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MOON WALKING WITH THE PASIFIKA GIRL IN THE  
MIRROR

*An autoethnography on the spaces of higher  
education*

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Professional  
Studies in Education,

The University of Auckland 2014

## Abstract

This dissertation is an autoethnography within a broad qualitative research paradigm. This autoethnography navigates the positionality of a Pasifika girl through the spaces at the University of Auckland. Having studied and interacted at all three campuses (Manukau, Epsom and Auckland) of the University of Auckland, this dissertation examines the complexities of physical spaces (campus locations, classrooms and hallways) as well as the social spaces (relationships, identity and culture). This dissertation also discusses the life of the Pasifika higher education student whilst studying and discusses the matters of the heart (Pelias, 2004). Bhabha's (1994) idea of third space is coupled with a Samoan term the Va' (Amituanai-Toloa, 2007; Tuagalu, 2008; Wendt, 1999) to create a Pasifika conception of third space which is used as a means to, critically analyse culture alongside physical and social spaces in higher education. I am hopeful that new knowledge and new perspectives are created by all who read this dissertation. Welcome to the journey of higher education through the lenses of a Pasifika girl who started out her journey moonwalking.

Key words: space, higher education, relationships, identity, Pasifika, culture, third space, matters of the heart.

## Acknowledgements

Firstly I acknowledge and thank my Creator for His grace and mercy and the precious gift of life. This is my offering back to Him.

Next, I express my profound gratitude and heartfelt thanks to Associate Professor Barbara Grant and Doctor Frances Kelly, thank you both. Your holistic support sits not only in my mind and writing but also in my heart.

This dissertation would not have birthed had it not been for the vision of those involved in the placement of the University of Auckland at Manukau. Special thank you to Doctor Maxine Stephenson, Doctor Pam Millward, Nane Rio and Tessa Tupai. You all have positively impacted me within higher education as well as my life beyond Manukau, my sincerest thanks.

My Grace at Calvary family, dearest friends and extended family and past students may God continue to bless each and every one of you the same way He has blessed me with you.

The sisterhood of the underpants thank you for the laughter, and love during our losses together throughout this dissertation. Our family that are resting are forever in our hearts and in the reflections of each of us.

My super, amazing, crazy, loyal siblings, nephews and nieces, thank you all for being my; emergency babysitters; stationary suppliers; drivers; food and coffee suppliers; nurses; cleaners and jokesters. Also thank you to Fuimaono Rosalia Me, Lilomaiava Margaret Ema Toluva Vui Siope and Sefulu Annie Siope thank you for adding wind into my sails for the homeward strait. God knew I needed all of you, fa'afetai, fa'afetai lava

To my loving humble Godly parents: Sua Muamai Vui Siope and Fuimaono Luse Vui Siope, thank you for, following after God's heart and seeking Him in all you do. It is a privilege to be your daughter.

Finally my thanks to my patient, loving, long-suffering, best friend and husband, Sonny and our gorgeous sons Josh, Corey, and Muamai Jnr. You are gifts from God that I treasure daily, I love you.

## Table of contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of contents .....	iii
Glossary.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction .....	1
Pasifika girl in the mirror: Part One: .....	1
The dissertation .....	1
Pasifika girl in the mirror moonwalking? .....	2
Research question:.....	3
Literature review:.....	3
Why Pasifika? .....	3
Foundation of Pasifika identity within education .....	4
Physical 'space' .....	4
Va' .....	4
Third space and Va' .....	6
Methodology:.....	7
Why autoethnography? .....	7
Autoethnography a qualitative research .....	7
Pitfalls and Challenges .....	9
Personal challenges.....	9
Data collection .....	10
Overview .....	11
CHAPTER TWO: Bachelor of Education, Manukau campus .....	13
Title: In the hood.....	13
Introduction: .....	13
Marae encounter .....	15
Encounter with a name .....	16
Encounter with curriculum .....	17
Life and Heart encounter .....	19
Racist encounter .....	20
CHAPTER THREE: Post Graduate Study Space: Epsom.....	23
Title: Space invader.....	23
Introduction: .....	23

Old planet yucky memories .....	23
New planet new aliens.....	24
New planet new insights.....	26
Matters of the heart .....	27
CHAPTER FOUR-A: Masters of Profession Studies in Education:.....	32
First post-graduate paper offered at Manukau campus: .....	32
Title: I am home .....	32
Introduction: .....	32
My space .....	32
K/new whanau .....	33
Where everybody knows your name.....	34
CHAPTER FOUR-B: Masters of Profession Studies in Education:.....	36
Final taught master’s paper Epsom campus:.....	36
Title: Identity shaped through space. ....	36
Introduction: .....	36
A powhiri with a difference.....	36
The effects of higher education in, the classroom of life .....	37
Unmasking .....	38
CHAPTER FIVE: Dissertation .....	40
City campus experience: .....	40
Title: ‘Spooky space’ .....	40
Introduction: .....	40
Death by hallway.....	40
Santa to the rescue .....	41
Seeking for connections.....	41
Noises and processes.....	42
The uneasy voice.....	42
Epsom dissertation campus experience: .....	43
Title: LIFE .....	43
A day to be inspired .....	43
Seeking a connection .....	43
Invisible student hierarchy.....	44
Support or sabotage .....	44
Hallway passes and the big elephant in the room.....	45

And a little big girl waits.....	46
Analysis .....	47
Introduction: .....	47
Space & Hallway identities:.....	47
Symbolic Hierarchy negotiated into third space.....	48
Relationships and connections .....	48
CHAPTER SIX: Conclusion.....	49
Moments processes and identity.....	49
Physical space .....	49
Humanity, hope and heart.....	50
Title: Pasifika girl in the mirror part 2: .....	51
REFERENCES.....	52

## Glossary

Samoaan, Maori languages as well as text message and slang is used in this glossary. The words included are used by me in this dissertation and derive from sources listed in the reference section or from the narratives.

<i>Aroha</i>	<i>Love, compassionate regard</i>
<i>Fa'afetai</i>	<i>Thanks</i>
<i>Fa'a Samoa</i>	<i>The way of Samoa</i>
<i>Ghettoism</i>	<i>Slum area</i>
<i>Hood (hoodlum)</i>	<i>Thug or gangster area</i>
<i>lil</i>	<i>Little</i>
<i>Lol</i>	<i>Laugh out loud</i>
<i>Marae</i>	<i>A traditional tribal Maori meeting place</i>
<i>Moko</i>	<i>Grandchildren</i>
<i>OMG</i>	<i>Oh my goodness</i>
<i>Pakeha</i>	<i>A white person who is not Maori</i>
<i>Palagi</i>	<i>Foreigner, European, non-Samoan, Pakeha</i>
<i>Powhiri</i>	<i>Maori ceremony welcome onto a Marae</i>
<i>Ptl</i>	<i>Praise the Lord</i>
<i>Taupou</i>	<i>Daughter of a high chief</i>
<i>Teu le va</i>	<i>Cherishing the space.</i>
<i>Va'</i>	<i>Space inbetween</i>
<i>Va fealoaloa'i</i>	<i>Respectful space</i>
<i>Va tapuia</i>	<i>Sacred spiritual space</i>
<i>Va o tagata</i>	<i>Relational space</i>
<i>Wananga</i>	<i>Place of higher learning</i>
<i>Whanau</i>	<i>Family</i>
<i>Whangai</i>	<i>Raise, adopt, nurture</i>

## CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

### Pasifika girl in the mirror: Part One:

*I see a brown Pasifika girl who has the Samoan migrant big nose*

*I see a white girl within the Pasifika girl*

*I see a Samoan Pasifika girl who can't speak Samoan*

*I see a girl who says she's Pasifika to cover up she's Samoan*

*I see a Pasifika mother who can't speak a Pasifika language and hasn't taught her sons any  
either*

*I see a Pasifika girl lost in translation of languages*

*I see a Pasifika girl who is judged by both worlds*

*I see a Pasifika girl trying to keep afloat in both worlds*

*I see a Pasifika girl who is failing*

*I see a Pasifika girl who is lost...*

*Moonwalk with her as she finds parts of who she is through higher education...*

*JOFI*

### The dissertation

The moonwalking dance begins with the Pasifika girl's experiences within the spaces of higher education: Firstly at the University of Auckland Manukau campus, then continues to University of Auckland Epsom campus, and concludes with her experiences as a Masters student at the Manukau, Epsom and the City campuses.

Whilst moonwalking through this autoethnography you will experience the complexities which the Pasifika girl encounters within the spaces of higher education. The juggling of culture (Pelias, 2004), Va' (Amituanai-Toloa, 2007; Tuagalu, 2008; Wendt, 1999), identity and third space (Bhabha, 1994) are theories the Pasifika girl uses to create a juxtaposition

through this autoethnography (Denzin, 2006) .We welcome you to dance the moonwalk with us.

### Pasifika girl in the mirror moonwalking?

In welcoming you to this dissertation of my journey through the spaces of higher education it is appropriate to give you an insight about whom and where the Pasifika girl came from.

My name is Fetaui Iosefo, I am a New Zealand born Samoan. I have been married for 19 years in March 2014 and am a biological mother of two gorgeous boys. I am also the youngest of six biological siblings and have had the privilege of being raised with three whangai siblings.

In 1958 both my parents migrated from Samoa to New Zealand and lived in Taihape where my father worked on the railways and as a farm hand. My mother was a house maid. My parents had my three older siblings in Taihape, then in 1967 moved to suburban South Auckland where the last three were born. During this time of migration to the suburbia of South Auckland my family was part of a dark era in New Zealand history in the 1970's known as the dawn raids. This was the era I was born into.

My primary years of education were filled with bullying, stealing and continuous punishment. In high school I turned up to a glorified babysitting unit of socialisation, where failing was cool as long as we did it together. To be successful in education was not a priority. I was in an era where being bad was being cool and being successful was a novelty.

At the age of 19 I was pregnant and alone. I had become a statistic. At this junction in my life although a tough time, I found hope. I attended a sermon where the preacher was my older brother. He said 'don't let any man create your world they'll always create it too small, let God of the universe create it'. At that point my life changed! I had seen my older siblings go from being drop outs to understanding their purpose through divine intervention and go back to education and use it as a means of emancipation.

Having my eldest son Joshua birthed in me the migrants' dream (Siope, 2010) my parents had. The dream of prosperity and education being the key. Although the migrants dream was birthed in me it wasn't enough: I needed faith, hope, love and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1995) to pursue this dream. Understanding the migrants dream and God's

purpose for my life saw me go back to study in 2000. I studied foundation education at the Manukau Institute of Technology. Following that I completed a Bachelor of Education; taught for 7 years; completed post-graduate diploma in education; and now am completing my masters in professional studies in education.

