

## Growing into: Pacific intellectual genealogies and indigenous development

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### Abstract

The profile of Indigenous Studies as a discipline and programme of study has increased considerably in recent years, and this is also true at the University of Otago. At Te Tumu, the arrangement of Indigenous Studies alongside Māori and Pacific Islands Studies represents a coalition of pedagogical expertise and, with their proximity, students and academics are permitted and encouraged to make regular disciplinary border crossings. The Indigenous Development Programme, as distinct from Indigenous Studies, now extends space for critical engagements with the futurity of plural indigeneities, discerned at, and from, this particular place; Dunedin, New Zealand – Ōtepoti, Aotearoa – the University of Otago.

In this article, we offer an understanding of Indigenous development as early career researchers who are respectively charged with setting a renewed heading for the programme, and ensuring it is well-provisioned for the journey. We discuss, in particular, the Pacific studies traditions shaping our approach to teaching and course design, and do so by touching on our personal experience working across Māori and Pacific research contexts. In the spirit of this special issue, we draw particular attention to the ways we see Pacific intellectual genealogies growing into the Indigenous development programme.

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**Keywords:** indigenous development, Pacific studies, Indigenous studies, Pacific and indigenous pedagogy

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## Introduction

In 1990, Te Tumu, the School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies at the University of Otago (Te Tumu), was established, originally as a Department of Māori Studies. It has grown to incorporate the disciplines of Pacific Islands and Indigenous Studies and has become the hitching post for innovative inquiry into the development of new knowledges for the Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand and of the Pacific region. For obvious reasons, this institutional project has been deeply influenced by the mana whenua of Ōtepoti – Ōtākou, Puketeraki and Moeraki rūnaka and Kāi Tahu whānui – seen in the course offerings and staffing of its Māori Studies department over its lifetime. More recently, Te Tumu has welcomed the knowledges of local Pacific communities who have sojourned and settled in Dunedin since the early twentieth century, including the Samoan, Tongan, Fijian, and Cook Islands Māori communities. The Indigenous Development programme, established in the mid-2010s under Professor Paul Tapsell's leadership, has also extended the critical gaze of Te Tumu to Indigenous knowledge projects that are global, comparative and collaborative. Te Tumu is a collective project, and we acknowledge that, as with all institutions, it has experienced both the growing pains of institutional restructuring and pioneering leadership, and the triumphs of refreshing new disciplinary proximities.

This article is beckoned forth by an impetus to celebrate the unique coalition of the three disciplines evoked in the nomenclature of the school, with a specific focus on the importance of Pacific scholarship to that project:

Our multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary staff, students, research and teaching is reflected in the name Te Tumu, a pan-Polynesian term which is often used in Māori in the phrase *te tumu herenga waka* – a post for tying up canoes. We liken ourselves as a foundation which staff, students and guests can anchor themselves to for the duration of their stay at the University of Otago (Te Tumu School of Māori Pacific & Indigenous Studies).

Nowhere else in New Zealand are these disciplinary programmes arranged in such proximity. At Te Tumu, team-teaching is made more possible in this environment. The institutional structure allows the intellectual proximity and the daily physical presence of scholars and students to intersect in the hallways, lecture theatres and reading lists that are generated by Te Tumu and its staff. In the context of this special issue, this department of disciplines has prompted us to consider how we have, and will, incorporate Indigenous Pacific knowledges in our teaching and research within the Indigenous Development programme.

We compose this contribution as relatively new appointees to the Indigenous Development programme at Te Tumu. We are scholars with graduate training, qualifications and research experience in Pacific Studies, and this intellectual genealogy significantly informs our current research

approaches and pedagogy.<sup>1</sup> To date, the Indigenous Development programme has been informed by the economics of Indigenous governance; calling on the “quadruple bottom line” of values-based economics coupled with Indigenous knowledge (Carter, 2018, 2019). This has pulled heavily on a legacy of development economics and more recently, the discipline of Development Studies. This discipline has been taken and reappropriated by Indigenous peoples to serve different Indigenous prerogatives in specific local contexts; yet, despite the sentiments of empowerment and indigenisation, the Indigenous Development programme at Te Tumu has to date retained resonances of parts of the Development Studies discourse that has been scrutinised by more recent interdisciplinary scholars in the region (Gegeo, 2001; Hau’ofa, 1994b; Maiava & King, 2007:87). In some respects, development projects have had an undeniable legacy of economic and cultural development as a colonising tactic, an enforced modernisation, and an invalidation of the social and cultural norms of Indigenous peoples. While we acknowledge that not all development projects and research has subscribed to this kind of practice, our Pacific Studies training, as well as our early Māori Studies training, has encouraged us to set a new heading for the programme.

