. I've benefited from being surrounded by other women that have empowered me. I've had fantastic female managers and my male managers have been the type that are like, "You go there, you do it." They talk about, how you talk about your female colleagues when they're not in the room versus when they're in the room. All of that is what I see as feminism should be about empowering women. We do it, but sometimes we get caught up in our own issues, and we forget, "Oh actually this is really cool." Sometimes I'll make comments of, "Oh." My friends are like - oh, we went to a dinner before I left. They're like, "This is so amazing. You've got this opportunity." I was like, "Oh, that's okay." It's just sometimes you need your group of friends or other women that you know, they are, "Oh my God, this is amazing," blah blah. Because you're just like, "Oh yes, I'm doing it. Oh yes, cool, cool." It's a natural thing. It might be because New Zealand, but also being a Pasifika woman is the, "Oh no, I just do my job." Instead of like, "Oh, that's freaking amazing." I do it naturally to other people, but when it's for myself it's like, "Oh, that's all right."

NN: Yes, that self-effacing thing.

NA: It's hard to learn how to go – and that's been the biggest lesson I've had, is in terms of--I often get asked, "How are you so confident?" I say, "Honestly, I've got an amazing group of women and men that I work with that are like, "Yeah, you can do it. You're amazing.'" The hardest lesson I've ever had to learn was actually to tell myself and believe it: "Oh, this is great. You did this all. Yes, this is great" Now it's a lot of, it's why I said, "Oh no, that's because if you don't believe it yourself, it'll never kick in." People

want to help you, people want to connect, but if you don't believe it yourself-- I always have to remind myself of I am in an incredible place of privilege, in a great job, great career, great network. The advocacy work that I do is part and parcel of growing up in a Pasifika culture, which is servant leadership. My way of serving is making people aware of, "Hey, did you know this scholarship is available? Did you know these people are hiring? Did you know, here's a way that you can connect?" Happy to mentor you, happy to chat, coffee in person, virtually or whatever. For me it helps me--I think I said because of the upbringing. I was explaining to my friend this morning, "Oh, people that do some type of service are generally happier." Like, "Really?" I was like, "Yeah." You can work, but working doesn't allow you to-- unless you're in a particular job, it doesn't allow you to empower other people. It doesn't allow you to connect and build a different experience. I want my nieces and great-nieces or whatever to have much better. It should be natural for them to consider technology if they want to, or any type of job.

NN: Well, you do seem pretty amazing to me. Give yourself--

NA: Oh, thank you. Thank you.

NN: You seem really [crosstalk]. It seems like you really love what you're doing.

NA: Oh yeah, totally.

NN: I don't know if you ever sleep because it seems like you're always doing--

NA: Yes, I do sleep. I think it was twice my team, "How do you do it?" I'd say, "Oh, I really like it." When you like it, you don't notice the time. You're energized by the work you're doing, and the outcomes that you are enabling.

NN: Oh, nice. Thank you. The next question, actually, the next block of questions is about the relationship between scholarship and activism. Feminist scholarship and activism. What's your take on that? You've talked a little bit about the academics and then policy people and the bits in between, the links in between. Can you elaborate what's your idea of that?

NA: I like the activism part in that you do need to know. One of the struggles I probably have with the academic side is it proposes most times a utopia. It.... One of the things that I often will kind of struggle with is more often when I'm reading academic texts. It's a descriptor of what's happening. This is what's happened. This is what is happening. There's no proposal or pilot that says: actually, we note that this has worked here. Here's something we've tried in our local environment.

NN: Right. What's the application? Yes.

NA: Yes. That's purely because often I'm dealing with business colleagues that have great ideas, and my job is to talk to them and make it a reality. Often, I can tell that the

academic has not potentially talked to a person that would have to implement it. Because the solutions are like, well, and it'll automatically happen. Automatic requires logic, and intense, robust discussions on processes end to end. It's not to say that they can't, it's just that maybe in their academic training, they don't get told to go talk to industry. They don't get told to test it with the community. Whereas because all of my training in technology, and the work that I've done has been largely in the public sector or not-for-profit, it is my first instinct to go and check: does the extra person at the end want this? Do they care about it? If that's the case, my job is fundamentally to make sure they're included every which way in the step. Like is this right? Is this right? Is this right? Because the cost of building it in isolation is very expensive.