The title 'Moon walking with the Pasifika girl in the mirror' is a reflection of what it was like for the Pasifika girl entering into higher education. Initially it was as though she was a visitor to a new planet. By moon walking in the mirror she is acknowledging her Nga Kete Wananga Marae where she learns to use her past as a force to help her slide backwards into her future. The title signifies the Pasifika girl is aware that, in this mirror, not all is seen, for it is the unseen which is truly guiding her moon walk.

#### Research question:

The relational space at Manukau impacted on me. It challenged and exposed me to higher education spaces with new lenses. I believed being at Manukau campus emancipated the inner me. Being a student at the three University of Auckland campuses I wanted to know if there was a different ethos between the campuses. This has led to my research question.

#### ***How do institutional spaces influence cultural identity in higher education?***

#### Literature review:

##### Why Pasifika?

There are many ways to label oneself. In this dissertation I have opted to use the term Pasifika to describe the girl in the mirror. According to Suaalii-Sauni (2007) Pasifika is a representation of all the islands which are surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. The term Pasifika is used for anyone who believes they are, or merely acknowledges their Pasifika heritage. Suaalii-Sauni's (2007) definition is inclusive of all. For the Pasifika girl in the mirror she struggles with the notion that she looks Pasifika but does not speak the language of her ancestors therefore is judged in higher education and within her worlds. Suaalii-Sauni's (2007) definition does not discriminate, segregate, or belittle Pasifika based on their knowledge or lack of language; this definition is embracing of all hence the term being used.

### Foundation of Pasifika identity within education

Pasifika education in New Zealand is nothing to be proud of. In the study of the children of the migrant dreamers, Siope (2010) notes the disparity between Pasifika and others and gives an example of the negative statistics of Maori and Pasifika students having the highest stand down and suspension rates and the lowest levels in numeracy and literacy regardless of decile ratings. These negative factors and unfavourable statistics have influenced the stereotypes of Pasifika identity and unfortunately are the foundations of Pasifika students attending higher education.

### Physical 'space'

In this dissertation I will be discussing how space influences my journey through higher education. I will be using the work of Rio (2010) who discusses the repositioning of the University of Auckland campus to Manukau. I will also be using the research 'Voices of Manukau' (Anderson, Millward, Rio & Stephenson, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011). This research looks at students who studied at Manukau and their experiences in higher education within the physical 'space' of Manukau. Within the different physical spaces we will discuss Cox, Herrick & Keating's (2012) symbolic hierarchy and how it influences identity as well as Jessop, Gubby & Smith's (2012) view on how the physical space influences the mood and morale within higher education. These space theorists will be used to compare the Pasifika girl's experiences at all three campuses.

### Va'

There are many forms of 'space' in the western world such as two dimensional space, three dimensional space, gaps, a chair, a room, outer space, deep space, all related to the physical aspect of space which is empty. Va' is a Samoan term. Wendt (1999) describes the Va' as 'The, space between-ness, not empty space...but space that relates (p.402)'. Therefore for the Pasifika girl, space is not only physical but it is a culmination of the seen and unseen.

Va' is widely used within higher education as a Pasifika term. According to Ka'ili (2005) it is also used in Samoa, Tonga, Rotuma, Tahiti, and also known in Aotearoa and Hawaii as wa' and is found in many Moanan languages. Not all Pasifika cultures use it, although many do.

Teu le va the care factor of the Va', according to Anae (2010), is to 'cherish, nurse and take care of the Va'-space'. Anae also refers to the putting away safely, the tidying up of secular

and sacred relations to achieve optimal outcomes for all stake holders. This is related to research and policy making within New Zealand Education for Pasifika people (Airini et al, 2010).

This view of cherishing and nurturing the space between relations of all kinds is an important factor within higher education between lecturer and student. Anae (2010) uses this work on a grander scale for research, policy making within New Zealand for Pasifika. Although there is value in arguing for the importance of knowing the Va' and cherishing the Va' in education, I do not think it is feasible to get all policy makers and stake holders to embrace all facets of the Va' and teu le va'. Furthermore (Airini et al, 2010,) believes that:

The teu le va cultural reference point is the single most important aspect in moving beyond just the identification of and procrastination about the state of things, to a place/space/site of action – that is, to getting things done, in a win-win situation which benefits all stakeholders and which upholds the moral, ethical spiritual dimensions of social relationships for all participants/people/stakeholders involved in these relationships (p. 12).

I do not believe that there can be a win-win situation solely based on teu le va. Within teu le va there will be situations where those who hold the most power have the most say. Age factors can be a contributing factor, positions of power can also tip the scales in favour of the superior. There will always be a subordinate in negotiation. There will be parts of Teu le va that will work, however I also believe that there is always going to be someone who will lose. Hence I liken the notion of teu le va within the research context to a utopian ideology.

In regards to one's identity, Va' and teu le va is based on relationships and the idea of how you treasure them, shapes who you are. Teu le va is the verb of the Va'; it is the centre of the Va' which you are responsible for taking care of. However you use the Va' parameters will reflect and shape the movement of who you become.

From the Pasifika girl in the mirror her Va' is from the Samoan perspective. It is the space in between. Tuagalu (2008, cited in Lafaialii, 2012) identifies at least 37 different types of Va's within the Samoan context. There are specifically three types of Va' that resonate within me in regards to forming my identity in higher education. They are:

1. Va' o tagata referring to the relational space between people:

Within the context of higher educational spaces the relational spaces between students and students, lecturers and students and the world outside of higher education. They are integral in shaping identity.

2. Va' fealoaloa'i is the space of respect

This space in regards to higher education is the respect between lecturers, students and others. This space rolls into all the Va's, it is the foundation of all negotiation within all spaces. This Va' is what I liken to teu' le va.

3. Va' tapuia is the sacred spiritual space:

This space is of utmost importance for me. Amituanai-Toloa (2007) discusses the Va Tapuia is the space made sacred. In this dissertation I will be referring to the Va Tapuia as a physical sacred spaces, as well as social sacred space. This sacred space is where morals and values evolve which build my identity. Within higher education I am constantly challenged, the Va tapuia enables me to acknowledge the influence of my inner beliefs the seen and unseen sacred spaces that shape me.

### Third space and Va'

From my perspective 'Va' space (Amituanai-Toloa, 2007; Tuagalu, 2008; Wendt, 1999) and Bhabha's (1990) third space are complementary to each other. Both the Va' and third space refer to the between spaces, both are not focussed solely on the physical aspects of space, but more so the unseen space where negotiation takes place. English (2004) with the influence of Bhabha's third is in reference to building ones identity according to the fluidity of space. Third is where negotiation of identity is constructed and deconstructed. The three Va's which I have chosen to focus on from Tuagalu (2008) and Amituanai-Toloa (2007) are used as spaces that link, connect, engage and disengage with the individual. These spaces help influence ones identity. I am Samoan and the Va' is influential in how I negotiate who I am on my own and relationally with others. I have highlighted the three Va's that I believe, have had a heavier influence over me as a daughter, wife, sister, aunt, teacher and higher education student.

Within Bhabha's (1994) third space the negotiation to gain new knowledge or understanding for me is influenced by the 'Va' hence me likening third space to the Va'. Both are not necessarily seen or physically tangible although at times they influence how one may physically act. Both also influence my identity.

Helu Thaman (2003) discusses that cultivating relationships is paramount in Pasifika people, by cultivating and protecting relationships we move from the, I mentality, into a relational perspective. This perspective fosters our cultural identity and consolidates the importance of Va', understanding the in-between spaces. Bhabha suggests that we focus on 'moments or processes' (Bhabha, 2004, p.2, quoted in Lafaialii, 2012, p.26). By focussing on moments and processes we are able to assist in the process of understanding one's identity and third space is where this takes place in the spaces in between.

Bhabha (1994) and Davis (2010) both discuss the, between-ness. They believe the space in between provides a domain for exploring oneself and the surroundings and therefore, adding new insights to one's identity. Va' (Wendt, 1999, Amituanai-Toloa, 2007, Tuagalu, 2008) and third space (Bhabha, 1994) both lie in this domain. Both connect in the moments and processes of cultural, holistic (hooks, 1994) negotiation. By using this process of negotiation I am able to reflect on the Pasifika girl in the mirror and what influences her identity in higher education.

#### Methodology:

##### Why autoethnography?

I had earlier decided to do research on Boards of Trustees in low decile schools South Auckland. Focussing on social justice specifically on unconscious oppression, (Freire, 1987) and bell hooks (2009) notion of white supremacy. However as the years passed I became aware that anything driven by bitterness and vengeance is not good for the heart, soul and lifespan. Using an autoethnographic approach, although most times I am challenged intrinsically, my heart and soul are at peace.

##### Autoethnography a qualitative research

Autoethnography is a form of qualitative research based on self and culture. According to Ellis (2004) autoethnography is research where method and writing link the researcher to

the social and cultural phenomena. It features emotion, self-awareness and self-relatedness. Spry (2001) adds that autoethnography is a self-narrative which critiques the position of self and others in its social context. Historically, according to Wall (2006), the researcher is telling their story connecting the reader with life, therefore suggesting that autoethnography intertwines history and writing. For Chang (2007) priority is the cultural connection between, self, others and society. The ultimate goal of autoethnography according to Chang (2007) is cultural understanding, whilst drawing on one's experiences.

Denzin (2006) takes Pelias (2004) a step further in autoethnography whereby he seeks a writing form that enacts a methodology of the heart, a form that listens to the heart, knowing that 'stories are the truths that won't stand still' (Pelias 2004, p.171). In writing from the heart we learn how to love, to forgive, to heal, and to move forward (Denzin, 2006, p.423).

Chang (2007) heavily emphasises autoethnography is about raising cultural consciousness of self and others and I am more prone to agree with Chang's view on autoethnography. However with my experiences I am unable to part from Denzin's and Pelia's plea of using the heart as a means to listen, learn and love. I therefore am combining Chang (2007) and Pelias (2003, p.372) whereby he says: An autoethnography 'lets you use yourself to get to culture'.

By writing an autoethnography of my experiences in higher education I believe it does exactly this: Ethnography opens me to get to culture. Being born in New Zealand and raised as a New Zealand born Samoan, I am left feeling that I don't fit fully either in New Zealand or in Samoa. When in Samoa I am called a 'Palagi' (white person), when I'm in New Zealand I am stereotyped by society as a brown brother, a drop out and low academic achiever (Iosefo, 2012).

Whilst moonwalking with my autoethnography I am able to use myself, my experiences and the complementary third space (Bhabha, 1994) and Va' (Amituanai-Toloa, 2007; Tuagalu, 2008; Wendt, 1999) to get to culture (Pelias, 2003). Ellis and Bochner (2000) acknowledges that there is no precise logical order of method or special formula for an autoethnography but they encourage the researcher to explore the uncertainty of this process.