In this article we discuss how our Pacific Studies training has shaped our understanding of Indigenous Studies and, therefore, our approach to what Indigenous Development can mean for our suite of courses and for the students who take them. We begin by tracing the intellectual genealogies of Pacific Studies and Indigenous Development, and identifying how we see these two disciplines meeting at Te Tumu. We then discuss key strategies and tenets in our pedagogical practice and our courses, touching on our personal experience working across Māori and Pacific research contexts. We highlight the ways that we use our experience and training to lead our course design and teaching plans; and in the spirit of this special issue, we draw particular attention to the ways that we see Pacific intellectual genealogies growing into the Indigenous Development programme.

### **Pacific intellectual genealogies and Indigenous studies**

Pacific and Indigenous Studies emerged from several post-World War II and decolonial moments in the twentieth century. The signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and the adoption of the Declaration on Decolonisation by the United Nations’ General Assembly in 1960, created institutional and political room for marginalised groups to agitate for opportunities to revise and correct historical legacies of oppression. For Indigenous peoples, this meant a renewed evaluation of imperial and colonial projects in their traditional lands, and a growing understanding and acceptance of the need to revise bureaucratic and political power by settler societies. When processes of territorial decolonisation increased under the UN charter in the 1960s, a new generation of Indigenous peoples entered Universities and began to understand novel perspectives of past and ongoing oppression. This led to more critical discourses about Indigenous futurity. From the 1960s onwards, the study of native and Indigenous peoples developed as both a ‘department’ and a field of intellectual inquiry and knowledge-making, particularly in North America. “The rights discourse,” as aboriginal scholar, Aileen Moreton-Robinson writes, “had entered public and political consciousness” through the

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<sup>1</sup> At Te Tumu, this is referred to as ‘Pacific Islands Studies’ (Te Tumu School of Māori Pacific & Indigenous Studies) but here we primarily invoke the term Pacific Studies with reference to the wider scholarly field that we have both been trained in at the doctoral level, rather than the Pacific Islands Studies programme of Te Tumu specifically.

influence of anthropological practice in the study of Indigenous peoples, especially within the older disciplines of history, archaeology, linguistics and political science (Moreton-Robinson, 2009:6). The nomenclature of Indigenous Studies varied during its growth, taking on the specificities of place, and of people, and therefore, of Indigenous genealogies. In the disciplinary mapping exercise undertaken by Moreton-Robinson in her edited volume, *Critical Indigenous Studies* (2016), Native American Studies as a department was first constituted at Princeton University in March 1970, followed by the growth of Hawaiian Studies, Māori Studies, Native Studies, Ethnic Studies, *Critical Indigenous Studies* and others into the 1980s and 90s (Barker, 2017; Moreton-Robinson, 2016).

The prescription for Indigenous Studies and its various disciplinary and departmental relations has a particularly ‘local’ valence. By this we mean that, although it has a broader, racially and geographically undiscerning modality, its peculiar (and necessary) valence is its essential concern with the *local*, not to be confused with the national or the domestic. That is to say that while there is broader critical Indigenous discourse at play, Indigenous Studies is also carefully attentive to local context as a quintessential part of Indigenous subjectivities. While Indigenous Studies is an intellectual discourse that explores solidarity and a shared identity amongst Indigenous folk, it also seeks to differentiate Indigenous peoples from settler and migrant populations in place, and how Indigenous peoples pursue their sovereignty in antithesis to colonial and imperial projects.

