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**Taonga Maioha: (Born this way)**  
**The In-depth Stories of three Māori, Pasifika, and**  
**Indigenous Queens**

A thesis  
Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

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by

**PAIKEA RONGONUI TE TUI-Ō-RONGO IO-O-TE-RĀ BONAVENTURA LUCINO**  
**TĀMUERA ARIKI**



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## Abstract

Who else has the right to define these, Queens?

This thesis provides a vital platform for the voices of three *Māori*, *Pasifika*, and Indigenous Queens, allowing them to share their transformation stories in their own words. Their experiences and feelings about in their words “*being born into the wrong bodies*” highlight the complex realities of identity and the struggle for acceptance by others.

These Queens are unified in their desire for dignity and respect. Dignity and respect underscore a fundamental human right. They seek recognition in all areas of their lives, from healthcare to education, housing, employment, and beyond. By articulating their needs, they advocate for themselves and all marginalized individuals, seeking fairness and understanding within systems that often overlook them.

Focusing on their lived experiences is crucial for fostering empathy and promoting systemic change, as it brings attention to the disparities they face and the importance of inclusivity in society. By sharing their truths, these Queens contribute to a broader dialogue about identity, respect, and the pursuit of equality for all.

This thesis aims to illuminate the transformation stories or *pūrākau* of ten *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens, to foster understanding of their unique experiences. The focus on those who identify as *wahine* despite being born biologically male allows the reader to highlight the rich diversity of gender identity within these cultures and groups.

The Māori Ethics Committee granted ethics approval for the study, thereby paving the way for the Queens to tell their stories or *pūrākau* from their truths and perspectives.

*Taonga Maioha* details the in-depth transformation stories of three *Māori-Pasifika* Queens aged 60 plus, supported by a contextual and cultural analysis of their generation. The voices and stories of the Queens are central to this thesis. These stories are thematically analyzed to unpack the cultural and

generational influences impacting their identities. The core identity constructs of *whakapapa*, *tinana*, *hinengaro*, and *wairua* are used to frame and organize their transformation stories according to their instructions. Above all, this thesis is anchored in their rights to define themselves on the premise that they have the *mana* to define themselves irrespective of others who define them from the sidelines of their lives. Their definitions are theirs alone. The storytellers call themselves Queen, *Wahine*, or women. This is based on the assertion that it is their right to be called a Queen. In certain contexts, they may refer to themselves as *takatāpui* and transgender for the sake of acceptance by others. This thesis is written to enhance the *mana* of the storytellers. These are their stories and their truths.

The late Dame Georgina Beyer, was one of the original participants in this thesis. Many interviews were conducted with her. Instructed by Georgina before her passing to publish elements of her story as part of this thesis. Unfortunately, the Ethics Committee at Waikato University did not accept this due to her passing. Hence, the reason ‘First Lady’ was introduced, where Liz Roberts gives exclusive details of her change, both legally and physically.

## Preface and Acknowledgements

To Dr Keri Rose Lawson – Te Aho, thank you for all your support, especially in reviewing my writing and offering advice. Secondly, to our beloved puppy Whetu, who died during the writing of my thesis. Putting aside my grief to be able to continue this work was, without doubt, one of the hardest things I have ever had to do.

To all the *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens here in *Aotearoa* and abroad, those who have departed.

Vouvou Tane, Grandpa Lieutenant Colonel John Douglas Harrington was born 12<sup>th</sup> January 1911 in McMinnville, Oregon, USA and died on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 1976 in Ureia, Araura, age 65.

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Koro to my Tamariki, the recognised orator, custodian, and teacher, Dr Joseph Mason, who passed away at the age of 87. Dr. Joseph Hohepa Te Pepehā Mason (Koro Joe). Last remaining child of the late Mataika Mason and Makarena Mate Mason (nee Merito). Mokopuna of Hone Meihana (Ngāti Pūkeko) and Hana Meihana (nee Rewi) and Eru Merito (Ngāti Pūkeko/ Ngāti Hōkōpu) and Parepikiao Merito (Ngāti Māhanga, Te Arawa).

Ernest Takave Maine, Date of Birth 22nd March 1976, Departure 8th March 2020, single, no issue. Self-trader business, Maine Contractor Ltd, His business closed when he passed on, debt-free.

Haere, haere, haere rā ki Avaiki Nui, Avaiki Roa, Avaiki Pāmamao.

## Dedication

This work is dedicated to the Queens in this study who continue to live their best and most authentic lives, ahakoa te aha (regardless of the many challenges they face, including discrimination from within whānau and the general public). May your stories bring clarity and understanding about the many challenges faced, and may this knowledge positively impact the lives of young up-and-coming Queens, their communities, and their families. Above all, may you live free from violence and filled with love, kindness, and acceptance. It has been an honour to be part of your journeys. Thank you to Joey Mataale of Tonga, whose work with the Leitis is vitally important, and to Phylesha Brown-Acton. Thank you to Tangee Kokaua for your support and active radical courage to fight for your community.

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*Mā ngā Atua koutou e tiaki e manaaki i ngā wā katoa, oti rā ki o koutou whānau.*

*“I ōrea te tuatara ka puta ki waho”*

(A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions.)

*Nāku Noa nā*

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## Karakia (Reo Māori mai Akatokamanava)

I'i Reinga te matangi o

Avaiki!

Taringa tū mei te kao 'enua

o Avaiki!

Mārino ta'atea te Moana

Nui-ō-Kiva!

E tupuranga Ariki no'ou, ka

ta'a ana Te Moana Nui.

'E Tangaroa-iti e!

Tangaroa-iti-kura!

Ngā ei'eia te ariki nui.

Pūtaranga mai ei tāku ingoa ki te Ao Nui-Mārama-o-Iva!

Tāku Ariki e,

Te Ariki ka tupu!

Tāku Ariki e,

Te Ariki ka tere!

No'ou te vakarangiroa

ka vai e.

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**CHAPTER 1**

## 1.1 Introduction

## 1.2 The realities and risks of authenticity for Queens

Commented [KT1]: Check TO

Outing oneself as a Queen can be dangerous. Stepping into one's authenticity requires courage and an inherent assumption that Queens have the right to define who they are for themselves. The Queens in this study asserted their unequivocal right to call themselves Queens or *wāhine*. It is not a term that they use to define themselves, albeit they will tolerate this labelling by others for whom they have respect, and to accommodate the fact that people will not accept them as *wāhine* or Queens. However, when in their own company, they call each other Queens, girls, and *wahine*.

Moreover, they believe that authenticity is achievable and worthy of celebration. These foundations for change are woven into the *pūrākau* or stories of the three centrals plus seven peripheral storytellers, yet equally as important, courageous individuals in this study. In their words, "being outed", that is having one's identity publicly disclosed without consent, tramples and transgresses the *mana* of Queens who need to control and indeed have every right to control (in their words) the when, who, how, and why of their narrative(s) and whether they wish to disclose their transformation(s). Being outed can be profoundly destructive because this behaviour is situated within the inflammation of moral judgment, denigration, violence, humiliation, and other consequences that give people the self-perceived knowledge to target these individuals. Furthermore, knowledge and disclosure of these and other Queens are often weaponized to threaten, shame, exploit, denigrate, and harm, physically, mentally, spiritually, and *ā wairua*. Whereas the process of speaking one's truth provides an opportunity for *whānau* and community to convey their support.

The Queens in this study spoke of their desire to share their authenticity as an expression of completeness and a completion of their journey(s). Authenticity means they can express themselves and move on with life. Despite the many challenges they face from society in general, the public, *whānau*, *hapū*, *iwi*, and significant others, they find the strength and courage to be authentic. In their words, they have no choice but to be themselves.