## Pitfalls and Challenges

Chang (2007) describes pit-falls that I am mindful to avoid whilst writing autoethnography. The first is focussing specifically on self. I as the researcher can become self-indulgent excluding others and therefore produce a lovely story about myself but not an academic autoethnography. The second is getting carried away in the narrative of each of the story so that the cultural analysis and interpretation is amiss. Third is over-relying on my memory. Chang (2007) encourages a variety of data collection that can provide a means of triangulation which helps with the validity of my writing. The fourth is the assumption that this autoethnography is owned by me because it was written by me. Realistically in order for me to write this autoethnography I've linked into other people's stories who have helped my journey through higher education. Therefore these stories also belong to them and it is my responsibility to creatively protect their confidentiality ethically and morally without losing the thread of how space, voice and relationships influenced me in higher education. Ellis and Bochner (2011) echo Chang (2007) that being aware and having protective devices such as 'changing gender, name, and place' (p.282) is essential as this can influence the integrity of the research.

## Personal challenges

My personal challenge about autoethnography is writing about myself. It is counter cultural and offensive to the way that I have been raised. To talk about one-self is deemed as prideful and self-serving. In our family ego is weeded out and we focus on a 'we' concept. God is the centre of our family, we do not talk about ourselves neither do we serve ourselves. Our lives are a gift to be given in the means of service for God and others. Therefore talking about oneself is not viewed as service for others, rather service for self. Therefore this autoethnography is a challenge. I have discussed this with my family and have consent from them to write this dissertation with the motive of this dissertation is my offering back to God, and the prayer that emancipation takes place with me and reader. Remembering at all times that identity is forever on a continuum, what I may see through the lenses of the Pasifika girl in the mirror in this dissertation is subject to change as time moon walks and dances with me.

## Data collection

To counteract the concerns of Chang (2007), Ellis and Bochner (2011) genders and names have been altered to protect the integrity of the research. Also I have asked my parents Sua Muamai Vui Siope, Fuimaono Vui Siope and siblings to be my cultural advisors, and they have consented. The data sources are as follows and varied as Chang (2007) has advised to ensure it is not solely memory.

- Personal stories in the form of memories: Ingleton (1995) discusses the importance of memories and how they are essential in creating tools for understanding hence the personal stories will be a collection of epiphanies. Bochner and Ellis (2011) describe epiphanies as remembered moments which impacted significantly on one-self and this will be me. Each of the memories or epiphanies are written down of the space and where the event took place with as much detail as possible as suggested by Ingleton (1995).
- The two transcripts I am using are from two interviews I did for Doctor Helen Anderson in January 2003 and a follow up interview for Doctor Maxine Stephenson in April 2004. Both these transcripts were used for 'The Voices of Manukau' project. This research project is specifically based on Bachelor of Education students at University of Auckland Manukau campus. The research focussed on the first four co-horts that had studied at Manukau and followed them into their first year of teaching. I was privileged to be in the first cohort at Manukau.
- Essays I had previously written in my post-graduate diploma and in my two taught master's papers: these are used as triggers for memories of what I was thinking at the time. For the post-graduate diploma I was located at Epsom Campus. My first taught masters paper was the first post-graduate paper offered at Manukau and my last taught paper was back at Epsom campus.
- Reading notes I had taken during my last taught paper in 2012 which specifically focus on 'space', and 'voice' in higher education. These reading notes served as a reflective practice not only for reading material but taught me to reflect on me and my world views.
- Field notes that I have taken in 2013, on the city campus which include a text message I sent to my son and field notes I took on Epsom campus.

- The poems that are written are poems created while writing up the dissertation. These poems are sometimes known as found poems (Bruce, 2013), however in this case I will call them *lived poems*. For me lived poetry engages in the life at the time of the poet.

For this autoethnography the research into me getting culture is processed through third space, moments and processes and Va's therefore all three concepts fit like Michael Jackson's hand in a glove.

## Overview

Within this dissertation there are three voices. Fetui is the narrator; Jerodeen the academic analyser; and JOFI the poet. There are also three forms of writing which are explored. The dual text of narrative and the analysis; the interwoven narrative and analysis; and finally the narratives with a separated combine analysis.

Chapter Two is written in a dual text. It has the narrative on the left and the analysis on the right. This chapter discusses the first encounters the Pasifika girl has with higher education whilst doing her Bachelor of Education within the 'space' at Manukau campus.

Chapter Three is also written in dual text with narrative on the left and analysis on the right. This chapter examines the Post-graduate diploma in Education experience at Epsom 'space'. This chapter examines the fear of studying at a new space as well as the importance of care of students and their other worlds.

Chapter Four is split into two parts. The first part is Chapter Four A: A Masters taught paper at Manukau space written in dual text. The Pasifika girl is finally home at Manukau, this chapter delves into her past experience as an under-graduate from Manukau and her experience as a Masters student. Chapter Four B is the final Masters taught paper at Epsom space. The narrative and analysis are interwoven. This chapter weaves the threads of the past and present experiences in higher education.

Within Chapter Five the Pasifika girl is at a new junction where she is alone as a Masters student. She embarks the dissertation alone and therefore writes two narratives separately. The first is an experience at the City campus and the second is an Epsom campus experience. At the closing of this chapter is a joint analysis. We examine the common themes in both narratives in this one analysis.

Finally in Chapter Six I will be concluding the dissertation with insights I have discovered whilst moonwalking in the mirror using space,  $Va'$  and third space.

## CHAPTER TWO: Bachelor of Education, Manukau campus

Title: In the hood

### Introduction:

*The dual text in this chapter is a representation of my worlds and spaces, seen through the eyes of Fetai as the Pasifika girl born and bred in the hood, as well as through the academia eyes of Jerodeen.*

#### ***Fetai's Narrative***

##### **Wonderment of location:**

"University of Auckland who me? Hell no!"  
Right up to that moment of being welcomed onto the Manukau Marae I had moon walked through life, if I had a theme song in life at that time it would've been Michael Jackson's infamous 'Beat it'. By the time I started at the University of Auckland Manukau campus I was 27 years of age and scared.

'Somebody pinch, me!' it was my first big day of tertiary study with the prestigious, illustrious, elite University of Auckland. I could not believe that I had actually made it into the University of Auckland the excitement that flowed through my body then came to a commanding halt when I realised the location of this campus. The University of Auckland was in South Auckland, and of all places Otara? Otara shopping centre which is commonly known to children born in the 1970's-80's as the

#### ***Jerodeen's Analysis***

##### **Space as location**

The notion of space is initially viewed as the physical location. The University of Auckland located the Bachelor of Education within the space of Manukau Institute of Technology as a reaction to increase multi-cultural teachers (Stephenson, Rio, Anderson & Millward, 2008.)

At the time there were not enough representations of teachers from similar backgrounds to the children. The ideology of increasing the participation of minority groups in higher education would improve the life chances of the children as well as the minority teachers (Rio, 2010.)

Whether politically, economically, socially or environmentally motivated, South Auckland has continued to be an important destination for less affluent migrants to New Zealand (Stephenson, Anderson & Millward, 2009) with this in mind it would confirm

'chopping centre'. This was reflective of the Samoan man who chopped the head off a Tongan man with a machete at the Otara shopping centre. Needless to say it's one of the worst suburbs in South Auckland. The people that reside in this suburb are predominately Maori and Pasifika which are my people but seriously? How does prestige and poverty mix? This choice of location was weird!

Although my mind boggled so did many people at the time. My cousin for example could not get his head around why the University of Auckland had set up campus in the hood he would often ask me 'if I had gone to Tech?' and I would say 'University of Auckland' and he would reply 'yeah yeah whatever!'

There was no use talking to him he was older. It wasn't until the day of graduation when he saw my name in the graduand book that he realised that I had attended the University of Auckland at Manukau Institute of Technology.

### **Family**

The co-hort had become very much like a family, the small number of students contributed to this. As well as the majority of us and our families all living in South

Fetaui not comprehending the location of the elite University being placed in the hood.

According to the 'Voices of Manukau' most of the Pasifika students came from the same location where the campus is situated. Therefore made them feel comfortable and secure in their position within higher education as well as fulfil an educational need at the time. (Stephenson, et al, 2008).

In regards to culture Fetaui is referring to Nieto (2000) idea of culture as a verb as opposed to it being known as a noun. She focusses on the suburb and the south as a form of identity discussing how it was 'weird that the university of Auckland would be in South Auckland and Otara of all places'

In the example given where, the older cousin is unable to understand that the location of University of Auckland within Manukau Fetaui gives up the right to argue with her older boy cousin, even though he was wrong, the Va' feolaloa'i is more important than correcting her older cousin.

### **Family and knowing your role**

Family attachments in the area of Manukau campus also influenced Pasifika students to enrol in the university program (Stephenson et al., 2008). Had there not been a Manukau

Auckland. I believed because of the commonalities we naturally magnetically merged together as a family.

The dominant group were older Pasifika women, when it came time to vote for student representative the dominant in the group appointed me and then before you knew it they had moved and passed the motion. I was on the back foot, my cultural practices of respect meant I had no choice. Yuck!!!

#### Marae encounter

##### **First encounter with a real Marae**

The first day we were all welcomed on the Marae. It was my first encounter with a real Marae. Other, than the Marae in the museum which was a five foot display. This Marae was amazing it was real!

Following this Marae experience our class shared with the head of school and our lecturers that the Marae experience was the first for the majority of us. They then asked if we were interested in having a noho Marae (sleep over in the Marae) we all leapt at this opportunity.

This experience was unplanned and yet it became one of the pivotal moments for me in my identity. Our Maori education

campus the Pasifika students would not have otherwise attended the University (Rio, & Stephenson, 2010).

In regards to Fetau being appointed the student representative, she had no choice but to accept the responsibility. Teu le va (Anae, 2010) and the Va' fealoaloa'i' (Tuagalu, 2008) mean Fetau is the subordinate and she is to do as she is instructed.

##### **Marae in the context of the Va' and third space**

Fetaui continues her narrative about the Marae and her encounters, or lack of it. This is a particular turning point for Fetau as she begins to drift into third space. English (2005) discusses how third is where, identity is constructed and reconstructed. Third space is used as a filter to create new understandings and strengthen Fetau's identity. When she is in the Marae and learning new knowledge she begins to assimilate in her mind how she fits in the Marae as a physical space. By sleeping under her country rib Fetau is physically demonstrating her acceptance of her place within the Marae space.

lecturer and schooling and society lecturer were there with us and we had a representative from Manukau institute of Technology explain to us about the Marae.

He shared how the Marae space was set out. He spoke about the spine of the Marae and the ribs and how the different ribs represented the different cultures. He spoke how the front was the back and how your past is in front of you and your future is behind you. I was in awe!

I remember that night each of us slept under the rib we belonged to. It was a surreal experience the sacredness of the Marae reminded me of the sacredness of a church. Something happened inside of me that night something weird!

From that night till now that Marae is my Nga Kete Wanaga Marae.