Scholars of critical Indigenous Studies have increasingly spent time “prescriptively explaining”, as Métis scholar Chris Andersen argues, “the *kinds* of knowledge the field should seek to produce” (2016:57). This sort of theorisation is crucial for new disciplines, particularly given the precarity of Indigenous presence in the academy. Andersen summarised,

...Indigenous studies should produce knowledge in service of/that benefits Indigenous communities, nations, peoples, sovereignty; that it should make use of endogamous, or “insider” knowledge (language, culture, traditions, and so on); and more recently, that it should be committed to interdisciplinarity (Andersen, 2016:57)

Further to this, Lenape scholar, Joanna Barker (2017), summarised a prescription for Indigenous Studies as being distinguished “through questions about Indigenous sovereignty, self-determination, and citizenship. [This] is germane to understand[ing] the intellectual and political work of CIS [Critical Indigenous Studies], which directly builds on the unique histories and cultures of nations and often territorial-based communities to address current forms of oppression and [to] think strategically through the efficacy of their unique but related anti-imperial and anticolonial objectives and strategies” (2017:9). This revisionist project is compelling and is manifest across many related fields – Asia-Pacific Studies, Native Studies<sup>2</sup>, Ethnic Studies and not least, Pacific or Pacific Islands Studies.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> As Barker (2017), Moreton-Robinson (2009, 2016), Andersen (2009, 2016) and many others note, these terms include various “allied fields like Native studies, Native American studies, American Indian studies, Hawaiian studies, Māori studies, and so on” (Andersen, 2016, p. 65).

<sup>3</sup> We refer to and imply both forms in the remaining article with the nomenclature ‘Pacific Studies’.

We received our respective doctoral training at two different Pacific Studies departments in New Zealand: Emma at Va'aomanū Pasifika at Victoria University of Wellington, and Erica at Te Tumu. Pacific Studies (as we were taught in these programmes) emerged from the de/postcolonial and Cold War period of the late twentieth century and reflected the projection of political, militaristic and strategic hubris onto the region by the United States and Russia. A milieu of post-war changes, including the UN declarations rehearsed above, beckoned forth an area studies approach to research and scholarship about the Pacific that primarily served the political and diplomatic interests of those at the Pacific rim. It encouraged anthropological research that mapped and described the peoples and places of the region in so far as it would help strategically leverage the occupation of key sites and the establishment of military routes across the Pacific for these global superpowers.

Pacific Studies, like many other disciplines, has been self-conscious about its relevance and meaning within the academy since its beginnings in the 70s. It was first taught at the University of the South Pacific in 1972, the Australia National University, the University of Hawaii and later, universities in the island-Pacific and New Zealand. Pacific Studies has gained popularity in recent years, and we must acknowledge the critical work done by key Pacific Studies scholars who have theorised the field and established innovative pedagogical practices; in particular, Hawai'i-based scholar, Terence Wesley-Smith and the late Teresia Teaiwa, as well as Tania Ka'ai, Michael Reilly and Michelle Schaaf at Te Tumu. In a dialogue between Wesley-Smith and Teaiwa that would span over a decade of their careers, they distilled a Pacific Studies practice that has been a major articulation in the genealogy of the wider Pacific Studies project. Teaiwa wrote in response to Wesley-Smith's (1995) article "Rethinking Pacific islands Studies",

What is Pacific Studies? My purpose is not to exclude any past or current work being done on the Pacific, but to consolidate what I see as some of the extant and latent strengths of humanities and social science work in the Pacific. Such consolidation, I believe, can help move us beyond the imperatives of institutional survival and individual careerism and clarify – both for Pacific Studies practitioners and our potential interlocutors in other area studies and/or interdisciplinary projects – why it is important that we continue to what we do in our region(s) of the world...Pacific Studies shall be interdisciplinary, account for Indigenous ways of knowing, and involve comparative analysis (Teaiwa, 2010:110, 116).

Teaiwa's three tenets of interdisciplinarity, Indigenous ways of knowing, and comparative analysis, have crucially guided the work of Pacific Studies students and scholars (at least those associated with Va'aomanū, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and ANU), and made recognisable the practice and value of Pacific Studies to interdisciplinary humanities research and pedagogy. It is a prescription that has allowed interested individuals to tether their oftentimes more traditional disciplinary training to intellectual posts when arriving to Pacific Studies. It also provides permission for scholars to roam far beyond those traditional disciplinary boundaries without any anxieties of disciplinary estrangement.