According to the storytellers in this thesis, they don't want to shame their *whānau* or their parents; hence, they often change their family names. Each of the three who have opted to tell their *pūrākau* asserts that their story will help others, especially young up-and-coming Queens, thereby bringing

comfort and a thorough understanding of risks and/or the value of transitioning.

There is one Queen who is a mother and a grandmother. She raised her child and grandchild. While not included as one of the three in-depth *pūrākau*, but one of the ten in this study, her story is important and exceptional, making it possible to become a mother and grandmother, although born biologically male.

Most Queens prefer to be called by their names and female pronouns. However, they opt for their name if someone struggles to accept them. Being called a pronoun does not work for them, nor does it work for Queens generally, because they have long hair, breasts, and are dressed as a *wahine*. Given this, there should not be any confusion about who they are. Yet, they are often subjected to misgendering, violence, and other forms of abuse. This is a reflection of society's rejection of their authentic identities and their right to define themselves.

For the three Queens in this study, the experiences are not all bad, albeit that for one of them, *whānau* acceptance of her identity as a Queen was and is far from normalized or accepted. *Whānau* responses to disclosure may be violent and abusive, as evident in one of these stories. However, these Queens' *pūrākau* must be entered into the public discourse so that upcoming Queens can better manage harmful public responses and make informed decisions about their responses to and from their *whānau* and the public.

In every culture, Queens are born – in the words of the ten Queens in this study, '*we are born this way*'. That hasn't changed over the decades since the signing of the *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*/Treaty of Waitangi. As *Māori* sought solutions to the issues impacting *Māori*, by means of the Treaty of Waitangi guarantee of self-determination, the critics of *Māori* control over all matters *Māori* continued to rally a deeply racist movement anchored in right-wing politics.

The decision to pursue surgical transformation in the public health system or privately provides the substance of the individualized decision to declare themselves a 'Queen'. This involves difficult choices. It may not be appropriate for every Queen to make such a declaration, particularly when cultural and familial resistance to disclosure raises risks for the individual and or their communities. Such risks include violence, humiliation, and other forms of abuse, including being ousted from *whānau*. In this research, emphasis is given to understanding how these Queens survive.

### 1.3 The Lay of the Land

It is hypothesized, perhaps even a commonplace assumption, that ‘Queens are Drag Queens, Trans, Transgender, Queer, and *Takatāpui* people’. This is often asserted by those who define themselves as cisgender, as there is limited evidence in the literature review about who Queens are, as stated by Shand (2023), Counter, (2011), and Human Rights Commission, 2008. However, these labels are wrong and unacceptable according to the *Māori, Pasifika*, and Indigenous Queens in this study. The Ethics Committee, Faculty of *Māori* and Indigenous Studies at the University of Waikato permitted me to conduct this study. Further information can be obtained via the Faculty of *Māori* and Indigenous Studies at the University of Waikato.

The three in-depth *pūrākau* or stories in this thesis are recounted in the Queens’ own words and highlight salient memories of growing up with the knowledge that they are *wāhine*, although born physically, biologically male. Their right to define themselves is bold and courageous in a world quick to judge and redefine who they are, from the sidelines of their lives.

### 1.4 The Right to Recognition Before the Law

Here is an example of Queens’ challenges when in contact with everyday legalities.

#### THE RIGHT TO RECOGNITION BEFORE THE LAW (ARTICLE 16, ICCPR)

- New Zealand’s official identity documents contain sex / gender information which can be difficult to correct for transgender, non-binary, and intersex people.
- The human rights principle or self-declaration for identity documents is not yet full implemented, it applies for passport and drivers’ licence records but not for birth certificates.
- The current process to amend sex on a birth certificate requires meeting a medical threshold and the involvement of the Family Court, presenting barriers to having a child, enrolling in school, getting married, and other areas of life.

Figure 1 - *Recognition Before The Law*, (Series & Nilsson, 2018).

The right to move away from legal systems that deny or limit legal capacity based on disability. The disability is based on being a Queen.

## **1.5 Homosexual Law Reform Act 1986**

The attitudes, roles, and beliefs about gender roles in culture were challenged and significantly reformed in *Aotearoa* in 1986, with the advent of the Homosexual Law Reform Act. The published narrative about how the act came about reads:

This article examines the legal history of the campaign for homosexual law reform in New Zealand in the 1980s. Only a few substantial publications discuss the campaign for homosexual law reform in 1984 – 1986 in depth. This article asks how law reform organisations interacted with the law and legal processes to ensure the success of the Homosexual Law Reform Act 1986 to better understand an understudied area of legal history. Key findings include the significant involvement of organisations as they engaged in a wide variety of activities across the entire campaign to achieve law reform. Reform organisations close relationship with Fran Wilde and her leadership style supported the campaign. How reform organisations interacted with the law was shaped by substantial learnings from previous, failed campaigns for law reform in New Zealand. Further, reform organisations shift from seeking tolerance from the law to seeking equality was arguably instrumental to their campaign, particularly as reform organisations were united around this political goal for the first time while the transnational gay liberation movement prospered. Finally, part 2 of the Bill – the amendments to the Human Rights Commission Act 1977 to include sexuality in its anti-discrimination provisions – failed at the second reading because it was under – discussed, lacked jurisprudential weight and misunderstood, rather than because reform organisations saw it as a section that could be expended in favour of the decriminalisation limb of the Bill.

Figure 2 - *MP Fran Wilde*, (Shand, 2023).

The Homosexual Law Reform Act provided for the decriminalization of sexual offenses between men, (Counter, 2011). The second part applicable to the *kaupapa* of this thesis was to declare discrimination in terms of sexual orientation as unlawful. However, the legislation has not changed the ongoing bigotry and abuse towards Queens and *takatāpui* communities. This has been and continues to be an ongoing reality for them (Human Rights Commission, 2008).

## 1.6 Civil Union Legislation 2004

The character assassination and criminalization of same sex marriages were featured in the storylines of these Queens. The Destiny Church's protest against the 2004 Civil Union Legislation uncovered church-initiated brutality towards the *Aotearoa* LGBTIQ+ community (first-hand participation in supporting this legislative change). There were protests against the Homosexual Law Reform Bill in New Zealand. This brutality was delivered as the assignment of sin to all those who identified as a member of the *takatāpui* (LGBTIQ+) community. The dogmatic negative messaging towards Queens was anchored in trans propaganda. This, in turn, fueled violence against Queens, transgender, and LGBTIQ+ individuals. Trans propaganda was perpetuated through church and societal messaging (verified by the participants).

## 1.7 Destiny Church 2004 Civil Union Legislation

Concern that the 2004 civil unions legislation giving official recognition to same-sex relationships undermined traditional marriage led the Destiny Church to march on Parliament. The fundamentals church introduced a new element to street marches: T-shirts with slogans. As well as getting their message across to the public, the T-shirts helped to provide marchers with a common sense of identity and purpose.

Figure 3 - *Destiny Church 2004 Civil Union Legislation* (Seuffert, 2006).

## New Zealand Human Rights 2010

“People of all sexual orientations and gender identities are entitled to the full enjoyment of all human rights.” Human Rights in New Zealand 2010 – Section Four: Rights of Specific Groups – Rights of sexual and gender minorities. The example is: Discrimination in the workplace: Authenticity and the genuine occupational qualification... of this Part other than this section, that conduct, practice, condition, or requirement shall be unlawful under that provision unless the person whose conduct or practise is in issue.

Figure 4 - *NZ Human Rights 2010, p.304 and* (McGregor, Bell, & Willson, 2016).

The example is that these Queens have the right to choose how they define themselves. Not that they should be told who they are.