NN: If they don't want it, if it's not useful, then.

NA: You could burn millions, and building something that's like nobody wants versus actually is this okay, is that enough? Okay, that's fine. In terms of the activism, I loved meeting the activists that I did when I was in New York. One of the challenges that I had a discussion with them was: technology in itself is not evil. You cannot demonize something that is an inanimate object. Because the person designing it, building it, they may have biases. That's definite; everyone has bias. Often when I meet with activists it's more of: how can I support you and connect you to others. Often they're burning both into the wick trying to build the solution and be the activist. Actually, you need to be the face and the voice, because you can get people together. You can tell the story quite well. But if you do it so that other people that work in academia, in technology kind of now, have a shared vision, they will give their time and be unpaid. Or if you get funding to pay their time. It's more of just like: how do they-- I think they both have good points. The challenge, I think, is often in academic or vocational education. They'll do like pseudo-problems, but made-up problems that a student will have to resolve; as opposed to getting a real problem from a real human that's attached to that problem and working with them to figure out what could work. The actual use cases in the academic sense should be-- If you spent two, three years doing these trials: how did it work? How does it get implemented, and how does it look like in reality? Because people-- if it's really something innovative or has fantastic outcomes--people want to get behind you straightaway. They'll give you funding, they'll give you people. The same with, all of that is that I love in New Zealand that we have such an open flat society where people can. That they have the privilege to freely demonstrate or do things that fix issues. More often than not I'm always conscious that they're working. It's a voluntary kind of role. It's an infrastructure thing. You love the work you're doing but I can't really afford for you to be burning both ends. Kind of build the solution while trying to lead the movement because they're two different things.

NN: Right, yes.

NA: I worry because of that. It's probably because I often will just connect. I can't help you in this sense, but I can connect you with someone that's like basically bread and

butter. They love that, and they're going to be a person that is looking for an opportunity to give back. Most people are, they just don't know who's doing something, and how they can contribute towards resolving an issue that is-- I say look, when I think of all the young people nowadays, they want to do work that has a long-lasting impact and it's a positive one. They want to be tied to something that has positive change.

NN: Boy, that's inspiring. Can I ask you: do you identify as a feminist?

NA: Yes.

NN: Okay.

NA: Although most of the time I try--sometimes it might just be because I have like six brothers. Sometimes I'll use terms, and I use it as a joke but it's more to put my colleagues at ease, or I'll just tease them. Sometimes I'd say to my colleagues, the reason we're behind this is because this room is full of white men that are middle-aged. They say, "What?" I say, "No look at you. Like I'm the brown person in this room and I'm the female." It's like, "Guys let's just admit that there's no diversity in this room and the reason we haven't succeeded is that lack of diversity." I don't have--because of my six brothers, I don't have a problem calling out men. Sometimes I should remind myself not to be so mean but it's just because like in Samoan culture-- I had to explain even to my boss, I say to him, "Just so you know, in island culture, if I'm polite to you I'm using all of my cultural societal training to be polite. Actually, in Pacific culture, if we tease you and roast you, that means we have a relationship." They go, "Oh." I say, "Yeah, if we eat together or if we're eating together, we chat or if I tease you about things that means I know enough about you to tease you." So I tease them all the time about being an Apple fanboy. I say, "Look, if I didn't like you, it'd be very transactional; Oh, good morning, goodbye." It's different. Whereas now I'm like, "why do you support the Crusaders⁶²? That's a rubbish rugby⁶³ team. It's the Auckland Blues.⁶⁴" It's that kind of-- I'll say those things to remind my colleagues. I often say to them, "I don't hate you. I'm just expressing my opinion. This might be an opinion you've never heard, but actually, it's reality. This room is full of too many men that are middle class on \$200,000 per annum. When was the last time you talked to a person that was struggling to attend school?" All right. It's like, yes.