## The thing about Indigenous development

It is true that Indigenous Studies has various guises, but you will note that none of them so far listed in this article are called ‘Indigenous Development’. In 2021, Māori literary scholar (and scholar of Indigenous, Māori and Pacific Studies at the University of Waikato), Alice Te Punga Somerville (2021a), wrote a chapter called “English by Name, English by Nature?”. In it she describes her relationship with the discipline of English Literature in which she was trained, and in which she taught for many years. She traces the intellectual genealogy and meaning of the discipline in the context of Indigeneity and research. In an abridged version of the article for the online zine, *e-Tangata*, she wrote,

It feels important to distinguish between a discipline and a department (or programme or faculty or whatever): one is an intellectual thing and the other is an institution/organisation thing (Te Punga Somerville, 2021b).

Though Te Punga Somerville goes on to describe the English discipline on a “good day”, she cites Evelyn Patuawa-Nathan’s poem, “Education Week”, to demonstrate how the discipline’s intellectual tools (writing and reading, in its barest forms) can, on a good day, enable both students and scholars to reframe and undermine colonialism. This implies that English, on other good days, can also help us to think, analyse and theorise the issues and ongoing mysteries of our time.

The tension that Te Punga Somerville identified in her relationship with English as a discipline, and the prescriptive discourses in Pacific and Indigenous Studies as gestured to above, have recently challenged us to delineate the intention and institutional location of our programme at the University of Otago. In the nomenclature of our school, our programme is represented by way of ‘Indigenous Studies’. However, that nomenclature also suggests that the ‘studies’ and ‘development’ are not the same thing. Indeed, how could they be given the deliberate – and *different* - naming of the programme and the school. It seems that Te Tumu’s exclusive graduate programme, the Masters of Indigenous *Studies*, also favours a particular disciplinary legacy.

In one way, this is a superfluous matter. Some would say that the important part is that they both use the term Indigenous and anything else after that is implied. And yet, genealogies matter. Here, the term “development” may invoke strong resonances with the Development Studies discipline, a field that has not always had pleasant connotations for Indigenous peoples. Many Indigenous scholars have had suspicions of ‘Development’ in the academy. David Gegeo, a Malaitan scholar who has written extensively on Indigenous epistemology in the Pacific, has been clear about his criticisms of development discourse in his local Solomon Islands and the Pacific region more broadly. He writes,

...the underlying causes [of ethnic conflict] have persisted in the Solomons because the structure and conceptualization of “development” has never really moved beyond classic modernization theory, emphasizing large-scale, top-down, center-periphery economic enterprises (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002:378)

The activity of “Development” has, from some perspectives, become synonymous with enforced modernisation, colonialization through the creation of false economies, and civilising and

assimilationist agendas under the guise of donor programming. For our part at Te Tumu, these are not the kinds of intellectual strategies that interest us in our programme, nor do we currently possess the expertise to teach development economics or the legacies of third world entry into the global economy. With our Pacific Studies training and philosophical approach to the scholarship of plural Indigenities in mind, we have moved the vaka of our programme to a new heading.

### **The study of Indigenous worlds: INDV at Te Tumu**

Indigenous development, currently coded INDV in our catalogue of offerings, has to date been shaped by the impetus to make possible a course of study where our students are enabled to explore Māori and Pacific Studies in relation to adjacent Indigenous discourses. This has involved courses that look at Māori and Pacific culture, language and history, to gauge an understanding of different aspects of local Indigenous world views. At this stage it is only at the 300 level where students can enrol in INDV-specific courses that study global Indigenous discourses in the Americas, Europe and Asia. Students begin their major with exploring an introduction to Māori Society and an introduction to Māori language. Taking these two papers as the core requirements of the major provides students with an understanding of Indigenous societies within New Zealand, including the many Pacific peoples who have long histories of colonialism and imperialism imposed by the New Zealand state. Of course, for students who are already at an advanced level of te reo Māori, there are other options available whereby they could, with the correct paperwork, enrol in an introduction to Pacific Islands or an introduction to Tongan language course. These papers contribute to engaging students within local Indigenous world views.