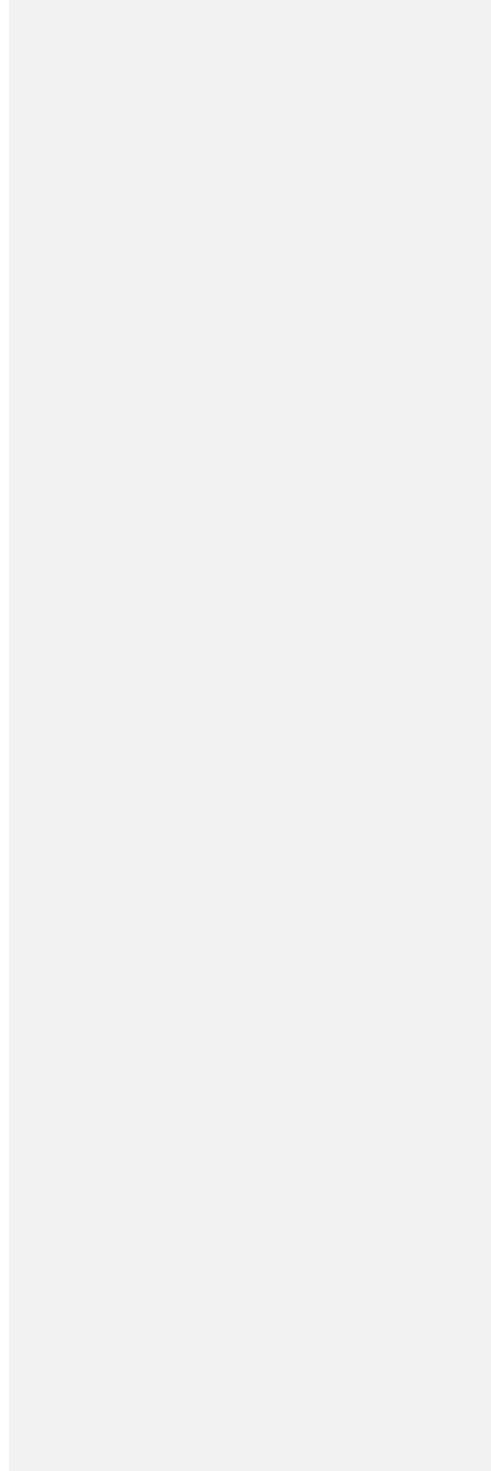
### 1.8 The Right To Freedom From Discrimination

#### THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION (ARTICLE 2, UDHR)

- The Human Rights Act 1993 does not provide explicit legal protection from discrimination with regards to gender identity, gender expression, or sex characteristics.
- Overt and subtle forms of discrimination are widespread against people with an actual or perceived diverse SOGIESC, and they are more likely to become victims of crime.

Figure 5 - *Freedom From Discrimination*, (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020).

**CHAPTER 2**



## 2.1 The Story-tellers

The three *Māori/Pasifika* Queens in this study are De'Anne Jackson, Teresa Christian, and Kay'la Rian, who gave their consent for their stories to be shared. Seven more Queens asked to have their stories included in this thesis. Of the seven, five consented to be named. They are Shaniqua Karawana Tillick, Chanel Hāti, Renée Paul, HRH Joey Mataele, and Wai Thompson. These additional stories are included to build on the narratives of the three named primary storytellers, including common themes that provide additional analysis.

## 2.2 THERE ARE THREE PARTS TO THIS THESIS

PART 1. Situating Indigenous Queens in a global context.

PART 2. Tikanga in relationship to Māori and Pasifika Queens and.

PART 3. Ngā Pūrākau - The three In-depth (Stories), supported by a thematic analysis of seven additional stories.

## 2.3 PART ONE - GLOBAL INDIGENOUS QUEENS;

Other short *pūrākau* or stories from Indigenous Queens were included to highlight their experiences and provide a global analysis based on the available narratives. Their stories were sourced from international film footage accessed via YouTube. This data was included to compensate for the limited available literature. Furthermore, it is important to compare and contrast the responses of *whānau/ānau* in *Aotearoa* with those of Queens from the Pacific Islands and the international experiences of Indigenous Queens contextualized by their global stories. Thus, including the stories of other Indigenous Queens was intended to add further layers of understanding and depth to this research. One non-indigenous Queen was included in this thesis as her story has particular importance, given that she transformed in the 1960s. She was, in fact, the first *Pākehā* Queen to share her transformation story.

The *Pākehā* participant story is taken from the biography of Elizabeth Roberts, the first person (Queen), in Aotearoa to undergo full surgical transformation. While not indigenous the story of Elizabeth Roberts exemplifies the importance of family support. Elizabeth Roberts gives a clear, accurate, and valuable account of her experiences throughout her transformation from male to female. This is particularly important, it clarifies the extent she had to go, to change and, in her case, the importance of family support. This provides a comparative analysis of a *Pākehā* Queen's transformation story in the 1960's. Her story is not the main focus of the work. However, it highlights the critical importance that family might play, to reduce the condemnation many Queens have experienced when they pursue a desired change. Her story also replaces critical information that was collected with Georgina Beyer but was unfortunately not allowed to be given as evidence.

Figure 6 - *A Pākehā Queen - Elizabeth Roberts*, (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

Each Queen has/had those who have sadly passed on, their own unique story/stories. All of the Queens whose stories are included in this work gave their informed consent for their stories to be made public, so that the pathway for their sisters (up-and-coming Queens), yet to step into their authentic identities, might be made easier.

The literature and available film footage(s) were reviewed. It became abundantly apparent that this *kaupapa* had not been extensively researched before. This was due to socialized stigma and transphobia. The paucity of research was also explained by the overpowering experiences of shame, violence, denigration, and rejection that characterized the experiences of these and, aligned with other Queens known to the storytellers.

## 2.4 Defining and Clarifying Identity Terms

The identity terms 'transgender' and '*Takatāpui*' are often applied to Queens. The identity term transgender is incorrect, according to the research participants. The Queens in this study define

themselves as Queens, although they allow others to refer to them as *takatāpui* when in specific contexts and with specific people, including but not limited to the general public. The variation in the ways they identify themselves is dependent on the circumstances and expectations of others. Thus, while they accept that others may refer to them as *takatāpui*, they prefer to be called Queens first, then *wāhine*.

The terms “transgender” and “*takatāpui*”, risk being weaponized by doctors and homophobic members of the general public who refuse to accept or respect “Queens”, rights to define themselves as women or *wāhine*. Specifically, transgender is an umbrella label or term for people whose gender identity differs from the gender identity generally assumed for the sex they were assigned at birth. This label is used by medical doctors and people in general but not by these *wāhine* or Queens. However, the late Queen Carmen Rupe herself referred to transgender individuals as Queens.

Figure 7 - *Transgender*

Of the six published biographies, three were used to inform these narratives. These included the late Dame Georgina Beyer, the late Carmen Rupe, and Liz Roberts, who became known as the first lady and the first to seek transformation. Dame Georgina Beyer underwent a process of transformation to become fully female, although born physiologically male. She was open and courageous about her transformation, disclosed in a film shared on YouTube after her death. Carmen Rupe’s story was penned by Paul Martin.

First Lady, the title of the book about Elizabeth Roberts, recounts the transformation story of a young New Zealand male who underwent transformative surgery in the 1960s to become a woman. The first lady was not indigenous. However, her story is included as it illuminates critical issues that shaped her transformation from male to female (Roberts & Mau, 2015). Liz Roberts’ story is included to contrast the significance of family support.