Encounter with a name

### **What's in a name?**

The head of our co-hort was Pasifika her korero in our first class together was 'what's in a name?' I was challenged because right up to that point I hadn't cared where my name came from. Then I remembered a story my siblings often remind me of. When I started school I was told my name was Jerodeen much to my surprise. From that

The Marae in this instance is Va' tapuia (Amituanai-Toloo, 2007) it is not only a physical sacred space where spiritual teachings and values are taught, but is also where the processing of these ideals moments and principles are added to Fetui's identity. This is where Bhabha's (1994) idea of third space takes place. Fetui's experience in the Marae begins to add a layer to her wholeness. By being able to place herself physically and her culture within that Marae, added value to who she is evolving to become. This confirms Hall's (1996) construction of identities which occurs within.

### **Identity in a name**

The introduction of what is in a name is like an intrusion for Fetui as she states she had never thought of it, neither had she cared. The third space (Bhabha, 1994) constructs and deconstructs her experience of being Fetui prior to going to school where she was named Jerodeen. A layer in her identity is revealed she admits that she was ashamed

day I made it very clear that my siblings and everyone else was to call me by my palagi name Jerodeen and furthermore I was going to be palagi. Farewell Fetauai you are no longer needed in this world. Eew that memory kind of scared me I wanted to be white yet I was the darkest in my family and lived in a neighbourhood of brown homies.

After class, I went home and asked my dad where my name Fetauai came from. Only to be told I was named after my late beautiful nana his mother who I had only known as Sefulu, Fetauai was her taupou name. I sat slightly ashamed I had lived 20 plus years, as Jerodeen. What's in a name? My nana, my ancestors, parts of my identity that's what's in my name. My name is Fetauai!

### Encounter with curriculum

#### **Finding the me in them**

I sat in my first Maori education lecture and schooling and society lecture thinking 'what could a New Zealand born Samoan girl learn from Maoris about education?' and 'why are we still talking about native schools?' At the time in my world space Samoan's didn't think very highly of Maori at all and obviously neither did I.

My stinking thinking thoughts were soon put to death. Our lecturers set us up for us to

to be called Fetauai at school. Her identity as Jerodeen was her way of being accepted in a world that Fetauai did not have enough cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1995) to survive.

At the age of 5 she was able to decide that being white was better than being Fetauai.

The change of name signifies to me that her cultural heritage was no longer of value to her. She wanted to be white. It wasn't until she was challenged that day at University she realised where her name had come from. The acceptance of her name is also the acceptance of her culture and the evolving of her identity.

#### **Identity in engaged pedagogy**

The way in which both papers were delivered encompassed hooks (1994) view on holistic education. She further suggests that holistic education is based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning and purpose in life, through connections to the community, natural world and spiritual values such as compassion and peace. Fetauai's narrative confirmed the internalization which took

understand the struggle that Maori students had whilst sitting tests in English. Our lecturer made us all take the Motis test (Maori test) the whole test was in te reo (Maori language) and each of us failed miserably but the lesson was effective.

It placed us in the shoes of the Maori students from the past and also placed us in the shoes of all students in the present. For me the lesson was, when I teach, I have to value each child and the shoes in which they have moon walked in.

These papers were often taught in story form. They openly shared their struggle as Maori in our society in education they shared of the emancipation and empowerment which took place inside of them and their whanau (family).

Both these papers examined, critical, deficit theories as well as Kaupapa Maori theory. They became a means of liberation for my stinking thinking. Understanding these theories I began to unlock the shackles on my ankles allowing me to slide to the sound of a new groove.

These papers challenged who I was? How did I fit into New Zealand society and education? They had such a profound effect on me I began dialoguing with my parents and family asking them, why did they

place because of both papers. She was able to question and weave the threads of her identity together not only in education but also in New Zealand society.

With the lecturers at Manukau unashamedly sharing who they were, their struggles growing up in New Zealand education and society, we were able to share our lives with them. In hooks' engaged pedagogy (1994) approach she shares that she does not expect her students to take risks if she isn't willing to.

The influence of the curriculum in regards to identity is effective in this case. Fetau notes that the papers challenged who she was not only internally but externally. This in effect began a discourse of discovery with her and her family returning to her Samoa to discover who she is.

Although the narrative does not continue with her journey of identity in Samoa what it does uncover is the power of the curriculum and its influence on Fetau's identity.

migrate to New Zealand? What does Samoa look like? Why didn't I ever fit in? I had many questions. I was burdened with graduating as a teacher, and teaching children from all ethnicities and not knowing who I was.

It burdened me so much that we as a family booked our flights to Samoa and went back to discover who and where I came from. I was 27 years of age and for the first time I was going to Samoa with my parents to discover who I was.

For reasons unbeknown to me since graduating from the BEd at Manukau both of these papers have, been withdrawn. What was effective, empowering and life changing for me may not have been for others.

### Life and Heart encounter

#### **Life and Lecturers**

In my second year of the BEd programme the pressure of wearing various hats, began to wane on our marriage. I was working three part-time jobs: studying full time, being a wife, mum, looking after my parents and heavily involved in running church ministries, student rep, running study groups and slowly but surely something had to give. And unfortunately at the time it was my marriage. My marriage fell apart and I did as well, I had lost all hope of wanting to live.

#### **Lecturers are humans**

Within higher education there is an invisible wall between lecturers as people and lecturers as professionals. In this case the lecturers proved to be both. Hooks (1994) describes her willingness to give of herself to gain the students trust is part of holistic education. By examining this narrative both these lecturers must have invested parts of their life stories in Fetui for her to trust them with her heart encounter. Could it have been that the class size? Or, location

After realising that I had let a man create my world and not my creator I began the process of healing. In amongst all this chaos I had two lecturers that I leant on for support.

I share this story because at the time these two lecturers help to give me hope and a new outlook on life. Both lecturers shared with me their personal experiences. One was divorced. Her husband had left her for another woman. The other lecturer shared how her husband had cheated on her for several years but they were still together. The first lecturer gave me practical things to do for example; get own bank account, sign up for the solo mothers benefit. The other woman shared with me how devastated she was when she found out about her husband. It was her children who signed her up to study and her study helped her get through that time. Study became her solace. I later understood that she used study as her third space a place of escapism.

#### Racist encounter

##### **Third year racist encounter:**

For our practicums we were encouraged to do a range of schools and deciles. This for me was slightly uncomfortable as I hadn't been anywhere but in the south. Leaving

that made these lecturers real people?

Earlier I discussed Pelias (2004) the methodology of the heart, is a complicated but an essential theory that must be discussed. In higher education the heart is dumbed down, autoethnography helps us unpack this phenomena and in the case of these lecturers because of their openness the Fetui walked away with more than an academic outlook Fetui moon walked with humanity and heart intact.

#### **Racist encounter**

Manukau had a sense of unity and utopia. Her practicum experience, although uncomfortable was necessary in the reality of the world. Being called a coconut by a

the south was quite scary not only as a student but as a South-sider.

One particular practicum was in an east school. I walked in and the teacher looked at me up and down asked me my name, I gave her my name. She then asked if I could shorten my surname for the children to pronounce for example Mrs I as opposed to Mrs Iosefo. I agreed to this and was introduced to my class as Mrs I. The next day a little boy from the class came up to me and said 'my dad says you're a coconut' I said nope I'm not a coconut I'm a person the little boy turned and started chanting 'you're a coconut, you're a coconut'.

I walked away and went and saw my associate, who looked blankly at me and said 'yes, that sounds like something he would say'. Then did nothing and neither did I. I was pissed off with the lack of support I had gotten from the associate teacher and pissed off with myself for not being more assertive.

The next day I took full control for writing and I took in a coconut I showed the children then did a writing piece together using our senses of how it looked what was inside it what it tasted like. At every step I likened the coconut to myself and finally asked the class so am I a coconut? Do you think you could eat me? And that was how I dealt with

student and his father and not having the support of the associate teacher or the school although unprofessional, taught Fetau a valuable lesson of who she was not!

A piece of fruit

The way she dealt with this was the only way she knew how at the time. Had she known the way Siope (2010) had dealt with being called a coconut her identity may not have limited to the physical components of the coconut instead viewed it the same as Siope (2010) father's description of a coconut tree as a life source for the people of Samoa:

*The virtues of the coconut tree. In storms, we were told, the tree is sought after by the islanders and some mothers would tie themselves and their baby children to the tree so that they would not get blown away...The coconut tree is the life source of Samoa without it the people would die, it is used as food, drink and all its resource materials, every single aspect of it is used. The husk is used to ignite fires, for making rope, the palm leaves for building thatched roofs, sails, for fine mats, shelter and clothing... the stalks of the palms are used to make the salu (broom) for sweeping. The coconut oil especially is used to keep us healthy, young and strong, and kept our young men, the manaia (village princes) to*

that.

My moonwalking in higher education began at Manukau campus in my Nga Kete Wanaga Marae that place will always be my space.

*the tau le' a le' a (which are the untitled men of the village) looking handsome and all of our women forever beautiful...The coconut could traverse many seas, guided by the tides and would embed its roots deep into the sandy foundations of its new island homeland and there grow tall and strong enough to withstand storms. "Where there are coconut trees there is life. (Siope2010, p 40)*

The quote by Siope (2010) is not a solution to racism but it is a powerful means for Fetau to use to counteract this specific racist term of being called a coconut.

## CHAPTER THREE: Post Graduate Study Space: Epsom

Title: Space invader

### Introduction:

*This chapter is also written in dual text, once again to differentiate between voices and thinking, whilst studying at the Epsom campus.*

Old planet yucky memories

#### ***Fetaui's narrative***

##### **Life at work whilst studying:**

I had been working as a teacher in decile one school for six years and had become discouraged. In my first year of teaching I emailed my lecturers from Manukau about my experiences as a beginning teacher, one thing that stood out for me was that I was way weigh at the bottom of the food chain.

I began to understand what the Schooling and Society paper meant about the system and how in our classroom we could make a difference with the children in our learning space of our classroom. So for the first four years that was my focus however as each year progressed it became harder to ignore the system. The power of how the system influences me and indirectly my students became harder and harder to ignore. I then opted to study I thought maybe they would hear me if I got more qualified so I enrolled

#### ***Jerodeen's analysis***

##### **The reality of teaching**

Seven years later with more life experience Fetaui decides to go back into higher education. Her motives here for going back to higher education are somewhat based on ego and the need to be validated. Her actions to go back to higher education as a means of escapism. Fetaui's experiences as a teacher and the system/politics had become overbearing. Unbeknown to her she was taking the same path her previous lecturer had taken by using study as a means of escapism and validation.

The word escapism earlier on in this analysis is what is taking place. In this instance Fetaui is using Bourdieu (1995) sub-type of cultural capital, institutionalised cultural capital whereby she is now gaining credentials to validate and counteract what is taking place within the school context. Fetaui thinks that by gaining another

in the post-graduate diploma.

