

Pacific Post-Graduate Talanoa Series 2021

Coordinated by Massey University Provost Office

Pacific Student Success (PSS) presents:



The Australian National University presenters for 31 May 2021.

Time zones:

3-5pm (NZST, Auckland)

1-3pm (AEST, Canberra)

3-5pm (FJT, Fiji)

1-3pm (PGT, PNG)

4-6pm (WST, Samoa)

4-6pm (TT, Tonga)

The Australian National University hub convenor: Dr Gemma Melvena Malungahu

Massey University convenor: Associate Professor Igelese Ete

In this Talanoa session there will be two presentations by ANU PhD candidates, Patricia Tupou (Tongan) and Jenny Homerang (PNG) (see details below). As an interlude between the two presentations, there will be a demonstration of the Toksave Pacific Gender Resource, a new online portal that aims to make quality research on gender in the Pacific discoverable and accessible, presented by Lindy Kanan of the ANU Department of Pacific Affairs.

1. Recasting Tongan Sovereignty: Land, Gender and Indigeneity.

Presented by Patricia (Trish) Tupou

PhD candidate, College of Asia and the Pacific, Crawford School of Public Policy,
RE&D, Australian National University.

Abstract

This talanoa introduces my PhD thesis topic (currently in the proposal stages) that re-articulates (Teaiwa, 2001) Oceanic understandings of sovereignty as intrinsically tied to land and gender. Asking, what does it mean to be sovereign in Tonga when this sovereignty relies/d upon the constitutional and active tethering of men to land as both arbiters and owners? The nation-building project of nineteenth century Tonga created new ways of governing land, a large proponent of which wrote women out of land ownership (along with foreigners). I ask how this period in Tonga's history has misrepresented women as appendages to independence as opposed to active agents in the incredible political, religious, and cultural developments of the time. More broadly, by centering women and women's connection to land, we can further complicate what it means to be Indigenous, sovereign and tied to place in Oceania.

Biography

Trish Tupou is a PhD candidate in the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University, where she currently lives and works on Ngunnawal and Ngambri land. Her research focuses on the function of sovereignty in Oceania by looking at the connections between gender, land and power in Tonga. In 2019, she graduated with her MA in Pacific Islands studies from the University of Hawai'i–Mānoa, where she was an East-West Center fellow and Fulbright New Zealand scholar.

2. Centring the Nalik, concept of 'a gigiuing' to do the right thing by my community in research.

Presented by Jenny Homerang

PhD candidate, College of Asia and the Pacific, School of Culture, History and Language, Australian National University.

Abstract

In the Nalik-speaking region of northern New Ireland, Papua New Guinea, our people have watched researchers such as anthropologists, linguists, economists, environmentalists, historians, biologists, archaeologists and others come and go without any transparency and accountability to the people in the communities they gain knowledge from. Research is a highly politically contested space, hence, how do those of us 'who do research' in our own places integrate cultural values into our research that sustain the well-being of our communities? In this presentation I will expand on the Nalik cultural concept of 'a gigiuing' and share some of my experience on how I worked it into my research for the collective well-being of our community in Madina.

Biography

Jenny is a PhD candidate in the School of Culture, History and Language (Asia and Pacific History) at the Australian National University. She is exploring the core activities of the three main mortuary ceremonies of her people which intersect, transact, legitimate, connect and manage the relationships of her people to their lands. In 2009 she registered 'Recreating the Village', (RTV) a small community-based NGO working alongside her people on Nalik cultural, social, economic and environmental development projects. She is currently the Convenor and Lecturer of the online Tok Pisin (PNG creole) language minor in the College of Asia and the Pacific at ANU.