The First Lady's story recounts her experience of finding acceptance as a seamstress initially in Australia, then in Paris. She occasionally returned to Aotearoa to visit her family in Christchurch, a family who loved and, supported her decision to change. However, achieving safety amidst authenticity necessitated her move away from Aotearoa. The reason for including her story is that it sheds light on the critical part that family has to play in the validation and authentication of her transformation from a boy to a Queen / Woman. The importance of family and cultural support remains one of the key challenges for those who wish to transform.

Figure 8 - *The First Lady – narrative 1*

Furthermore, much of the scholarly attention is given to male entertainers who dress as women and perform as 'drag Queens'. Drag Queens are performers and cross-dressers first and foremost.

They are often in relationships with other males (gay men) and are therefore situated outside the parameters of this research. This differentiation was clarified by the participants and is included to correct public misperceptions about drag Queens compared to Queens.

Transgender is a commonly used term that describes people whose gender identity, or their internal sense of being female (or male), does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. In other words, biology and psychology are not aligned despite in some cases, the extensive surgeries they have been through to change their physical selves, (top or bottom or both). Many Queens are still considered by the general public to be men. However, at varying stages of change, this tends to be overlooked by the wider public who view them as abnormal.

Figure 9 - *Defining Transgender 2*

This comes from a place of ignorance rather than enlightenment. *Takatāpui* is a useful term, as acknowledged in the doctoral research of Dr Elizabeth (Kerekere, 2017). She is also acknowledged internationally through ILGA, for the importance and innovation of her PhD entitled '*Takatāpui* one of the *whānau*'.

Professors Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku and Linda Waimarie Nikora produced groundbreaking work, exemplified in 'The sameness and the differences': Representations of Māori femininities and sexualities in Ngāhuia Te Awekotuku's short story compilations titled *Tahuri* (1989) and *Ruahine* (2003) (see also Bach, Luh, & Schult, 2011). Along with Hamley, & Doyle (2023), who wrote about Takatāpui and Sexuality Education in The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Sexuality Education (p. 1-9).

In 2001, Professor Awekōtuku offered a useful account from the mid-19th century in which she recalled a historical narrative of a *wahine Māori* (Māori Woman) performing *Kapa Haka ...* (Paora, 2022). In the story, Professor Te Awekōtuku described how she wept as a prominent *takatāpui* ... was stopped from performing.

Drawing on the richly nuanced story (Hamley et al., 2021), and the decolonizing project of reclaiming our historical narrative that Te

Awekōtuku represents, the important focus has been given to the process of decolonizing *Takatāpui*, (Doyle, 2023; Hamley, & Doyle, 2023). Rather than reading the narrative as a definitive, eternal statement that says *Wairaka* is a trans man, which falls in line with Western ideals of gender transitioning (Beckford & Nikora, 2016; Berryman-Kamp, 2024) and ... relating to the mourning of *takatāpui* people in the *Māori* world, ... death rituals enacted for three *takatāpui* people. The deceased ... rituals for *takatāpui* people into *wānanga*, a process of ... (Nikora & Te Awekōtuku, 2016), and “What happens when you die – and you are *Māori* and anyone, or a combination, of the following: a queen, *takatāpui*, butch, like that, gay, she-male, lesbian, transsexual, a dyke, intersex, tomboy, Kamp, drag, homosexual, or just queer?” (Nikora & Te Awekōtuku, 2016).

The Queens in this study prefer to be referred to as Queens rather than *takatāpui* or transgender. To call or address Queens as *Takatāpui* or Transgender is to *trample on their mana and rights* to define themselves as Queens.

By way of clarification, *Māori* Queens are born physically male yet have the *āhua* and *wairua* of *wāhine*. Thus, the initial transformation process occurs as a *wairua* or spiritual transformation. The details of the physiological transformation are irrelevant according to the storytellers in this thesis. In their words, the *wairua* transformation matters most, although there tends to be a public and *whānau* fixation on the physical transformation. The physicality/biology of transgenderism is often the dominant narrative amongst the general *Aotearoa* public. The term ‘Queens’ is less understood or heard of in *Aotearoa*. The term Drag Queen is often misused and misunderstood as an appropriate term applicable to Queens. However, this reflects a public perception that is factually wrong. Queens and drag queens are not the same.

This thesis amplifies the voices of three *Māori*/Pacific Queens/*wāhine* in-depth *pūrākau* and seven others, thereby reframing and reimagining the taken-for-granted assumptions about who Queens are, according to these Queens and, in their own words. A cross-cultural analysis of transgender and Queens clarifies that there is no common consensus about what these terms mean and/or how they might be differentiated. However, for the sake of clarity, this thesis relies on the narratives of *Māori*, Pacific, and Indigenous Queens.

The term ‘*two-spirit*’ is applied by and towards Native American Queens/women (Geller, 2018). Two-spirit emphasizes both a transformation of the *wairua* and *tinana* (Kerekere, 2017). As previously stated, and verified by the participants in this research, the emphasis on *wairua* is critical. *Muxes* who are Mexican Queens are wrongly labeled as transgender women (men in frocks). This labeling is dangerous and derogatory, driving as it does a misunderstanding leading to judgmentalism and potentially dangerous outcomes such as violence. *Muxes* never refer to themselves as transgender. They consistently self-define as *Muxes*.

Overall, the paucity of literature about Indigenous Queens drives and creates the necessity for this research. These stories of transformation belong to the storytellers and are their intellectual and cultural property. I am grateful that they have accorded me the right to use their *pūrākau* in their words, in the writing of this master’s thesis.

## 2.5 Literature Review - Indigenous Queens

There is a paucity of relevant literature on the lives and transformation *pūrākau* of Queens. The Indigenous Queens in this work elevate the importance of the *pūrākau* in this thesis. There is a small literature base, specifically relevant to those who define themselves as Queens. However, some literature has been incorporated into this work. There is a need to contribute to the current body of evidence and literature so that the *pūrākau* or narratives of these Queens might lead to further research into the lives and transformation stories of these individuals who are born biologically male but declare themselves to be *wahine*. Their stories assert that they have the right to define their identities.

This research was carried out to inform and correct any erroneous assumptions about who Queens are. This analysis considers the specific names and understandings of Indigenous nations, about whom there is a small literature but a burgeoning cultural and political analysis on the rights and experiences of Queens, including how they choose to define themselves. Firstly, transgender and *takatāpui* are not Queens. Transgender and *takatāpui* are broad terms that are not completely accurate or appropriate when applied to Queens. Transgender and *takatāpui* are terms used by others who do not necessarily know or understand when or how to apply these terms. Whereas the terms transgender and *takatāpui* are used by Queens to support the understanding of others. Unfortunately, it is the ‘others’ who label the Queens as transgender, *takatāpui*, and/or transsexual, and/or transvestites. This is, in the opinions

of the Queens in this study, simply because the term Queen does not sit right with them (others). Thus, their chosen personal gender identity is often renamed as *takatāpui* and transgender, thereby taking the *mana* away from these Queens to define themselves.

Furthermore, the ‘others’ include medical practitioners who are infamous for mislabeling and misgendering Queens. Such mislabeling and misgendering only increase the negative attitudes and behaviors, including those of the general public, toward Queens unless the public has been taught to use the correct term: Queens, *wāhine*, or women. However, the attitude change toward Queens needs to be anchored in respect for the way they choose to define themselves rather than the definitions of others.

Most countries have different names or terms for Queens. For example, *Kathoey* is the term in Thailand. Two-spirit is the chosen term for Native Americans; *Muxes* is the name used in Mexico. In India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, the term ‘Hijra’, is used. ‘Shemale’, is another term used, although this is not a term that Queens use, as they view it as a denigration of their right to self-define and, therefore, insulting. The term ‘shemale’, has been weaponized to shame and belittle. The closest word in English for a Queen is a woman, but unfortunately, the public refuses to accept this term, preferring to call them transgender, transsexual, or transwomen.