In the second year, the core requirement is a tikanga Māori paper that expands on understanding the cultural values of Māori society. Although this paper does not explore other Indigenous societies, it continues to provide an understanding of the Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand and encouraging a principle of being open to other world views that can be used to understand Indigenous communities and Indigenous lives. Once at 300 level, students have two options for a core paper: one explores people and space under the title of ‘Whakapapa and Marae’, using these two Māori concepts to explore local and global Indigenous societies. The other paper, Governance and Ethics, explores different Indigenous governance frameworks. It explores the social, historical and political context that enables new iterations and innovations of Indigenous governance that are often – but not always – so defined as settler-colonial. In and amongst these are elective papers that relate to Indigenous peoples, knowledges and world views.

This programme is still relatively young compared to Pacific Studies, and especially Māori Studies at the University of Otago. Nevertheless, although we are a small team of staff members, we are now beginning to expand and introduce more papers that delve into the study and teaching of global Indigenities. This will initially begin at 200 level, with the ambition of covering all levels soon. We are also discerning the intellectual and disciplinary threads that run through our programme, and the knowledge-making skills that we wish to cultivate in our classrooms, and in the discussions amongst our students. In identifying these principles, we anticipate better aligning our individual course design. This is a part of cohering a programme that is recognisable to students and colleagues within and

beyond the University of Otago, and is a much-needed narration of how our programme continues to journey onward.

### **Critical thinking and the practice of comparison**

Pacific scholars have long advocated for comparative practice in intellectual inquiry (Huffer & Qalo, 2004; Huntsman, 1995; Teaiwa, 2010). Pacific Studies is an interdisciplinary project that at its foundations, is concerned with the social and the cultural, and with the geographical region that is the Pacific. It necessarily, therefore, welcomes the wide range of analytical tools and intellectual legacies used by its students and practitioners alongside key tenets that ground Indigenous and local epistemologies. Teaiwa, who spent much of her career advocating for “critical thinking as acts of disturbance” (Dunn, 2018) has been famously quoted about the impetus to pay attention to the nuance of Indigenous experiences in the region. She responded to Dale Husband in an interview in 2015,

I’m constantly resisting other people’s attempt to reduce the Pacific to one thing – one issue. Whether it’s climate change or their relaxing holiday in Fiji I want to disturb all that. For us, it’s never one issue. We live complicated lives...That’s my job as a Pacific Studies academic...It’s to remind people of the complexity and not let them try to paint us with a single brush stroke (Teaiwa, 2015).

Teaiwa’s reminder for cognisance of the complexity of Pacific experience inherently calls for a depth in Pacific Studies practice that strives to understand national, historical, social and cultural context. It also implies the need for a comparative gaze beyond the local to better understand how such complex experiences interlock, grow apart from, and are influenced by the many other kinds of Indigenous lives that exist in often overlapping and multi-layered conceptual and *real* locales.

This complexity has parallel concerns in Indigenous Studies practice. One of the most powerful tools available to Indigenous studies scholars, no matter the specific Indigenous studies field you teach in, is the relationality inherent in the practice of comparative analysis. Those like historian Kerry Howe, anthropologist Judith Huntsman, and Teaiwa herself have all highlighted the ways that comparative analysis takes studies of the Pacific beyond a siloed understanding of national and ethnic contexts, putting critical questions and real Indigenous Pacific lives in relation to those within, across and beyond the region. Similarly, in Indigenous Studies comparative analysis encourages scholars and students to look for sameness and difference across plural Indigenous peoples without conflating the former, or fixating on the latter. Indigeneity as an identity and as a lived experience, is explored in all the courses we offer, with the intention of guiding student exploration of diverse indigeneities that face their own particular challenges, celebrate their own genealogies to specific place and peoples, and that mutually engage in relational practices.

Teaching the importance and practice of comparative analysis is one of the biggest challenges in the critical Indigenous studies classroom, and it is also one of the most satisfying for us as educators.. In her introduction to *Tonga and Samoa: Gender and Polity*, Judith Huntsman outlines why she uses comparative analysis in her work on Tonga and Samoa explaining, “...to bring out differences in

culture between Western Polynesia and the rest of Polynesia, and to find out what brought them about” (Huntsman, 1995:11). Similarly, in her prescription for Pacific Studies, Teaiwa wrote,

The comparative approach does not have to be routine and predictable. It is certainly useful to compare the linguistic and oral traditions of Samoans and Maori, the reigns of Queen Lili‘uokalani of Hawai‘i and Queen Salote of Tonga, the career tracks of Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara of Fiji and Sir Tom Davis of the Cook Islands...it is just as useful to apply the anticolonial theorising of Albert Wendt and Epeli Hau‘ofa to Niuean art and literature, or the feminist political economy analyses of ‘Atu Emberson-Bain and Claire Slatter to globalisation processes in the Northern Marianas (2010:117-118).