⁶² The Crusaders are a rugby team in New Zealand. They are considered one of the more successful teams as they have many championship titles. ("Crusaders (rugby union)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crusaders_\(rugby_union\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crusaders_(rugby_union)). Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁶³ Rugby is a professional sport that consists of two teams. The goal of each team is to keep contact of a ball and make it to the other end of the field to score a point while the other team attempts to block them in any way possible. ("Rugby union." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rugby_union. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁶⁴ The Auckland Blues are a rugby team from Auckland, New Zealand. They are known for being a successful rugby team as they have made it to the finals many times before. ("Blues (Super Rugby)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blues_\(Super_Rugby\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blues_(Super_Rugby)). Accessed 27 July 2023.)

NN: Yes, fair enough. OK. Let's talk about-- This is a big question, this one. What is your analysis, evaluation, and expectation of the development of feminism in New Zealand?

NA: I'm excited by the young people.

NN: Oh, neat.

NA: Yeah. Other than that, they use technology, social media, and their initiatives to be very vocal, visible examples of feminism. I think of Alexia⁶⁵. I never say her name wrong, as she runs--she won a Queen's Award⁶⁶ for running an initiative about bringing more young women into STEM⁶⁷.

NN: Oh, neat.

NA: She's fantastic in that she talks about her parents, her upbringing. She's connecting all these young girls to opportunities, networks, and facilitating that discussion. She's very composed. But then you also have the young women that were leading the strike against climate change⁶⁸.

NN: Right, yes.

NA: They use technology for what it's for: to bring people together to focus on a particular level of change. When I think of-- in technology there's two ladies Julia⁶⁹ and

⁶⁵ Alexia Hilbertidou was given a Queen's Young Leaders Award in 2018 for her organization, GirlBoss NZ, which encourages New Zealand women to pursue STEM careers. ("Alexia Hilbertidou." The Queen's Young Leaders. <https://www.queensyoungleaders.com/awardee/alexia-hilbertidou/>. Accessed 10 June 2024.)

⁶⁶ Previously referred to as the Queen's Award, the King's Award is given to organizations of individuals known for their volunteer service. It is the highest reward an individual can receive for their service. ("The King's Award for Voluntary Service." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_King%27s_Award_for_Voluntary_Service#:~:text=The%20King's%20Award%20for%20Voluntary%20Service%2C%20previously%20known%20as%20The.the%20coronati on%20of%20Elizabeth%20II. Accessed 9 August 2023.)

⁶⁷ STEM is an acronym that stands for science, technology, engineering, and math. This acronym is usually used to refer to an educational field or career. ("Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science,_technology,_engineering,_and_mathematics. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁶⁸ Climate change is defined as differences in the environment, such as temperature and sea level, over a long period of time. Such differences can be due to nature itself or by human activity, like burning fossil fuels. ("What Is Climate Change?." United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/what-is-climate-change>. Accessed 9 August 2023.)

⁶⁹ Julia Arnott-Neenee is one of the founders of Fibre Fale and is interested in looking at how technology can help people. Julia studied at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. ("Julia Arnott-Neenee." LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/julia-arnott-neenee/?originalSubdomain=nz>. Accessed 9 August 2023.)

Eteroa⁷⁰ who run Fibre Fale⁷¹. They launched last year and their whole focus is on running initiatives to increase Māori Pasifika and tech. I'm talking in a panel that they're running on the 27th. Julia used to work in London⁷², came back home, she wanted to make a difference back home. Eteroa was just fabulous, very proud to be from Porirua⁷³. You have lots of younger women, and I'm approached by women that are changing careers as well. I think that the future of feminism is pretty good in New Zealand. I do think it'd be nice if they had more exposure for boys and girls when they're in primary or intermediate. Because while it's going better than what it was when I was growing up, that's positive. The rest is more about normalizing it, that feminism isn't a, I thought I got older workmates in the past who'd be like, "Oh, it's bra burning." I'm like, "No, it's literally about being paid the same wage, the same salary." I was like, "Oh, what's rocket science⁷⁴ about being paid the same, when you do the same job?" It's like, "Oh, what's rocket science about recognizing that there is a gender imbalance when it comes to work at home?" Unpaid labor, it's like, oh. There's nothing evil about it. It's literally equality, what we fundamentally are supposed to be doing. I have loved to see the change in terms of what I can see is a focus on empowerment. I do probably more so for New Zealanders to better connect with the women that are doing the work across the Pacific, because they don't have as much infrastructure. In particular, I'll tell the New Zealand government, you can't go into other countries and tell them how to suck an egg⁷⁵ and do work. That's how other states got in, because they just came in with money and said, do what you want. If there are lessons that we can take from our feminism movement in New Zealand, to make it long-lasting, one, we need to start younger with younger people. Two, I know I always say this with my technology colleagues: people in tech are rubbish at marketing what you can do in tech and what your career pathways are. I always tell Pacific groups, "Hey, if you did a development course or a data analyst course, every 6 to 12 months, within 18 months, you will have recovered the cost to do the training." They're like, "What?" I'm like, "Yeah because most data analysts start at 60,000 for most Pacific populations where mom and dad is only on 40, 45,000." To have a child starting at 60 is massive. It's just, you don't need to work hard. You can use things for good. Personally, I'm excited in terms of-- I think a lot of the younger ones do