Every Indigenous culture has a word for ‘Queen’. *Māori* women/female (queer/gender) people refer to themselves as ‘Queens’, followed by *wahine*, *whakawahine*, *akava 'ine*, *fa 'afafine*, or women before transgender or *takatāpui*.

According to Schmidt, 2005, p.3), “the Samoan word ‘*Fa 'afafine*’ literally translates as ‘in the manner of’ or ‘like’ – ‘*Fa 'a*’ – a woman or women. *Fa 'afafine* are biologically Samoan ‘males’ whose gendered behaviours are feminine.”

Moreover, Schmidt asserts that “...contemporary *Fa 'afafine* live in times and spaces of global flows marked by migrations, diasporas, and the ever-expanding reach of various media. Individual identities and wider cultures are fashioned in increasingly shifting contexts, resulting in accommodations, tensions, constraints, and opportunities as customary indigenous practices co-exist with new discourses... Samoans and Samoan culture are no exception to these processes. Thus, contemporary *Fa 'afafine* are ‘like women’”, an umbrella term used to refer to all individuals who live outside of normative sex/gender relations – that is, individuals whose gendered self- presentation (evidenced

through dress, mannerisms, and even physiology) does not correspond to the behaviors habitually associated with the members of their biological sex, (Namaste, 2000).

International trans activist, Miss Major, who identifies as a male (with large breasts), and at other times a female or a Queen, also defines herself as the third gender. The third gender is, in her words, 'a male with 'extras'. The majority of those who live as the 'third gender' are oppressed and suppressed, subdued, defeated, silenced, physically abused, shamed, evicted from their families, ostracised, and rendered invisible. These are all strategies learned as repertoires of colonisation. Thus, in death, the *tūpāpaku* becomes the legacy bearer of colonisation.

Many *Māori* Queens are treated this way. This research found that the majority of *Māori* Queens do not go to the *marae* when they pass away because they are not accepted by their people, their *whakapapa*, or their *whānau*. Sadly, many Queens end up in an urn on the mantelpiece, as is known to be the case in Wellington, or are buried in an unmarked grave, often outside the gates of the *urupā*, unloved and forgotten. The ultimate expression of disdain for Queens is to be buried face down and, in the words of the Queens in this study, forgotten. Experience has taught them that in preparation for death, they must think carefully about whether they will go to the *marae* for their *tangihanga* or be cremated. There are further decisions following cremation, such as what happens with their ashes. Do they rest on the mantelpiece in an urn or a box, or will their ashes be scattered on the *whenua* or in the *moana* that anchors them to *whakapapa*? These decisions inevitably interfere with *Tikanga* (protocols), subjecting their choices to the rules, norms, and moralizing that represent ideologies of colonisation.

**CHAPTER 3**

### 3.1 TIKANGA IN RELATIONSHIP TO MĀORI AND PASIFIKA QUEENS

#### a) *Traditional Marae Protocol at the Tangihanga for Victor Biddle, a Takatāpui Man*

This *pūrākau* speaks of the significance of the interaction between homophobia and *Tikanga Māori*.

*“He passed after a long illness or was it brief? It seemed so fast. One day he was there, his vibrant self and the next he was gone... Either way, her world was never the same again. Neither were we, his community... In life, he was larger than life and he was loved, so loved by so many who knew him. He became like an older brother to her, the special one who took care of him in his last days... she made him scones served up with jam and cream. The cream was lightly whipped and although he could barely eat, he relished her cooking, filled as it was with a deep love for him and a strong desire to make his suffering a little less. The community of friends and carers became his extended whānau. They knew him, understood him and loved him without reservation. He was stunningly handsome, boldly talented and beloved but he left so soon. She will never think about scones in the same way again. They were her way of showing him love ... and he loved her as if her big brother...”*

Figure 10 - *Victor Biddle, 2017* - (A.J. Scones – *Pūrākau* interview, 2023).

According to Kenneth Doka’s (1989), “The sometimes hidden or in-the-closet nature of gay relationships resides in the complexity of disenfranchised grief.” This is an idea that Doka describes as a loss that is not or cannot be openly acknowledged, publicly mourned, or socially supported (Nikora, & Te Awekotuku, 2016). This is critically important as death rituals and *tangihanga* for *takatāpui whānau* create a division within the *hapū* and *Iwi*, and in some cases, the *whānau*.

Thus, the *whānau*, *hapū*, and *Iwi* are not always welcoming or kind towards Queens or *takatāpui* when they are alive, and often, when they are alive, they are not welcomed so much as tolerated. They are often subjected to mockery, told to be quiet, and treated like children. Thus, Queens and *takatāpui* are often ridiculed, mocked, and treated as if lacking morals by some *Kaumātua* who determine the *tikanga* of the *marae*. What they experience when they are alive determines their final wishes when they pass, with many choosing not to go to the *marae* when they die.

Going to the *marae* and being buried in the *Urupā* is a political choice, their final act of resistance to the hypocrisy of their *whānau*, *hapū*, and *Iwi*. One example was the passing of a well-known, respected *takatāpui* activist. Many young *takatāpui* were present as the *Kaumātua* trampled the *mana* of the *tūpāpaku* and all the mourners. In a *kaupapa Māori* analysis, the *tūpāpaku* has *mana* and rights. However, this is too often forgotten by *Kaumātua* who are either ignorant, arrogant, or deeply homophobic... At Vic Biddle's *tangi*, his *mama* was silenced, unable to speak in the *whareniui* in defense of her precious and beloved son, while the *Kaumātua* denigrated his *mana*. This, in turn, impacted her son's friends and everyone present, especially young *takatāpui*. This was, for many, their first visit to a *marae* specifically for a *tangi*. They wanted only to pay their respects to one of their elders.

This is a prime example of homophobia overriding *Tikanga*. There is no place for homophobia in respect of *Tikanga*. The *Kaumātua* brought the wrong *Tikanga* into the *Whareniui* at the wrong time and for the wrong *Kaupapa*. He essentially broke the *Tikanga* and the *kawa* of the *marae*, of the *hapū*, and of the *Iwi*. The actions of the *kaumatua* unleashed his homophobia, which came across as more important than the *tūpāpaku* lying in state. His attitude towards the lifestyle and integrity of the loved one *tūpāpaku* scarred all present, specifically the young *takatāpui*. This was a fearful and traumatizing experience for them. Trauma is linked to suicide and mental illness (Lawson-Te Aho, 2013).

“I witnessed the intimidating behavior of the *kaumatua* as a serious breach/violation of the *mana* of the *Rangatahi*, *whānaupani*, and all within the *whareniui*, which could and may have psychologically damaged them”. (Lawson - Te Aho, 2013).

This experience scarred many of those present, especially the young *takatāpui*. It is possible that the psychological and *wairua* scarring of young *takatāpui* will impact their decision to either go to the

*marae* for their *tangi* or not. That is what happened at this specific *tangi*. It made no sense to them to expose themselves to the same treatment that their beloved friend, mentor, and role model was exposed to in death. This was a blatant example of the abuse of *Tikanga*.

*Māori* often claim the *whakataukī* ‘*he aha te mea nui o te ao, he tangata, he tangata, he tangata*’, which is not always applied to *Māori* Queens or *takatāpui*, for whom the reality is that their remains are often found in an urn on a mantelpiece, which becomes their final resting place. As such, they are disconnected from their *whānau*, *hapū*, *Iwi*, and *Papatūānuku*. They are stripped of their *mana* and birthright. Paradoxically, because of their physical appearance as *wahine*, the expectation is that they can be called upon as *Kaikaranga*. To want to *Karanga* is their choice. Whereas, to *whaikōrero* in their physical state as Queen or a *wahine*, and the accompanying dress code for a *tane* renders them less acceptable.