These Pacific discourses have influenced the way we encourage students to think carefully about what they *think* they know about Indigenous peoples, even though they may, for example, have a deep knowledge of their own Indigenous communities or indeed, the Indigenous peoples of Ōtepoti and of Te Waipounamu and Aotearoa more broadly. As Pacific and non-Indigenous students learn more about Indigenous peoples in settler-colonial contexts, how, for example, does this deepen their understanding of the diverse political histories, economies and contexts that make familiar communities both unique and resonant of other Indigenous struggles and future building? How does engaging in these comparisons help to deepen the Indigenous discourse that they are contributing to? Much as Epeli Hau‘ofa (1994a) implied with his seminal “Our Sea of Islands” essay, it is comparison that helps students and scholars to see contrasts and dynamics that are not apparent when the subject is in isolation. It is a practice of putting one thing alongside one or many other things to see the varying states of what it is, perhaps what it is not, and more importantly, what it can be (Powell, 2021).

There is a further part to this methodology that we are conscious of in our classrooms: what uniquely marks Indigenous knowledge production is the requirement for students and scholars to be unafraid of bringing their subjectivities and their ignorance into the classroom and into their work. In our programme, we don’t endeavour to “teach” this aspect of Indigenous studies practice as much as we adopt a pedagogy that welcomes and makes safe the individual stories and curiosities of our students in discussion-style formats. Comparison is enabled when students and researchers are honest with themselves about their positionalities while also developing an ongoing (and perhaps never-ending) understanding of what they *do not* know.

## **Pedagogy and the Indigenous classroom**

Indigenous research methods have grown at pace since Linda Tuhiwai-Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), and from our Pacific Studies training we have respectively learned from the many developing Indigenous Pacific theories and theoreticians that have slowly grown in number since Albert Wendt’s formative essay “Towards a New Oceania” (1976). In our programme, Indigenous research methods are a crucial part of our courses, and most prominently for Te Tumu’s graduate programme, the Masters of Indigenous Studies, with INGS501: Indigenous Theory and Method. We both teach these theoretical processes and adopt them in our practice, influenced by our training and past learning experiences. Indigenous epistemology and ontology underpin our respective pedagogies,

where both our research inquiry and our engagement with students as learners and teachers, pays careful attention to Indigenous relational tenets that take seriously expectations of care, support and safety.

In our classroom, we guide students through knowledge inquiry and acquisition by using techniques that elicit critical thinking and engagement and for this, dialogue is key. Oral narratives are an essential element of Indigenous societies, and it is the use of these, and how they are disseminated by following the practices of *tūpuna* (ancestors), that provides us with a way to apply critical thinking and foster discussion in the classroom. Within the Pacific scholarship, *talanoa* as a method and methodology, is practiced widely, defined “as a conversation, a talk, an exchange of ideas or thinking, whether formal or informal” (Vaiote, 2006:23). It is through this approach, conducted face to face, that stories and/or experiences are shared amongst our students. This is an effective practice to incorporate within Indigenous pedagogy. It ensures engagement from students who are empowered to share their own experienced knowledge that in turn provides a unique and generative perspective for all in the context of the classroom, including the lecturer. It is this Indigenous pedagogy that the writers have been educated within and it continues to develop and be incorporated within their own teaching practices.