⁷⁰ Eteroa Lafaele is a co-founder of Fibre Fale. Eteroa studied at the Auckland University of Technology and previously worked as a software engineer. ("Nu'uali'i Eteroa Lafaele." LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/eteroa/?originalSubdomain=nz>. Accessed 9 August 2023.)

⁷¹ Fibre Fale is a group of many individuals who are dedicated to help promote Pacific people in the field of technology. ("Who we are." Fibre Fale. <https://www.fibrefale.com/>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁷² London is a city located in the country of England. It is one of the larger cities in this country and the world. ("London." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁷³ Porirua is a suburb located in New Zealand, and is often where Māori and Pasifika people live. It is part of the Wellington region in New Zealand and makes is one of the larger cities in the region. ("Porirua." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porirua>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁷⁴ 'Rocket science' is an idiomatic phrase that usually indicates that a topic or concept is easy to understand. ("Rocket science." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocket_science. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁷⁵ 'tell how to suck an egg' is an idiomatic phrase that refers to an individual explaining a topic or concept to another person that is already familiar with said topic or concept. ("Teaching grandmother to suck eggs." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teaching_grandmother_to_suck_eggs. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

inspire women that are in their 20s and above. I love watching how poised and also just how open they are. I do think that women, like feminism in New Zealand, need to be probably a bit more open about the challenges of being a female leader. It's fine if you got a great network of women that you talk to. But if you're by yourself, often leadership is lonely anyway. Not having an established network of other women that you meet with on a consistent, regular basis or other networks like your friends, that's the difference between a longer lasting impact of what feminism is in New Zealand than it is thinking I need this trailblazer⁷⁶. We got so many trailblazers in New Zealand. Sometimes we just forget that we don't play that roller deck history for our kids. One of my friends bought a game that was like, it's like Guess Who, but it was like Women in Science. I was like, I don't know who half these ladies were. Holy crap. It was like, man, that's really cool. That's a fun way to teach kids, Women in Science, different things. It should be the same: I think if we can make sure going forward that there's something that talks about women role models in New Zealand now versus the ones that have come before us. It carries on that notion of: oh, you're continuing the work; it's just the baton being passed to the next person. You're guided, you have someone that's been there, that's in there and can give you some feedback as to how to handle the stuff. Secondly, those trailblazers did a lot of things. I often forget; I was in New York and people were like, "Oh, why do you have such strong female representation? Everyone loves Jacinda."⁷⁷ I said, "I love Jacinda too." It was tough watching her. I was like, "Yes, she's great." Man, it's tough being that role and being a mother. We're full of numpties. It's like, yes, absolute numpties.

NN: That was awful.

NA: It's tough being in that role. I think it was really good to see how open she was, even when she was giving her final interview to John Campbell.⁷⁸ I love John Campbell, so that was great. Like giving that feedback as to it's okay to be vulnerable. A lot of leaders think, "Oh, I've got to be a female. I've got to be a trailblazer. I've got to be tough as hell." No, actually, you can be just as vulnerable and effective.

NN: You can be just a person, yes.

NA: Yes. I think a lot of it is like, which I was referencing earlier, technology people are crap at marketing what we do. We have a lot of really innovative trailblazers that started this stuff in New Zealand, but also the new ones. It's more about giving

⁷⁶ A trailblazer is defined as an individual who forges a path ahead in a specific field for other people to follow. ("Trailblazer Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/trailblazer>. Accessed 27 July 2023.)