One of the Queens in this study was always told by her mother that she was born ‘her son’ even though she looked like a woman. Furthermore, she was told, she had every right to *whaikōrero* if she chose to. Her mother encouraged her to speak on the *paepae*. The *whānau* knew she entered this world as a male but always had the *wairua* of a woman. Her transformation from *tane* to *wahine* was inevitable for the *whānau*. Therefore, the *whānau* always insisted on her right to *whaikōrero*.

However, the *hapū* has to support each Queen as having the right to *whaikōrero*. This is never guaranteed and relies on the willingness of the *Kaumātua* to recognize and accept a Queen's entitlement to speak. This means accepting their physical change as culturally embedded and thereby acceptable and integral to *Tikanga Māori*.

In Victor's case, when the *whānau pani* took their beloved *tūpāpaku* back to the *marae*, it took one patriarchal *Kaumātua* to *takahi*/denigrate his *mana* and thereby, his *whānau* and friends. A different time, a different place, a different *marae*, but the same *kaupapa*, wrapped up in homophobia and bigotry, presented as *Tikanga Māori*. Such actions denigrate the rights of the *whānau* to have *Tikanga* observed in a way that enhances the *mana* of all present, especially the *whānau pani* and their loved ones. However, when *mana* is trampled, the *whānau* either has to watch in silence or walk off the *marae*, taking their loved one(s) with them.

Such actions not only break the *kawa* and *tikanga* of the *marae*, but they also deplete the *mana* of the *marae*. The consequences of the actions of the *Kaumatuā* who behaved in this manner and, in this case, disgraced the *whānau*, *hapū*, and *Iwi*. When this happens, the purpose of the *marae* and rules of engagement are changed due to the interference of a different value base determining and revising *Tikanga Māori*.

All too often, this is anchored in colonial legacies, which create and sustain a colonizing reinterpretation laden upon the normality and *tikanga* acceptance of Queens and pre-colonial *Māori* relationship protocols. This is understood as an outcome of deeply entrenched colonial mindsets. It is important to challenge such colonized/colonizing behaviour.

In times of loss of life, the actions of those in the position of power can either uphold the *mana* of the *whānau pani* or the *tūpāpaku*, based on a deep and committed understanding of and respect for the cultural practices of *tika* and *pono*. The denigration of *tikanga* may and often does exemplify legacies of colonization, which is about the denigration of the *mana* of *tangata whenua* and the elevation of a Christian ethos and set of values that eventually overtook and replaced *Tikanga Māori*.

Furthermore, the foundational concept of what a *marae* was supposed to be brings about a new connotation when colonial mindsets replace *Māori* mindsets. The purpose of the *marae* was never meant to denigrate, especially at a *tangi*, and certainly not towards the *tūpāpaku* or *whānau*. This has resulted in the whole meaning of the *tangihanga* changing for many Queens and *takatāpui*. This brings into question the point of being a great orator or *Kaikaranga*, able to produce a depth of *whaikōrero* or be the first voice heard on the *marae* at a *tangi*, if one can easily dismiss another's *mana*. Such behaviour impacts the living in one way or another. Firstly, there is no healing for those who have been subjected to abuse. This poses the question: how does healing take place for all those in the *whareni* after the actions of the homophobic *Kaumatuā*? When and where does healing commence? Furthermore, what right does anyone have to belittle or *takahi* the *mana* of another, including the *tūpāpaku*, especially at a *tangi*? It also questions how the pain of *māmā* can be healed after listening to the abuse and *takahi* of the *mana* of her son... This also challenges whether the *marae* and *whareni* can or should be considered to be a place of sacredness, *tapu*, and *mana* when it is so easily trampled by homophobic *Kaumatuā*. This is one story, one narrative, one *pūrākau* for one beloved *takatāpui whānau*. Stories such as this are more widespread than uncommon and isolated.

b) *Extending and Expanding the Takahi – Pathologizing Queens, Transgenders and Takatāpui*

In a broader historical and contemporary context, being a Queen, transgender, or *takatāpui* person is shaped by state, government, and cultural moralities, leading to the pathologizing or otherwise of Queens in many nations around the world. Furthermore, the politics of pathologizing Queens' identities has negatively impacted the political treatment of Queens. Some communities of Queens have been brutalized as a result of the intersection of state government cultural policy and practices. These are shaped and informed by state or nationalized political and religious beliefs. For example, it is not possible to legally change one's gender in at least 47 United Nations states.

An international literature search was undertaken to inform this work. This examined relevant scholarship from other nations to provide an international analysis, to compare and contrast with the localized analysis to contextualize this work, positioning it as directly impactful for the cultural practices of *Māori* and Pacific. The academic scholarship on this subject is very small. Literature from *Māori* scholars contributes to informing local and international scholarship on individuals who spiritually and physically transition. Kerekere states that “Since the early 1980s, *Māori* who are *whakawāhine*, *tangata ira tāne*, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex or queer have increasingly adopted the identity of ‘*takatāpui*’ - a traditional *Māori* term meaning ‘intimate companion of the same sex’”. This does not refer to Queens, (Kerekere, 2017). In addition, two biographical works further contextualize the experiences of the Queens in this study.

### 3.2 Contemporary Abuses of Queens, Transgender, and Takatāpui Individuals

The abuses and denigration of the *mana* of Queens, transgender, *takatāpui* individuals have always been evident in far-right and right-leaning political ideologies. Intensification has seen efforts to eliminate or punish *Queens*. The word abomination is often used to reference Queens/*wāhine* and Transgender and *Takatāpui* individuals by the conservative right-wing elements of New Zealand society. Specifically, it is used about the Queens (wrong use of transgender and *takatāpui*) individuals and communities.

Jordan (2023) comments;

*“In recent years, a disturbing rise of far-right ideologies and movements has taken hold across the globe, posing a significant threat to the rights and well-being of marginalized communities. Among these targeted groups, transgender individuals find themselves at the forefront of political attacks”.*

These attacks are most often derived from right-wing conservatives, aided and abetted by the tendency towards political point scoring to garner public support by inflaming differences between people on the grounds of the moralizing of identifiable political and religious interpretations and agendas.

### 3.3 Genderscapes

Genderscapes are attitudes, roles, and beliefs about gender roles within the culture. In Thailand, the terrain of gender and sexuality continues to evolve quickly, with male-to-female, Queens wrongly mislabeled as transgender and/or effeminate gay identities positioned alongside masculine ones.

The positioning of *Kathoey* as traditional is shifting to one that identifies “Kathoey-ness”, or Thai male effeminacy, as a modern legitimate identity expression. *Kathoey*/Queen/male effeminacy is visible in feminized clothing, use of cosmetics, bodily comportment, and language. Being visible aligns with being acceptable in Thai culture, although there is still resistance to the presence of *Kathoey* by more traditional, religious members of the Thai citizenry. The tensions between *Kathoey*, Queen's transgenderism, rights, and orthodox religious movements exist in many populations around the world, including Thailand.

A localized Pacific case is that of the Tongan *Leiti's* (Tan, 2019), Joey Mataele, who is known internationally for her activism in support of the Leitis. Phylesha Brown Acton is another famous activist of Niuean descent. She is very active in her community in *Aotearoa* (Schmidt, 2005).