After juggling study with the rest of my life I applied for ministry of education scholarship for the following year. Again school politics had become unbearable. The bullying of staff members including myself was rife I could not see a way out. Thankfully I received the scholarship which meant I was able to teach for the first three weeks of that year and study until the last three weeks of the school year.

For the first 3 weeks I worked as a teacher aide in a year one class and at the end of the year I returned for the last 3 weeks of school. I returned blessed and seven months pregnant my duties were cleaning and moving furniture.

Obviously nothing had changed within the school system. While I was on study leave they became more heart-less.

**New planet new aliens**

### **Exploring the new planet**

I was working full-time and studying this particular paper and this was my first encounter with another campus beside the Manukau campus. I wasn't sure where to park so I parked on the side street and climbed a slight hill all I see are ugly buildings I finally find my room and I enter

qualification she will escape the abuse which is taking place at school. Although Fetau escapes the visible abuse, the repercussions of the unseen is being carried within her.

### **Physical space**

Fetaui's fears of being in a new location are evident. The way she back tracks into her south thinking for identity is repetitive, she makes notions of looking for familiarity, both physical spaces, the Marae which she claimed and bonded as part of her identity in chapter two and then food. The Va' tapuia-

cautiously wondering what was before me I walked into a huge unknown space. At this point I felt like an alien visiting a new planet. I look for spaces I can identify with unfortunately there is no Marae or a Powhiri greeting and worse there is no food. Both important components in making me feel at home.

### **New lecturers**

The paper had three lecturers one was Pasifika and the other two were Pakeha. They did their introductions our class size was small there were 3 Pasifika women including myself and the rest were Pakeha no men in our class.

I did a presentation on the inquiry work which I had done within my school context in our class one of my lecturers asked if they could have a copy for their colleagues as they were writing about inquiry. I gave freely because where I'm from in the south-side this is the way we roll.

sacred space (Amituanai-Tolosa, 2007) is not present in Epsom. Fetui felt the loss of security she had studying at Manukau which Stephenson, Rio, Anderson & Millward, (2008) discuss in the 'voices of Manukau' research. If Manukau had started a post-graduate programme earlier would Fetui have stayed in teaching as long as she did? Or would she have gone back to what was comfortable?

### **The Va'**

When requested a copy from her 'inquiry' presentation, you will note that she gave it 'freely...because where I'm from in the south-side that's how we roll' Fetui has no regard of intellectual property, copyright, or ethical issues when giving 'freely' her work in inquiry.

There are three very different issues. First is Fetui's naivety and her lack of Bourdieu's (1995) 'cultural capital' had she known the importance intellectual property she may not have given it so freely. The second is the power of the 'teu le va' (Anae, 2010) and the Va' fealoaloa'i (Tuagalu, 2008) emphasis to respect those in authority and cherish the space by keeping the peace. Fetui has no choice culturally she has to give what she has over to the superior. The third is the giving which is untainted with a payback

system which is associated with her South side thinking.

New planet new insights

### **Empowerment and new insights**

The following year I studied full time as a post-graduate student. The class had two lecturers. One was a famous researcher. I quickly began to realise that not all great researchers are good lecturers. Don't get me wrong there is a clear distinction between researchers, presenters and lecturers, well in my mind that is. In this case the researcher was passionate about her research which made her a presentation interesting but she had zero nurturing skills as a lecturer. I miss the lecturers at Manukau I miss the holism. I once again struggled with this paper.

Next my sister in-law and I enrolled on another paper walked into the class room and sat through the first lecture and vowed never to go back there firstly it was packed and everyone was so intense. I ended up doing a paper under critical studies and this paper blew me away it was taught indirectly in an inquiry way.

We were able to use our experiences and create a research project we had to use new theorists we had never encountered and do

### **Pedagogy**

Fetaui notices the difference between researchers, presenters, and lecturers which is an interesting judgemental observation. . According to hooks (1994) engaged pedagogy is not only about giving power to the students, it is students and lecturers grow together holistically. In examining the narrative it seems as if Fetaui is left behind and is not growing.

Could this be what was missing from the two papers of Fetaui Post-graduate diploma? If so it would confirm the analysis in chapter two that in Manukau this was what was taking place between students and lecturers an holistic (hooks, 1994) approach to pedagogy.

However in addressing this notion of holistic approach hooks (1994) does assert that individual professors complain that students want life changing classes and concur that this is not realistic. I believe that in this case Fetaui is expecting this to happen at Epsom campus because of her experience in Manukau where her life not only in education but her identity evolved

a presentation and follow through with the proposed research. This paper seemed to be all over the place however I viewed it as part and parcel of an inquiry approach I thought it was fabulous. As I remember preparing for my final presentation I realised how much bitterness I had towards the school where I had been teaching and it was evident in my research I was out for blood, the wounds were deep and came out in the presentation. But for the first time I was able to understand what was going on at school by using theories in education about control. I suppose there was a sense of freedom in that process but the bitterness didn't go away and neither did the feeling of inferiority and dumbness!

### **Matters of the heart**

#### **A heart matter**

Finally the last paper in my post-grad diploma the research methodologies paper I am 6 months pregnant and look and feel like a monster.

I have been told by fellow students this paper is the worst paper it had a high failure rate. Which meant for me being Pasifika I was definitely going to fail. How depressing I thought! And then I met the lecturer. She was lovely yes she was hard but there was

dramatically she had unrealistic expectations for Epsom campus.

By the third paper you can feel the excitement that Fetaui has with being given the freedom by using an inquiry approach to create a research project then you sense the sadness of her realisation of her motives behind doing the research which was influenced mainly by bitterness. This third paper allows Fetaui to use education as a means to free herself hooks (1994) discusses that education is a tool in freedom.

#### **Importance of support**

The tsunami experience renders an example of the life the higher education students face outside of the academia world.

The auto-ethnographer here seeks verisimilitude a buy in from the reader to feel and experience the narrative (Ellis & Bochner, 2011).

Within this particular narrative Fetaui includes her cultural identity ties to Samoa and enables the reader to explore her

something lovely about her, she would often start each session talking about her moko or her children and I felt instantly drawn to her.

As time progressed she also shared her academic struggle with our class. Her assignments and lectures set us up for a research we could do. Her famous words which still ring today in my thoughts are... 'I don't want to see quotes in your assignments, if I see quotes that tells me you were too lazy to explain what it meant'...

She went overseas for a conference towards the end of our semester but we could always contact her. While she was away we had our final assignment due. Up to this date I had never handed in or asked for an extension on any assignment whilst studying in higher education.

Then the morning of 27th of September 2009, I turned on my TV to Sunrise TV three and watched the coverage of the Tsunami in Samoa. My heart skipped a beat. They mention Lalomanu my mother's birth village. I yelled out to mum to 'come quick a Tsunami has hit Lalomanu' mum and dad come out of their room, I ring my sister and tell her watch the news she said she had heard and she was on her way over. I'm looking at my mother and her face is turning pale she clings onto dad and says its

historical lineage, through her mother and we, as an audience are able to testify and witness the experience (Denzin, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Ellis & Bochner, 2011).

Va' tapuia (Amituanai-Tolua, 2007) is once again incorporated here. This time it is her mother that goes into the sacred third space. It is evident here that Fetau's third space of Va' tapuia is hereditary. In this shared third space Fetau is not an alien she is surrounded by like-minded people her family.

In regards to Fetau requesting an extension, this is an ordeal for her and she drives home that she did not want to be branded or stereotyped as another brown brother (Iosefo, 2012) not cutting it within higher education. 50's. Lafaialii (2012) discusses how Pasifika people were in demand in the 1950s to work in New Zealand factories. Then in the 1970's a dark era in New Zealand history a history in which Fetau was born into, the dawn raids took place. Pasifika people went from being needed, to being tossed out. So I would have to agree with Lafaialii (2012) that historically inequality is the foundation of the Pasifika in New Zealand. This inequality it is coupled with insecurity.

Fetau's hybridity is loaded with inequality

Lalomanu then prays....'Lord please be with my family'.....in no time my nephews, nieces, siblings and great nephews and nieces arrive to be together.

Some of us huddled around the TV and others were ringing through to Samoa, emailing and face booking. We have no communication with them. That night no one is able to sleep. We have heard that there are a number of fatalities. A family meeting is called and mum dad and siblings including spouses, and nieces are confirmed to fly out immediately to Samoa.

I'm frantic wanting to go, my father turns to me and says 'Fetaui you stay it has taken God sixteen years to trust you with another son you stay and look after him'. My heart ached with deep sorrow but I knew what he was saying was true. So I stay with my sister and nephews and nieces. Our job is to rally around organise containers of food, linen, clothes and building materials.

The next morning on sunrise I'm watching the destruction of the tsunami and in the camera shot I can see my aunty Fuimaono Rosa walking in the background I yell out to mum to come see it's her sister and she's alive. Everyone rushes to the sitting room, my mother and father are both praising the Lord we are stoked to see her. I email tv3

and insecurity. Her moon walk into life did not begin in higher education it began the day she was born into New Zealand society her insecurity and worthlessness is influenced by the foundations of her family's migration from Samoa to New Zealand and the politics at the time.

The Tsunami becomes a pivotal moment in Fetaui's life. Because of the Tsunami she sees New Zealand in a different light. Not in the light of inequality or insecurity. But in the light of loss and love. Fetaui therefore has a mind-set shift. The reflection in the mirror of a dark past in Fetaui's hybridity now has a thin light of hope.

At this junction this narrative is used as a means of therapy. A means to understand Fetaui and her experience. (Kiesinger, 2002; Poulos, 2008, cited in Ellis & Bochner, 2011). By using third space she is able to construct new knowledge and identify key moments which help shape her identity as a New Zealand born Samoan.

and thank them.

Yay! we finally get a phone call from Samoa. My mother is on the phone talking to her sister she just saw on TV. Mum is sitting on her lazy-boy, praising the Lord that her sister is safe then she asks her sister 'how is our family?' My mother looks at us her face turns pale she tries to talk but her voice is shaking she says slowly, 'Grandpa is missing, Aunty is missing .....14 members of our family are missing'. Tears are streaming down my mother's face. She is strong she's the eldest in the family and she has to be. But her whole body is shaking with sadness.

Whilst the dramas of the tsunami are unfolding, I'm thinking about my assignment that's due and how I'm going to fit my studies with the organising of everything. I email my lecturer and give her the heads up that I may need a dreaded extension. She replies back from her conference overseas with the warmest email saying for me to take my time.

I'm in awe by her reaction. I had often thought of the lecturers at post-grad level as academic robots, but this lecturer had a care factor. Because of this I managed to get my assignment done and handed it in a week later. I didn't need to but because of the way she was I wanted to work harder not for

myself but to let her know that I wasn't taking advantage of her.

The research class had heard about what had happened and were sympathetic with my situation being pregnant and tsunami one of the ladies gave me a card and a gift for my unborn baby.