⁷⁷ Jacinda is a politician from New Zealand who previously served as the prime minister of the country from 2017-2023. ("Jacinda Ardern." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinda_Ardern. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁷⁸ John Campbell is a journalist from New Zealand. He started his career in 2015 as a rugby commentator and now reports at Television New Zealand. ("John Campbell (broadcaster)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Campbell_\(broadcaster\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Campbell_(broadcaster)). Accessed 4 August 2023.)

awareness of what they do, how they do it. Not many women in New Zealand know that there's a Ministry for Women.⁷⁹

NN: Yeah, that was new since when I've been away for 22 years. I came back and it was like, "Oh, there's a Ministry for Women. I had no idea."

NA: The Minister for Women⁸⁰ is also the Minister for Education.⁸¹ Used to me--Minister Jan Tinetti⁸² used to be a primary principal in Tauranga⁸³. I think a low decile school. When you see her talk, she's very like, listen to this. Do that. You can definitely see the principal coming out. I was talking to the ladies from the Ministry of Women, I said, Oh, it's really good when your chief executive⁸⁴ is the embodiment of what you want the chief executive to be. Also that your minister is invested and wants to do this, knows the impact of education, but also the challenges that women face. I was like, Oh. I said, because a lot of people when I was there, they're like, Oh, New Zealand's got a really good history of Governor Generals⁸⁵ and Prime Ministers,⁸⁶ and was the first place to give women the vote and say, Oh, yes, I'm not saying that we're bad. We must always be looking at ourselves to see, What can I do that's slightly better, that's slightly different?

NN: Keep moving forward.

NA: I think if we can highlight the ones that are doing great work now, make sure that they get the support that they need, because it can be tough in terms of those roles. If

⁷⁹ The Ministry for Women is a New Zealand department that is responsible for guiding the government with any issue that affects women. ("Ministry for Women." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_for_Women. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸⁰ The Minister for Women is a position in the New Zealand government that is responsible for protecting and promoting women's rights. ("Minister for Women (New Zealand)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minister_for_Women_\(New_Zealand\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minister_for_Women_(New_Zealand)). Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸¹ The Minister of Education is a position in the New Zealand government that is responsible for education in the country. ("Minister of Education (New Zealand)." [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minister_of_Education_\(New_Zealand\)#:~:text=Incumbent,Jan%20Tinetti&text=The%20present%20Minister%20is%20Jan,member%20of%20the%20Labour%20Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minister_of_Education_(New_Zealand)#:~:text=Incumbent,Jan%20Tinetti&text=The%20present%20Minister%20is%20Jan,member%20of%20the%20Labour%20Party). Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸² Jan Tinetti is a politician in New Zealand government. She is the Minister of Education, Minister for Child Poverty Reduction, and Minister for Women. ("Jan Tinetti." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Tinetti. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸³ Tauranga is a city in New Zealand. It is located on the coast of the Bay of Plenty and is known for being one of the most populated cities in the region. ("Tauranga." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tauranga>. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸⁴ The chief executive officer, or CEO, is an officer of an organization or company that is responsible for managing the organization or company. ("Chief executive officer." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_executive_officer. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸⁵ A governor general is an individual who has a strong history of civil service. Governor generals often hold positions representing monarchs within a colony. ("Governor-general." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor-general#:~:text=A%20governor%2Dgeneral%20is%20usually,news%20media%20to%20the%20office>. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸⁶ A prime minister is a head of the government in country that follows a parliament system. ("Prime minister." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_minister#:~:text=A%20prime%20minister%2C%20premier%20or,parliamentary%20or%20semi%2Dpresidential%20system. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

you have the right support network of friends, family, and colleagues, you are fine. If you don't-- I've got friends who had to leave visible high-level roles because they made comments about the systemic racism in the organization, and then they proceeded to get threats on their life. We want all these dynamic, innovative leaders, but if we're doing nothing to support them when times get rough, you were never really protecting them to start with. The good thing is that the organization they called out has subsequently done its own internal review and admitted that there was systemic racism in the way the organization was set, and they've made steps to go. I said, "Look, had those two ladies not gone through that, this organization would never have gone through the exercise of bringing in an external person, accepting and understanding that the structure that it was set up with was literally built in the '90s by a bunch of white guys." They've had the opportunity to reflect and look at it, and now they're making conscious steps. They have a problem, they've admitted it, they're working towards it, and they're committed to publicly sharing what they are learning about themselves and the organization as a result. Unfortunately, it took that, and it happened. I see her every time I go visit, I'm like, "Hey, how are you going?" She's like, "It was rubbish when it was there, but it's been really good to see the change."