### 3.4 Ground Breakers - First Lady

*“June 1947, a Christchurch suburb on a very special occasion: my kindergarten fancy-dress party. I was four years old. Grandma had made both costumes herself, they were absolutely beautiful creations, but I don’t remember what Prince Charming’s outfit looked like. Who cared about him? I wanted to go as Cinderella.”*

First Lady recounts the story of Liz Roberts, the first person in New Zealand to undergo gender change surgery to become a woman (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

Figure 11 - *June 1947* (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

*Teenage life was difficult for Garry Roberts. “Perhaps that’s underselling it a little. It was Hell. Beaten with the cane by teachers, bullied by the other boys, I was a total misfit. Even I thought I was weird.”*

Figure 12 - *Teenage life* (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

*At four years of age, Liz chose between what most boys and girls were supposed to play with. However, Liz saw nothing flamboyant about Mr. Prince Charming at all. Didn’t even notice him. The*

*sparkles in the dress made for the neighbor next door by Nana were most appealing and desirable. Cinderella was the better choice. A brilliant story about how Liz's career made headlines in a Christchurch newspaper about her success in London, back when she was Mr. Garry Scott-Roberts. The title was 'London Success for Designer. Against all odds, the boy, Gary, tells of her dramatic story throughout her often-torturous transition into a woman known as Elizabeth, (Roberts & Mau, 2015).*

Throughout Liz's life, she always knew from a young age who she wanted to be. She consistently made feminized choices about her dress, preferring to dress up as a girl in the initial steps towards womanhood, although born a boy. Liz Roberts was courageous in her pursuit of gender change surgery. She proactively sought to align her physical self (male) with her *wairua* self (female), and she had the love and support of her mother and grandmother to change.

The following are letters from Liz Roberts that detail what she went through to complete her physical transformation and the significance of her transformation in 1960s, New Zealand.

**Letter One:***WALTHAM SURGERY**83 Waltham Road**Christchurch, 2**Telephone 60 - 059**Dear John,*

*Herewith Mrs Elizabeth Trask, (Mr Gary Roberts) who is transvestite, and wishes to undergo sex transformation.*

*He has had treatment in England with Stilboestrol 50mg nocte and Primo lute 250mg 2x weekly and (unreadable) daily.*

*He expresses no interest in sexuality towards females but does have feelings of love towards a man friend. He says this lack of sexual feelings precedes his treatment.*

*He has seen Eric Espiner on one occasion, and Eric commented that there seemed no endocrine disturbance: a buccal smear was Chromotone -ve.*

*His purpose in seeing you is to persuade you that an operation should be performed in that he may officially be declared a woman - at present he does seem to have quite serious problems of a practical nature e.g., visiting the lavatory in town, and he has some difficulties with the police. He has an ongoing sexual relationship with this man friend.*

*Thank you for seeing him.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Brian*

Figure 13 - *Letter One* (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

In the 1960s, homosexuality was illegal (and would stay that way for another twenty years). Even the most practical-minded GP would have been well aware that the things I was telling him were against the law (Roberts & Mau, 2015, p 111).

The 1960s in New Zealand were an unsafe time for Queens, Transgender, and *Takatāpui* people, for there were laws in place that would punish these people in *Aotearoa*, New Zealand by imprisonment and fines.

**Letter Two**

*Letter from Thomas W. Milliken, reconstructive surgeon, to Dr Brian Jones, 7  
May 1969*

*Dear Brian*

*Re: MRS ELIZABETH TRASK*

*Thank you for asking me to see this man.*

*I am amazed to see just how feminine he is, and there seems no doubt  
he wants to live this way. He is intelligent, and I explained things pretty fully  
to him as regards to what I could do from an operative point of view. I would  
amputate the penis and castrate him, and use the skin from the penis to make  
labial folds as far as it is possible.*

*You would agree this has to be sewn up very tightly from a legal point  
of view, and I have said that I will ask John Dobson to see him again. Also I  
think he requires a second Psychiatric opinion and then a good lawyer, and I  
am doubtful whether (deleted) is the right man for the job.*

*I will contact John Dobson in the next day or two, and we will keep you  
fully informed on any developments.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Tom*

*(Page 113).*

Figure 14 - *Letter Two* (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

These are three letters among many that would have been exchanged to achieve her desired transformation as a complete woman. These three letters were added to this thesis to show what Queens must go through to complete their transformation while dealing with continuous misgendering.

The letter concludes:

*He fulfils the major criteria for gender change, i.e.*

1. *Desire to be a female from childhood.*
2. *Demonstrated ability to maintain satisfactorily a female role.*
3. *Adequate duration of chemical castration.*
4. *Absence of psychosis or severely disabling personality traits* (Robert & Mau, 2015, p 119).

**Letter Three****Surgery, 1969: The Operation.*****Text of the affidavit of Thomas Milliken, surgeon, dated 7 August 1969***

*I, Thomas William Milliken of Christchurch, Plastic Surgeon, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:*

- 1. That I am a registered medical practitioner and have been practicing in Christchurch as a Plastic Surgeon continuously for the past thirteen years.*
- 2. That I am acquainted with ELIZABETH ANNE ROBBERTS formerly known as GARY ALEXANDER ROBERTS and I am aware that said ELIZABETH ANNE ROBBERTS was born a male person.*
- 3. That upon the recommendation of my colleague JOHN ROBERT EARL DOBSON of Christchurch, Psychiatrist and after examining the said ELIZABETH ANNE ROBERTS and following the said surgical operation which I performed I ~~very~~ believe the said ELIZABETH ANNE ROBBERTS to be a female person and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957. Pages 121-122.*

Figure 15 - *Letter Three* (Robert & Mau, 2015).

### 3.5 Surgery, 1969: The Operation

Elizabeth Anne Roberts underwent a further twenty years of surgical treatment to complete her journey from man to woman from the 1970s to the 1990s. Today, even though many *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens have undergone the same full transformation from male to female, legally and physically, they are misgendered and constantly abused by the medical system, other government agencies, and the general public. This is a clear indication of what the general public is capable of and continues to bully and hurt Queens and others, i.e., L.G.B.T.Q.I., etc.

The following *kōrero* is from Elizabeth about how she felt the need to do right by herself, for her own sanity and dignity.

*“I had to do what was right for me—what felt right for me, from the time I was very small—in order to survive. My father had his demons, and his own views on my choices, but I certainly have no regrets about the way I’ve chosen to live”.* ¶