During the tsunami I saw New Zealand in a different light, I learnt that everyone is connected in some way or another, I learnt that loss crosses all races, colours and sizes. I realised how important rallying together in love in times of devastation helps heal the loss.

## CHAPTER FOUR-A: Masters of Profession Studies in Education:

First post-graduate paper offered at Manukau campus:

Title: I am home

I am no longer a stranger

I am no longer a number

I am no longer an outcast

I am no longer invisible

I am home...

***JOFI***

Introduction:

*This is the final dual text in this dissertation. Once again it is representative of voices spaces, moments and processes, which are constructing the Pasifika girl in the mirror.*

My space

### ***Fetaui's narrative***

#### **Home**

Finally back at Manukau campus...my home...its summer school and I'm back home woohoo I drive through Otahuhu into Otara and I begin to reminisce of my amazing time as an undergraduate. Within seconds I find a car park mind you it is summer school, hehe. I hop out of the car and breathe in the warm summer breeze. The whole time I'm thinking and feeling...I'm home.

### ***Jerodeen's analysis***

#### **Space-Location home**

In the Manukau Voices research Stephenson (2009) found that the diverse students and growth of Manukau was largely influenced by its location. The expenses for travel were favourable of Manukau compared to the city campus. Transportation and access to free parking was a draw card for the undergrads to enrol at Manukau. In this narrative Fetaui is quick to disclose the ease of finding a car park yet at the same time is realistic that it

Without hesitation I walk swiftly to see my Marae, my haven, my spiritual space of refuge peace and solace, with the biggest smile I say 'hey it's me! I've missed you!!!!' If I could fit my arms around the Marae I would've given it a big warm hug to let it know that, its daughter had returned home. I look around to see if there is a powhiri for the newbies into the hood. There is no one to welcome our new class onto my Marae. Granted it is summer school which means it's down to business and no time for that cultural touchy feely stuff hmmm... really? Wish they did.

may have been due to the paper being offered in summer school.

K/new whanau

### **The class**

The three lecturers are all European women. They seem excited about being the first post-grad paper being taught at the Manukau campus. I'm also thrilled for Manukau, it has only taken eleven years, I think sarcastically, ah well but better late than never.

We get straight into introductions our class is a good mix of ethnicities. While the introductions are being done I can't shake the feeling of elation of being home! I want to get up and hug everyone and say

### **Identity & Emotion**

It is evident in this narrative the pride that Fetaui has in returning home to familiar settings. According to Ingleton (1999) by analysing emotion we are able to shape learning. She goes further to discuss the importance of pride and shame. Pride and shame is at the core of the construction of identity. In chapter two of being in the hood, Fetaui recognises that the location of the campus is one of disbelief and novelty perhaps this is because the area in which the campus is located is one of shame and lower class. However in her return for her masters

welcome. Some of the students around me seem uneasy so I opt not to scare them with my big hugs. I begin thinking hmmm...I wonder if they feel the same way I felt when I first went to Epsom campus.

It's the first day and I'm excited thinking I can contribute to this class I've got experience as an 'inquiry coach' at school and love teaching and modelling Inquiry. Within the first hour I realise this is not about the curriculum inquiry. Once again I'm way weigh out of my depth.

Where everybody knows your name

### **Cheers**

Manukau campus is like the sitcom 90's sitcom cheers where everybody knows your name. I love that!!!. On the surface the class itself is a cohesive unit where everyone is out to help each other. However I notice the usual leeches, know it all's, undercover scholars, lecturer hoppers, butt kisses.

Amongst this group of students are mini ME's. They are a couple of newly graduated Maori and Pasifika students. I spend time with them talking theorys through asking them questions to make sure they understand. They totally remind me of me in my first year of post-grad. I remember

paper she views it with pride Fetaui's identity has evolved from one of shame, disbelief and novelty to one of pride. Ingleton (1999) also confirms that emotions not only influence identity but also shapes the learning and experiences that take place between students and teachers.

### **Care and Va**

The importance of relationships run through this narrative and without her realising this Fetaui's motives for caring for the students is unconsciously based on her own identity being constructed and deconstructed. This is what Bhabha (1994) describes as third space. According to Davis (2010) Bhabha focusses on culture and the influences on identity. Fetaui did not wake up one day and decide that she was going to care and help others, this is where I believe the third space of the Va' is woven through her identity. Specifically the Va o tagata (space between people) by Tuagalu (2008); this space is

nodding a lot and pretending to understand but the whole time thinking HELP! I tried to encourage them, gave them my number, email and told them to contact me anytime. I literally stalked them. Why? Well I was home I knew what it was like being new to post-grad. The leap from degree to post-grad cannot be underestimated and my heart just feels for them.

The course continues and there is a student who is paired up with a leech and instead of being her critical friend she became away with the fairies friend. The student is way off base, I got wind of it and rung her. She disclosed she was so confused and that she wasn't going to return to class. I listened and heard her out, she was so upset. I told her nope that's not how we roll at Manukau and that she had better turn up the next day and not to worry, I would be by her side. This student did show up the next day and I gave her the biggest hug I was so proud of her!! She also passed that paper and the leech that was her critical friend also passed. Grrrr I'm not sure where the justice is there but such is life.

where Fetau is nurturing the students within her care. Fetau unconsciously helps those that she believes are reticent (Chanock, 2010). Within, her va o tagata (Tuagalu, 2008) she constructs how she views the differences in students. By Fetau labelling and judging the students as leeches and so forth she has counteracted the Va' fealoaloa'i, (the respectful space).

The Va tapuia (sacred space) Amituanai-Toloa (2007) is inclusive of the sacredness of Marae space. Sighting the Marae is confirmation that she is home. It is her sacred space of what she identifies as spiritual space, refuge, peace and solace. In this she has identified that this particular space is where parts of her identity have been constructed this is part of her third space. What is interesting is, Fetau is not Maori yet she identifies strongly with the Marae as hers. With Fetau's deep rooted identity within this space her care for others is a bi-product of her being home.

## CHAPTER FOUR-B: Masters of Profession Studies in Education:

Final taught master's paper Epsom campus:

Title: Identity shaped through space.

Introduction:

*This text is a woven with the narrative and theory. It is written as an expression of how, for the first time in higher education, Fetau and Jerodeen begin to merge as one. Fetau begins to understand that theory and life can be intermingled. As the paper unfolds Fetau realises she can use Jerodeen's knowledge of theory and use it to help understand Fetau. This interwoven piece is symbolic of Fetau and Jerodeen merging as one.*

Hmm...I've arrived no one is here yet. Once again I say to myself 'I'm far too eager' I walk around the classroom thinking...'hmmm I'm going to be in here for the rest of the semester...I'm not sure I like this room let alone the building it's ugly'.

Our first class and thankfully we have a small class. It consists of the lecturer, a colleague of hers that will be sitting in on the lecturers she can make it to (which I found rather odd) then all woman, a Pakeha, Tongan, Niuean-Samoan, Indian, and myself a Samoan later we had an addition of a full Niuean woman.

The lecturer introduces herself, she said 'I'm a mother-grandmother and I understand that there are things that can happen that's ok we will deal with it as we go'. She explained the expectations and although she had a structure for what was planned, she was open to change. While she's talking there is an air of professionalism yet humanity in her voice and demeanour in her stance.

**A powhiri with a difference**

She then introduced us to David Lusted (1986) triangle with the three points labelled as teacher student and curriculum. At first I think hmm... interesting but a little boring...then she gives us another hand out to read and it's a woman named Marama, (Grant, 1993) Wow instantly....she is my greeter in my porthole of learning on space and identity in higher education. As I read this story I feel as though I've just had a powhiri onto the University of Auckland Epsom campus even though the welcome is five years later and not in a physical

form. From reading Marama's story a powhiri had taken place spiritually within my Va' tapuia (Amituanai-Toloo, 2007).

### The effects of higher education in, the classroom of life

While sitting in this class I recalled an incident that took place at Manukau campus as an under-grad student. A tutorial had been offered for Maori and Pasifika students. It was to help Maori and Pasifika students with the Children's Literature paper. Yet all students were struggling with this paper. At the time I was the student representative. I voiced how unfair it was that our Pakeha family were ousted and believed that it would encourage segregation which would be detrimental to the ethos of Manukau campus.

Regardless of me voicing my discrepancies the extra tutorial classes went ahead. I did not attend. However the majority of the Maori and Pasifika students did. I remember thinking they were perpetuating the cycle of them, and us. And I hated it. Ten years on from this incident I am reading about Jones (1999) in my final taught master's class and I now understand the importance of difference and validation. However at that moment I began to question myself and say 'perhaps they felt threatened in not being heard if the Pakeha students had been a part of the class?' by questioning I begin to understand.

The questions became deeper and more personal: 'who am I that I could not be able to identify with my own people? I began to sense insecurity within myself. Ellsworth (1989) and Jones (1999) insecurity is similar to mine I felt a sense of loss that I had missed the point of what our Pasifika higher education students needed and I felt that my New Zealand born Pasifika knowledge and instincts was not enough to know my Pasifika people. From this I began to question myself as daughter of Pasifika parents, as a sibling as a wife and mother.

This paper created a sense of vulnerability. By questioning my own mind-set I began to unpack my identity as a mother. Had I, instilled in my son the drive to have Bourdieu's 'cultural capital (Nash, 2000) as first priority? And at what cost? I knew deep down inside at what cost and it's my Samoan language. Yes I have the principles and values that Pasifika believe in but I missed out on teaching my son the language. This time of reflecting of me as a Pasifika mother led me to remember a mothers' day family gathering where, I was criticised, for not teaching my sons the Samoan language. I was told I had failed as a parent;

then to clinch the dagger of insecurity and worthlessness in my heart I was told my parents had also failed by not teaching me the Samoan language.

Because of the Va feolaloa'i (space of respect) (Tuagalu, 2008) I sat and cried. I wanted to retaliate and say 'in the Samoan prisons they all speak Samoan and look at where they are!' I wanted to say 'I may not speak the language but I live by the principles of love!' I wanted to say 'I may not speak the Samoan but I would rather not speak the language than be an asshole that did!!' I wanted to say so...much but I couldn't I just sat and cried. The influence of the Va feolaloa'i in this case is not only in my third space it is in my body it is in my tears. I sat thinking I'm a New Zealand born Samoan who doesn't fit into this world of fa'a Samoa (The way of Samoa) and neither have I really fitted into the space of being a New Zealander.

### Unmasking

Learning was like this for every lecture. Not only did it challenge me in higher education but me outside of higher education. In our class we were privileged to have the rich experience and time to share and be heard. Ellsworth (1989) discusses how students voices within classrooms are not of equal standings and in this paper I would have to disagree I believe because the numbers were small and the relational/critical/engaged pedagogy was holistic (hooks, 1994) everyone was on equal standings I say this because everyone shared personal experiences which related to our educational experiences including our lecturer.