NN: Good. You've talked a little bit about the NGO, the conference that you just went to in New York, and that. Do you have other connections or connections with other activists and scholars in organizations in other countries? Do you have ongoing connections with them?

NA: Yeah. When I was there, I was able to connect with a couple of Canadians⁸⁷ that run a program for young women, which is about—[unintelligible] but basically focus on highlighting indigenous experiences in Canada.⁸⁸ Canada it's been difficult for them to accept their past of how they've treated indigenous populations. It's been quite a revelation to them of how they treated indigenous people. When it's pretty recent too, I think it was the '80s was when it stopped. I met a pair of ladies in PNG who run a not-for-profit ICT program⁸⁹. They're running initiatives for the government, training and educating women on how to do things like banking. They don't even know how to do a ledger. They're teaching them how to the ledger, but th⁹⁰ey're also teaching them how to create a profile, because most of them don't even have an email or an identity document. They're running a whole bunch of core basic foundational components, and

⁸⁷ Canadians refers to people who are from the country of Canada. ("Canadians." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadians>. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸⁸ Canada is a country made up of provinces and territories. It is the northern most country in North America and is known for being one of the largest countries in the world. ("Canada." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada>. Accessed 4 August 2023.)

⁸⁹ An ICT program is an information and communications technology program ("Information and communications technology." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_and_communications_technology. Accessed 4 June 2024)

⁹⁰ Papua New Guinea.

connected with the delegate from Australia is an Aboriginal⁹¹ woman. We connected and we're still in touch. As well as the young Pasifika lady that runs initiatives in Samoa and it's called Brown Girl Woke⁹². They run initiatives on educating young girls about hygiene health, women's hygiene health, and Samoan job training programs and they were targeted by women's initiatives. It was really: that was the best part of that was connecting with internationals that have a shared focus on empowering women and achieving gender equality, but also just making sure that my New Zealand delegates that were there from NGOs, I said, "please, get in touch with these ladies because it's quite critical." The main one that I touched base with was the Indigenous woman group and that was just because I was trying to push for them. You must discuss indigenous data sovereignty and they're like, "Can you come?" I was like, "No I just...I will have spent three weeks away from work and your conference is in April, I do not think that my manager will be that flexible." [laughter] To go for three weeks, come back for a week, and then disappear for another two weeks. I said, no, I don't think I'm going to get away with that. There's more just that. There are a few. I'll probably check with them, because I'm having a catch-up with the NGOs next week, Tuesday so I can happily pass on your details in terms of what you're looking to do, because actually, I'll see if I can--it's the Ministry for Women's International Caucus⁹³. I can probably flick them your details and say, hey, I've just run this and if this is the initiative you wanted to do, because the intro paper that you had, has a good amount of blurb of what it is.

NN: Yes, that'd be great. Thank you. [laughs]

NA: Because I felt: they were like, "Oh, Norie, how are we going to contact?" WhatsApp⁹⁴, an email, and we would do Zooms⁹⁵ but I ended up just-- because most of the team there that came didn't know how to use WhatsApp, so I ended up just doing reply all emails now. "Hi, today's update is da da da da da, here are some links, I need some questions answered, please respond by this timeframe." They're like oh, this is really informative, Norie. I was like-- no worries. This is all actually copied pasted into

⁹¹ Aboriginal refers to the indigenous peoples of Australia. ("Indigenous Australians." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_Australians. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

⁹² Brown Girl Woke is an organization that is dedicated to providing opportunities to adolescents in rural areas of Samoa. ("About Brown Girl Woke." Brown Girl Woke. <https://browngirlwoke.co/about-us/>. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

⁹³ The Ministry for International Women's Caucus is a subset of the New Zealand government where the government and organizations separate for the government meet to discuss issues concerning women. ("International Women's Caucus." Ministry for Women. <https://women.govt.nz/international/international-womens-caucus#:~:text=Manat%C5%AB%20W%C4%81hine%20Ministry%20for%20Women,Caucus%20was%20established%20in%202004>. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

⁹⁴ WhatsApp is a social media platform in which individuals can send messages to others via the app. ("WhatsApp." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WhatsApp>. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

⁹⁵ Zoom, or Zoom Video Communications, is a company that allows individuals to video chat via the platform. ("Zoom Video Communications." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoom_Video_Communications. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

the WhatsApp and the Google Doc.⁹⁶ [laughter] They're like oh. I said don't worry about it, I knew that this was part of the job.