We begin with our openness and vulnerability and share of our own experiential knowledge and positionality at the beginning and throughout our courses. We have both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in our classes who all have varied understandings of Indigenous world views that are learned through their personal environments, schooling, media and social and political milieu. Establishing a safe learning environment is required for all students to be unafraid to bring their subjectivities and ignorance to the classroom and within their work. It is only through this process that critical engagement with the material can begin and both students and scholars can build on their understanding of what they do not know. As Moreton-Robinson (2016) states:

In exploring the conditions of our oppression, we utilize our cultural knowledges to produce critical insights about our lives and about others. We understand that knowledge is socially situated. Indigenous lives provide the starting point for asking new and critical questions about Indigenous living and our being, based on presuppositions of relatedness to place, people, and the earth. As such, the connections between Indigenous knowledges, relatedness, and embodiment distinguish and mark the epistemological ground of critical Indigenous studies scholarship. Our tendency is not to telescope in on an object of interest but to understand the object in the context of its relatedness. Critical Indigenous studies exposes the ontological density of our being in our difference and in how we have been represented as different. Thus, the process of Indigenous differentiation is

not solely one of choice nor is it epistemologically or ontologically constraining (2016:5).

At the beginning of a course, the pedagogy of discussion and engagement is explained. Respect begins by creating an environment where there is an equal partnership between student and scholar, and through understanding mutual expectations. As educators, we begin with our expectations of students: read the assigned literature carefully and reflect on the material, prepare to be engaged and discuss reading and preparatory material in class, submit assessments by due dates, and keep lecturers informed of any issues that could affect work performance. These expectations provide students with an understanding of both administrative and pedagogical boundaries of a university course, and sets fair expectations of pastoral care, and the students' commitment to knowledge discovery and acquisition. This is then flipped to the students to discuss amongst themselves: what are their expectations of us as facilitators, markers, and managers of the paper? It is important that there is an opportunity to develop a respectful relationship between student and lecturer, and that we take their expectations seriously. Openness, vulnerability, respect and engagement, beginning with the lecturer, begins to constitute a safe environment that elicits critical thinking, debate and reflection for the semester ahead.

Each week classes begin with an overview of the topic, explaining what it is and using any of our own personal experience that illuminate the prescribed reading material. This leads to group work, where questions are posed, and students discuss their understanding of the reading including how it might support or challenge their own experiences or understandings. These are then brought back to the class as a whole to listen, engage and discuss. The challenge within the class is catering to the many different levels of knowledge, encouraging those *with* knowledge to delve deeper into the topic, critique the material provided against their understanding, and be comfortable enough to share this. Those with less knowledge are encouraged to ask questions, seek clarity, and embrace their misunderstandings. With a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students we are all able to broaden our ideas and understandings of different perspectives and how these came to be. We learn through sharing our narratives and developing our knowledge to better understand differing world views.

### **Growing into: Pacific Studies and Indigenous Studies**

At Otago, where the University has recently made a public commitment to being a leading *Pacific* University, our part in that larger strategic project must necessarily ponder how our disciplinary and geographical location implicates our students and courses in this institutional reorientation. Are we engaged in a project that “develops” our students and their Indigenous communities, or are we committed to classrooms that cultivate a particularly Indigenous approach to what the futures of our students and our scholarship can look like, uniquely shaped by the deep history and ever-growing culture and relations that make our harbour-side city what it is? With the local a conscious part of our approach to the teaching and research we undertake in our programme, this located-ness within the University of Otago and within the city of Ōtepoti, Dunedin, means that we must account for the histories and strategies of mana whenua and mātaŵaka from elsewhere in the country *alongside* the study of Indigenous peoples from elsewhere. To this end, we encourage classroom dialogues that are

inclusive of Māori, Pacific, other Indigenous peoples' knowledges, as well as the non-Indigenous learners who enter alongside our Indigenous students.

It is this commitment that necessarily draws on our experience in Māori and Pacific Studies. These disciplines are prefigured quite separately in tertiary institutions across the country, and we acknowledge the essential predominance of Indigenous dialogues that begin, as a matter of course, with understanding how students are oriented to place through relationships with tangata whenua and mana whenua in their respective locales. Nevertheless, the disciplinary dialogic of these fields are tethered together in Indigenous studies, where we see the wielding of the intersecting genealogies of these peoples as crucial to our research and teaching. The programme has had a distinctly Māori Studies flavour since its beginnings which has served past students well, but we are now deliberately reorientating a programme to consider the study of indigeneity and Indigenous studies as plural, diverse and global in nature. Pacific intellectual genealogies have been pivotal in that reorientation and as a part of this, our programme will move from Indigenous Development to Indigenous Studies in 2023.

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