In my personal life throughout this paper my aunts were laid to rest. I had to leave to fly to Brisbane for both funerals. Needless to say both were heart-breaking. For a while I had viewed Pasifika students to be unreliable when it came to deadlines, I had become unconsciously quite arrogant and heartless when it came to excuses and reasons for punctuality for assignments. On the return from the last funeral I learnt that family/life is more important than deadlines. Although I handed in all assignments on time I continue to have an annoyance with myself for not seeing the importance of the Va' between other Pasifika students and their moments and processes and third space.

Initially the physical space was important to me however as the paper continued the physical space became a side issue. What became priority was unmasking the space in-between. I walked into this paper concerned with the physical space, I moon walk out

challenged into wanting to research how does 'higher educational space influence me as a Pasifika woman'.

## CHAPTER FIVE: Dissertation

### City campus experience:

Title: 'Spooky space'

#### Introduction:

*In this chapter I am alone. I am no longer bonded or privileged with relationships within a classroom context. I no longer have the comforts of meeting with colleagues once a week for two and half hours, to talk about theories and ties to the outside world. The journey of writing a dissertation alone is represented in two separate narratives. The first narrative is with the city campus and the last is with the Epsom campus. The analysis for both narratives is combined please note the analysis for both narratives is at the end of the Epsom campus experience.*

#### Death by hallway

I find my way to the room where the seminar about Pasifika students in higher education is to take place I walk in and BOOM! All white people I scan the room to see any brown faces....zero...I look for any white faces I may know....zero I quickly retreat and close the door and find the seat outside the room and sheepishly sit down, unsure if I should stay or go home. I decide to wait, breathe and pray. I then pull my phone out and text this caption below to my Son.

*'OMG im early n they al wite ppl I am d minority I felt so uncomfortable I retreat to the seat outsd sux no1hea the same color as me wite pple walkn past dr blah blah name oh hs door he goes past me 3 times witout a bat of an eyelid im awestruk of d isolation I feel so alone n ds corridor of academia snobbery y me bahahaha ptl my worth is founded n my God dr blah blah passes 1 last time caln owt 2 hs colleague down d hallway im cumn 2 get real coffee I sit n hum 2 myself wile ur at it get a real personality. At ds mo n time I am d dollar a day child w8n 2 b acknowledged d hallway wea academics pas thru wit so much clowt of knowledge yet no basic awareness of spaces of aroha n common decency 4 al of Gods creations nterestn.'*  
(March 2013)

While waiting two students came and sat on the couch both to the left of me. One looked Indian but later found out she was Pasifika. Hmm I realised sitting there that I was also invisible to them. I decide to venture once again into the room where I had felt intimidated and insecure earlier. I walked in and scanned the back row dam! The seats were all taken so I went to the second back row and sat on the edge.

### Santa to the rescue

I bend down to get my note pad and pen from my bag then see a pair of men's shoes. I got a shock standing in front of me is an old Santa like man with glasses who crouched down to speak to me, for a moment I think I'm in trouble, but then he says 'would you like a cup of tea or coffee?, there is a lovely lemon cake over there'. I was stumped. I thought I was only visible to myself. I flounder with words and say 'no thanks' I realise, once I've said that I had lied, I never turn down food but it was the fear of having to get up and be seen which frightened me. The Santa man smiled and walked away, I didn't get to thank him but that gesture put me at ease for a moment. I sat thinking only a man like Santa could have that effect on me.

### Seeking for connections

Finally after what felt like an eternity which in reality was just 5 minutes, a fellow brown woman walked into the room. There were no chairs left but I motioned to her to get her chair from the back she did and placed it beside me. I had never met this woman before but we instantly connected. She whispers to me 'hi' I whisper back 'hi' we both giggle. I introduce myself to her and she introduces herself to me. I ask her what she studying; she said she's a psychology Masters student. She asked me what I was studying I said I was education masters student we both giggled.

The researchers consist of a lecturer and the others are either, Masters Students and the other woman was their education person. The Samoan researcher girl has the surname of an affluent family in Samoa and I'm sitting there thinking.. hmmm.. How can I relate to her?....We are both Samoan but I could not understand her world of elitism and I doubt that neither could she understand my world of ghettoism.

### Noises and processes

I noticed something about myself.. I make noises while people are speaking if I agree I go.. hmmm.. Yes that's good and if I don't agree I go...hmmm.. as well. When it came to critiquing the research, a lecturer from politics was sharing his views on the research and at one point whilst I was agreeing with him with my.. hmmm.. Sounds he turned and asked me if he was saying the right thing. The content of his critique was on how their recommendations of smaller groups for Pacific and Maori should be the same for all students and that it all came down to good teaching practice which he believed was already taken place. I was agreeing with him that it should be the same but I also disagreed with him, my noises were the telling point of my thinking.

### The uneasy voice

After the Politics lecturer spoke, the Indian/Pacific woman spoke I found her to be quite self-seeking and I did not feel what she had to say added any value to the discussion. At this point I am feeling quite nervous and uneasy about speaking but I knew that I had to share what was on my heart. So, up goes my prayers coupled with my hand to notion the speaker that I had something to say. I go to speak and I'm shaking.. I'm shaking because I was about to let my guard down and be vulnerable to room full of white academics with a sprinkle of brown faces. I speak and say 'I have two things to say firstly to the assumptions that all teachers have good teaching practice is exactly that an assumption, if that were true, we wouldn't need this research. The thing about assuming, is that it makes an ass out of you and me, secondly I want to thank you for this research it's awesome to hear the voices of the Pasifika and Maori students coming through it gives me hope for my son's generation. After I spoke, I was trying to stop my body from shaking. I swear people could feel the vibration of my heart through the room. In my mind even the hallway was vibrating to the beat of my heart.

Epsom dissertation campus experience:

Title: LIFE

Life rolls out laughter

Life rolls out insecurity

Life rolls out fears

Life has eyes that see but do not hear or feel

My life is physically present but my mind is taking its time to catch up.

Life

JOFI

A day to be inspired

It has been 5 months since my car accident where I was diagnosed with mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) I am on the slow road to recovery. I register to attend a symposium at Epsom campus but due to being a late registration I needed to bring my own lunch as the lunch was catered for.

Seeking a connection

I'm already on the back foot, because I registered late. I see my name is not printed. Then, a familiar face from Manukau approaches the table and gives me a hand written name tag. She welcomes me instantly and we have a quick catch up. She had heard about my accident and we chatted about that. She looked quite busy so I said I would catch up with her later. I walk away looking at the sticker with my hand written name on it thinking how lovely it would have been if my name was printed like everyone else.

I go into the auditorium have a quick browse and opt to sit at the back on the corner of the table. I have a quiet giggle to myself as I'm now aware that I have a tendency to sit in the back and in the corner. As I sit, I begin to look around, the space is cold, filled with chairs and tables, the lights are on, yet it still feels cold. I feel cold and I'm unsure if it's because I didn't wear enough clothes or is it the feeling of the room? I look down and nope I'm layered with a lot of fat and a lot of clothes I'm physically warm yet the space feels cold.

I'm looking around for any familiar faces, for any Pasifika students. There are none. There are Asians, Indians, Africans and Palagi students. Then to my surprise, a Pasifika student turns up and sits right next to me. She's my ex-lecturer from Manukau. She is one of the facilitators for the day. I'm in awe, how is that, in a room of about 80, possibly 90, there are only 2 Pasifika faces.

### Invisible student hierarchy

Following the keynote speaker we had a group discussion. On our table there were two facilitators so my ex-lecturer went to facilitate another table. There were two parts, the first was for us to share our name and research and the second was to share what we found difficult and how did we overcome it. It was quite fascinating after everyone had answered the first question, which we did by going clockwise from the facilitator. By the time the second part began it was as though an invisible sifting process had happened. All those that identified as PhD students answered the second question it was no longer an orderly clockwise fashion it changed to a hierarchical of educational status. The three that weren't PhD students just sat and listened whilst the PhD students went back and forth with their difficulties and how they overcame them. Some people spoke several times and the those as the lower end of the food chain sat and listened dangling at the end of the food chain.

The issues were very real for them discussing how supervisors have pushed them into a field of research that they didn't want to go into. One lady ended up having to change her supervisor, another talked how her supervisors didn't get along, another discussed how PhD is a huge jump from her Masters then went into her story of how her Masters was a breeze, I secretly wanted to choke her! I looked over to where my ex-lecturer had gone to facilitate and thought hmmm...I wonder how she is doing at this time I saw her face look quite agitated, I had a little giggle. Yay our round table session had ended.

### Support or sabotage

Its morning-tea time, I caught up with my ex-lecturer and asked her about the facial she had made. She said a couple that were doing their PhD's at her table found island time very difficult to deal with, especially with Samoans. I cracked up laughing and said 'if I was them I would also find it difficult'. I'm feeling very grateful that I've got her to speak to during morning tea. Another ex-lecturer of mine from Manukau walks over, he doesn't look happy

to be there he doesn't recognise me but it's hard to forget his stony looking face and his low men's tone of a voice. I stand and listen while he and my other ex-lecturer are conversing. I'm amazed he's as grumpy as he looks, he begins to say how he's there because he has students that are presenting. He tells us he is sitting in the back of the room he has emails to clear. During morning tea, I see another Pasifika woman, she's helping with the morning tea hmmm...I think to myself...hmmm

For the second session I am in a new room. There are two women who are doing are written feedback for the presenters. I'm put off by the mannerism of one of the woman doing the feedback. She snaps in an icy cold tone at the PhD student o boy she's annoying me but I refocus. I am beginning to tire so I zone out. At the end of the session the icy cold woman does not disappoint and once again is abrupt and growls at the PhD student. I'm thinking you rude bitch cut them some slack I get up and walk out.

**Hallway passes and the big elephant in the room**

I find myself sitting in the hallway thinking how in this hallway I'm not as isolated as the hallway in city campus. I take some time out then walk into the session on bullying it has already begun so I sneak in and grab the nearest seat by the door, although I'd like to think I was quiet unfortunately moving my large body into a room is like moving a bear from its' beehive not a quiet experience.

The presenter shares of his experience of how he had a phone call at 11pm at night about his 16 year old son being in hospital as a result of bullying, everyone gasps. I sit there as the minority my mind wonders with shame hoping and praying it wasn't a Pasifika person that hurt his son. We all know that Pasifika and Maori children are renowned for bullying. I drift into third space –thinking processing assimilating information. I think it was awesome that he had personalised his researched but had a few concerns about it.

It is question time now and one person asked what was the statistics for bullying in regards to ethnicity? I'm sitting there thinking here we go it's the big elephant in the room I wonder how he will respond. He didn't answer the question. After a few more questions I put my hand up and ask him if this research had helped heal him from his bullying experience and how? And I wanted to know, because of this pre-experience, did he come into this research with any biases and if so what were they? His reply was, it happened 4 years ago and he is

healed and no, he had no biases. Immediately alarm bells are going off in my third space. For me there is, no time limit on healing and his answer of not having any biases made me think he was living in denial, I sat.