NN: Well, technology moves so quickly these days and if you've been trained in a certain way, and then to do your job, as well as learn all the ways different new technologies in which you do that. That's all very difficult. You're a very valued resource.

NA: Yes. [laughter]

NN: That's the end of my questions for you. Do you have any final thoughts or comments that you want to make?

NA: I think it was pretty cool that you're back home, and that this is the kind of thing that you do, because I think the best thing we can do for the global feminist movement is to actually help women and allies even understand what feminism means, because I know people have the definition of bra-burning, they have a very 1960s-'70s perception of feminism. I think the best thing is: we know what we need to do to empower a woman, which is to make sure that the structure recognizes the systemic issues, but also that there is education, awareness, legislation, policies that support gender equality. More so that if you can get the allies, our young boys and their dads, we need them to be, they are ready to be there, but the perception is bra burning. Not that they actually, whereas you've got really good examples like Ruby Tui⁹⁷, in terms of the Rugby World Cup⁹⁸? I was at the final. I lost my voice screaming.

NN: Oh, really?

NA: Me and my friends. My group of friends we were all screaming. My friends, there's of the seven, only three of us understand rugby.

NN: Oh. [laughs]

NA: Other four were just like: yeah, it was great fun. It was the first time that they actually wanted to watch rugby consistently and that is because that was a female-made, female-run, program. Very family-orientated. The tickets weren't ridiculously expensive, but one of the cool things was you saw a lot of fathers, uncles coming there to cheer on, and also bringing their young sons or daughters or nieces, whatever. This is

⁹⁶ Google Docs is a processor part of Google Suite. It is a free service provided by Google. ("Google Docs." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Docs. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

⁹⁷ Ruby Tui is a rugby player. She has competed internationally at the Summer Olympics for New Zealand and most recently played for the Black Ferns locally. ("Ruby Tui." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruby_Tui. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

⁹⁸ After winning the 2021 Rugby World Cup, Ruby Tui engaged with the crowd in an interview and celebrated women's rugby. ("Iconic interview from Ruby Tui as she gets Eden Park rocking!" Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/rugbyworldcup/videos/iconic-interview-from-ruby-tui-as-she-gets-eden-park-rocking-rwc-2021/8150132651728471/>. Accessed 8 August 2023.)

what supporting women can look like in the construct of New Zealand. I think actually helping them understand. Even the campaigns that have worked in New Zealand well like, what is it? It was a breast cancer⁹⁹ campaign and they actually had a bunch of men talking about encouraging women, Pacific women, a lot of women, to go get their mammograms and stuff like that, because they were highlighting, "Oh, this is my mother, my daughter, my niece, my cousin or my grandmother." They're like oh. It was more like strangely that it's "a woman's problem," when actually it's a society problem. I think that would be stuff that we already do but we just need to leverage these people that are really smart at marketing because they do it well and we know that there's heaps of marketers that would love to be able to give back to key initiatives that are really about pushing the needle to have positive, long-lasting change. No one's going to argue that you don't want to have women or girls that are empowered. No one's going to argue that you don't want women and girls to be on the same pay bracket as their male counterparts doing the same job. No one.

NN: Oh, well, we hope; and I guess your observation is really astute in that the name of the project is global feminisms plural. It really depends on the country as to what feminism looks like within that context.

NA: Yes.

NN: I guess that's it for me. You're going to stick around a little bit, and I will stop recording now. Thank you so much. You've been wonderful. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

⁹⁹ Breast cancer is defined as cancer that occurs in the breast cells. It is regarded as one of the most diagnosed type of cancers in women. ("Breast cancer." Mayo Clinic. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/breast-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20352470>. Accessed 8 August 2023.)