### And a little big girl waits

At the end of that session the facilitator makes an announcement that everyone that registered on time there was lunch for them in the auditorium and for them to go network with other people. Because I had received that phone call of having to bring my own lunch I make my way downstairs and sit at a bench outside, this is a caption I wrote on the day:

*'I'm now sitting outside having lunch on my own lols I'm a lil disheartened especially seeing everyone walking past to go to the auditorium. I could go in but I know, they know, I didn't register on time and I don't want to be identified or singled out as the typical brown girl who scabbed, a free meal...feeling like a loser...I sit and pray to my third space as what to do then loud and clear I hear my supervisors voice in my head saying 'Tau'i you are a strong woman go in there' (she had actually wrote those words 'Tau'i you are a strong woman ' for feedback due to a bad experience I had)...I'm off...(July, 2013)*

I'm greeted with the helpers who point me to a bench of lunches, I wait. I'm still worried, what if someone sees me and identifies me as the girl who registered late?...I've revert to the little unworthy brown child. Then I see my Manukau campus lecturer she comes through and touches me saying 'how are you? Have you had some lunch' I explain my situation , she says nothing she walks over to the bench points out 'meat or vegetarian', she winks 'help yourself there are delicious cookies there Fetau'i I know you'll love'. My heart melts I walk over and pick up a bag. I can hear in my third space my supervisor saying 'Go girl'. Although I was comforted by my third space and my Manukau lecturer's reassurance deep inside I did not feel as though I was entitled to the lunch and I showed this in my actions, as I quickly snuck it into my bag as though I had stolen it.

The next session begins I shy away and sit back in the corner at the back next to a lecturer I ask her, 'Where are all the Pasifika and Maori students?' 'How come I am the only Pasifika student here?' She replied, 'that in this hall, was a good representation of what the

University of Auckland is made up of many Asians many Indians, Europeans and Pasifika are the lowest represented especially at this level'. I am enlightened and saddened.

Finally the last key note speaker for the day...I'm secretly screaming 'I made it through to the end of the day...woohooo'...The key note speaks about herself she seemed real. I approach her later and discuss my autoethnography and she offers to help me. I am humbled by her gesture but unsure as I don't know her yet. My day has finally come to an end and I've had a rich day of life.

## Analysis

### Introduction:

*I have combined the analysis of both narratives and listed the analysis into the common themes and threads that I've identified as important for, unpacking moments and processes for the Pasifika girl to reflect in the mirror and construct her identity.*

### Space & Hallway identities:

The narrator begins with a text she sent her son while she sat in the hallway space at the city campus. In the following narrative she also discusses the hallway space at the Epsom campus. According to Jessop, Gubby & Smith (2012), the physical space within higher education influences mood and morale. They further go to describe how the lecturers are more concerned about the physical aspects of the teaching space. However they found that the students lacked the same concern about the physical spaces. In these narratives the Fetui counteracts a student's perspective and discusses how the hallways are more than just physical space holders. Hallways are the spaces of negotiation where warmth and acceptance can occur.

For her as a higher education student sitting in the hallway at the city campus amalgamated the physical space, with third space. She looks around the hallway for a connection and finds an academic too busy to notice her. Fetui finds herself not only texting her son; she is also using her Va' tapuia (Amituanai-Toloa, 2007) as a means of comfort. Fetui is creating her space of safety from the insecurities that she is facing being alone as the only Pasifika higher education student there. This hallway space is quite a contrast to the narrators Epsom hallway experience, she compares the hallways and discusses how in the Epsom campus hallway she is not isolated as she was in the city campus.

### Symbolic Hierarchy negotiated into third space

Cox, Herrick and Keating (2012) discusses symbolic hierarchy and how this is present in the spaces of higher education. Hierarchies help shape identity within the second narrative the PhD students moved into a zone of hierarchy without them realising. I believe that this is partially influenced by the third space process. After the students had given their status in academia the third space process kicked into play with the PhD students. They were all influenced by the information shared and consciously created a third space of hierarchy. I have said that it was a conscious decision because they were constructing their identity within third space. I believe that they are aware of where they sat and where the other students sat in the hierarchy of higher education. This is confirmed as only the PhD students spoke and the lower status students sat in silence (Chanock, 2010) where they were no longer of value to the discussion. Granted that Cox, Herrick and Keating's (2012) symbolic hierarchy meaning is intended for the physical spaces of symbolic hierarchy I believe symbolic hierarchy does not necessarily have to be one of physical spaces I believe that it also constructed and deconstructed within 'third spaces'.

### Relationships and connections

Fetaui looks for connections for example the Tongan psychology Masters student the connection with being Pasifika. She also does this in trying to identify with the Samoan researcher but then she decides after hearing the researchers' surname that they were from two completely different worlds and the connection ended. At the conclusion of the Epsom narrative Fetaui has an opportunity to take the help offered by the keynote speaker but is unsure because she does not have a relationship with her.

The insecurity of being Pasifika and a minority at both campuses is a common theme. For both narratives Fetaui goes to her Va' tapuia for reassurance she is meant to be, in the spaces of academia. Amituanai-Tolosa (2007) discusses when uncertainty and insecurities of any type arise the Va' tapuia is where these issues are connected, nurtured, clarified negotiated and shaped. English (2005) discusses how third space is used as a form of rebutting I believe that Fetaui uses the Va' tapuia as a form of rebutting her insecurities of being alone as Pasifika person in higher education. This process of rebutting, by using third space and Va' tapuia she is able to validate her existence in the higher educational spaces.

## CHAPTER SIX: Conclusion

### Introduction:

*The influence of institutional spaces in higher education on the Pasifika girl in the mirror in this, dissertation was measured by the physical spaces Cox, Herrick and Keating (2012) Va o tagata (space between people), Va' fealoaloa'i (space of respect), (Tuagalu, 2008) Va' tapuia (sacred space), (Amituanai-Tolosa, 2007) Va' (Wendt, 1999) and third space (Bhabha, 1994). In this conclusion I will focus specifically on moments and processes; the influence of physical/space; humanity hope and heart then conclude with the final lived poem of this dissertation.*

### Moments processes and identity

By focussing on moments and processes Fetau is able to identify; the moments in regards to the narratives; the processes through narrative and analysis; and the shaping of Fetau's identity through both the narratives and analysis. This confirms Chang's (2007) autoethnographic view that through these narratives and analysis Fetau is able to understand cultural connection between, self, others and society. Spry (2001) explains that autoethnography narratives critiques the position of self and others in its social context. Moments within the spaces of the narratives give voice to the reticent (Chanock, 2010).

Within this dissertation moments and processes are filtered through Fetau's third space (Bhabha, 1994) and Va' (Amituanai-Tolosa, 2007; Tuagalu, 2008; Wendt, 1999). By using this filtering process Fetau is able to view the spaces of higher education through intrinsic lenses as the Pasifika girl as well as extrinsic lenses as Jerodeen the analyser. By doing this she is able to construct her identity within and be able to acknowledge parts of the spaces which are excluded yet, continue to influence her identity. (Bhabha, 1994; Hall, 1993; cited in Hall, 1996)

### Influence of physical /space

Stephenson (2009) discusses how the lecturers from the city campus found themselves having to transition themselves into the ethos of Manukau campus. The physical space, and the invisible space of, empowerment, emancipation, love and hope of the Manukau campus not only influenced the students but also the lecturers. Because of this Fetau unknowingly

began to measure the other campuses according to her experiences at Manukau. Fetui's challenges of being uncertain about identity began to evolve through Graham Smith's Kaupapa Maori theory of change (1991) regardless of her being Pasifika. Her discovery of who she was, consolidated her place within higher education.

Her positive holistic experience at Manukau influenced her to return to higher education. It is with Fetui's experiences that I would like to highlight the importance of undergraduate programmes. For there to be retention (bums on seats) in higher education, bell hooks (1994) holistic engaged pedagogy and Siopoe (2013) theory of being 'present' (p.47) in regards to cultural relational pedagogy must be implored. The space at Manukau which Fetui gleaned from became her measuring stick in higher education. Because of her *cheers* experience she returned back to higher education.

#### Humanity, hope and heart

In this autoethnography we see the humanity in both higher educational lecturers as well as the humanity of Pasifika girl in the mirror. The notion of hope is also a common theme that is threaded throughout this dissertation: hope from her older brother; hope during her marriage breakdown; hope during the tsunami; and hope within the voices of her lectures. It is with this hope and the experiences of the heart (Pelias, 2004) that Fetui is able to reflect on the colonisation and assimilation (Bhabha, 1990) which she and her family and her, experienced. Fetui uses Pelias (2004) and Bhabha (1994) to look into the reticent (Chanock, 2010) of the past and be able to construct within her third space (Bhabha, 1994) new beginnings and new insights. These new insights guide her momentum in the moments and processes whilst moonwalking .

Earlier in chapter one, I discussed how I did not view Teu le va (Anae, 2010) as a win-win situation in regards to education or in life. After consulting with my cultural advisors I am now able to understand that the Va' tapuia (Amituanai-Tolosa, 2007) is what makes teu le va (Anae, 2010) a win, win situation. Regardless of the status that anyone has, your core belief in God (Va' tapuia) and His leading means that whatever decision is made is because God (Va' tapuia) has allowed it. Our job as humans is to ensure that His values of humility, respect, and love are at the core of everything we do.

The third space objective for this autoethnography was for the authors (Jerodeen, Olivaigafa, Fetaui Iosefo) to find culture (Denzin, 2006). At the start of this dissertation the authors were lost floating aimlessly in between worlds and planets. Through this experience of using and understanding third space (Bhabha, 1994) and the Va' in particular the Va' tapuia (Amituanai-Toloa, 2007) the sacred, spiritual space, the authors have been able to use higher education as a means to gather, to weave, to dance with parts of their identity. By doing this Jerodeen, Olivaigafa, FETAUI, Iosefo has found the culture she needs to for this time within this space.

Title: Pasifika girl in the mirror part 2:

*I see a Pasifika girl who still has the migrant big nose*

*I see a Pasifika girl who understands that identity is a constant*

*I see a Pasifika girl who is unsure but willing to try*

*I see a Pasifika girl who rings her mother to have conversations in Samoan*

*I see a Pasifika girl who loves her family and her God*

*I see a Pasifika girl thankful for the experience of higher education*

*I hear the father of the Pasifika girl say "you know Jesus, you know everything"*

*I see a Pasifika girl moonwalking with a jig in her hips, smiling looking up*

*I see a Samoan Pasifika girl*

*JOFI*

Thank you for taking the time to moonwalk through this autoethnography in higher education. May you continue to dance in the blessings of God, education, family, life and love.

Kia manuia

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