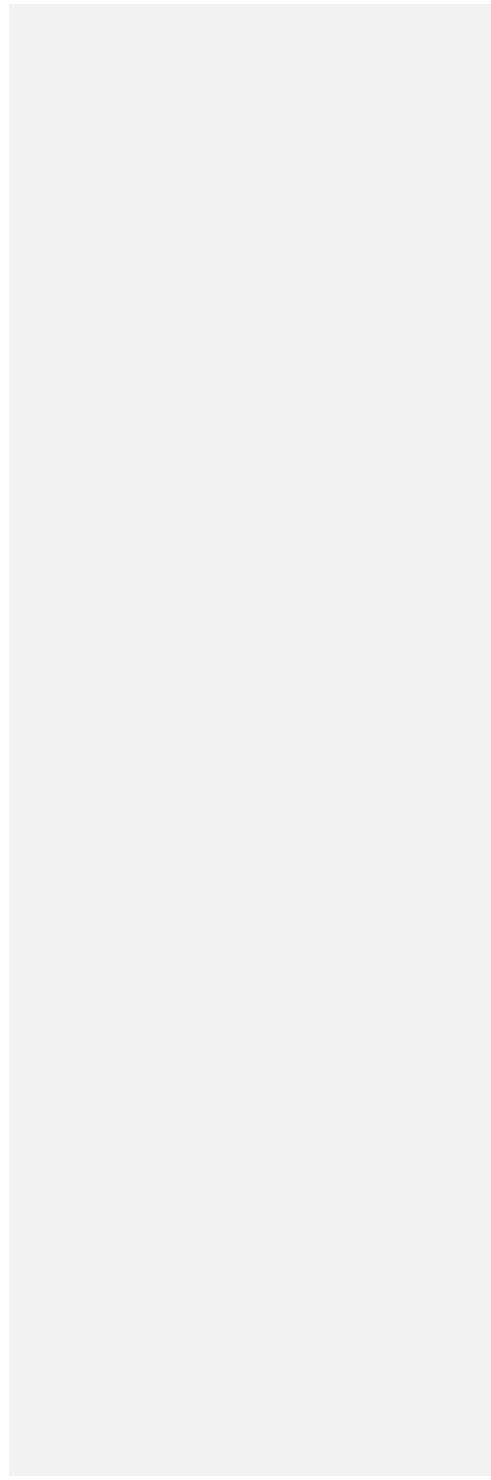
¶

*Figure 16—My father; (Robert & Mau, 2015).* ¶

Figure 16 - My father... (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

The Queens I interviewed for this study had to do what was right for them. They have no regrets about how they have chosen to live their lives.

**CHAPTER 4**



## 4.1 KATHOEY

In this chapter, I explore Indigenous Queens globally who tell their *pūrākau* and their reality of how it is in their own country. How are they treated, and what do they face daily? What they have endured and what lies ahead for them to be their authentic selves. This content is included for the many Indigenous Queens who are subjected daily to homophobia, abuse, both physical and emotional, and death. They, too, deserve a voice.

## 4.2 Kathoeyes in Thailand

*Kathoey* is indigenous to Thailand. Pravattiyagu refers to “a large number of Thai Queens and transgender women (*Kathoey*) in Thailand and their visible roles in society, which often leads casual visitors to believe that Thailand is open and accepting of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queens) culture. Hence, it is common to hear Thailand described as gender tolerant and culturally sensitive. However, this is often untrue of Thai Queens and transgender women, and for many, this is a misrepresentation of their realities and experiences. They explain that the accumulated injustices of the Thai state on Queens and transgender rights - such as same- sex marriage, access to socialized welfare, change of gender on an identification card, and structural employment discrimination have been the main factors for Thai *Kathoey* (Queens) women migration to Europe” (Pravattiyagu, 2018). While this reference is somewhat dated, the fact remains that in population data in Thailand, *Kathoey* (Queens) are often invisible. This is evident in the failure to ‘count’ and thereby validate *Kathoey* (Queens) individuals in national census data. However, while they are visible and therefore seen in the Thai population, albeit not counted, this makes them vulnerable and the frequent subjects of public humiliation and mockery. Many *Kathoey* (Queens), especially those who have the opportunity to leave the country, i.e., moving to Europe to start a new life, with their husbands or new partners, begin or start their restaurants and continue to send money home to the family in Thailand. The majority of them very seldom go back to Thailand to visit. Tragically, the majority of *Kathoey* (Queens) will die in another country.

### 4.3 Two-Spirit

Two-Spirit individuals, or Indigenous Americans who identify as both female and male, usually also identify as GLBTIQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer and Queens) Natives. Furthermore, Two Spirit references the dual, spiritually powerful nature, traditionally attributed in many Native American cultures, to individuals who combine the feminine and masculine. Latterly, there has been a shift to an indigenist/decolonial intellectual and political focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and Queen Native people.

Stanley (2022) and Tan (2019). offers a theoretical analysis as a Samoan scholar and self-declared lesbian. While being lesbian is not synonymous with being a Queen or transgender, the point of stepping into one's true identity carries with it thematic commonalities that may be selectively interpreted and applied to Queens, transgenders, and *takatāpui* individuals (Roberts & Mau, 2015), although there is a need to exercise caution with such an analysis. The emphasis here is on the preference and right to claim one's authentic identity. Queen is the preferred term applied by the participants in this study. The word 'Queen' refers to those born biologically male but who choose to identify as female. Their identification is marked by different stages of biological transformation described in their own words in this thesis.

### 4.4 Constructed Deviance Historically Ascribed to Indigenous Peoples as part of Colonization

There is a history of the generalized assignment of deviance to Indigenous peoples that dates back to colonization. The pathologizing of Indigenous cultures was embedded in notions that Indigenous peoples were 'born' deviant. Assertions of deviance were intentionally applied, and the consequences for Queens ranged from the denial of their historical legacy and right to be Queens, to exposure to persecution, public humiliation, and a range of other physical, psychological, and spiritual punishments. Bowers (1965), stated that Native people were considered 'sexually deviant' when the crossover between gender role behavior was observed and judged as being abnormal and contrary to the behavioral standards and norms of the colonizers. As a result, Native/Indigenous peoples were historically targeted by missionaries, Indian agents, boarding school teachers, and other representatives of the dominant non-Native society. Processes were set in place to punish Indigenous peoples for their 'sexual deviance' and 'gender non-conformity'. Missionaries, school teachers, and

other proponents of colonization used violence and ridicule to force Indigenous peoples to conform to European norms. In the normative frame of the British colonizers, women and men had prescribed social and cultural roles. Whereas, in many Indigenous cultures, gender roles were fluid, and tasks like child-rearing were shared. Punishment for non-compliance with the cultural views of the colonizer was swift and harsh.

## 4.5 Hidatsa miati

*“The only surviving Hidatsu miati (male in a woman’s role) was forcibly stripped of her/his female attire by the local government agent, who also dressed her/him in men’s clothes and cut off her braids”. ¶*

Figure 17 - *Hidatsa miati* (Bowers 1965: 315; Lang (2010).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, colonization and forced acculturation resulted in a decline of the special roles and statuses held by “women-men” (males in a feminine role) and “men-women” (females in a masculine role) in indigenous North American cultures cited in (Lang, 2010) and (Cariou et al. 2015). While these references are dated, they map out a piece of the story of an Indigenous cultural norm that is probably best understood as Queens followed by transgenderism.

The colonial persecution of Queens and cross-gender/transgender indigenous peoples is seen throughout history. Such persecution is cited in various historical records. Given the paucity of literature, the precise extent of gender (role) fluidity before colonization is unknown and currently unattainable. However, it appears to have been normal and quite widespread according to (Bowers, 1965).

Furthermore, there have been reports of male-bodied individuals in indigenous cultures taking up the

work tasks of women, often also entering into relationships with men. There were also recorded cases in North America where female Native persons adopted masculine roles and entered into sexual relationships or marriages with native/indigenous women. While they were accepted and sometimes even revered by their respective indigenous societies, the status and roles, particularly of the “*feminine males*” were usually met with disdain and disgust by the colonizers, to the extent that they attempted to physically exterminate those they called the “sodomites,” committing what has been termed ‘gendercide’ in Middle America and California, (Miranda 2010; Lang 2010; & Trexler, 1995).

#### 4.6 Miss Major Speaks – (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023).

Miss Major Griffin Gracy is recognized globally as a trans revolutionary, a veteran of the Stonewall Riots, a former sex worker, and a transgender activist who survived Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital, New York’s jail system, and the HIV/AIDs crisis. This is described in her book, *Miss Major Speaks*. GURL is how she identifies members of her family who are otherwise defined as transgender by the public. This is an important distinction as she differentiates between ‘Gurls, Queens, transgender’, and all other assigned labels, especially those of the general public.

In her book, she sought to bring the understanding of the process of liberation and why it was and is essential for ‘GURLs’ to be aware of oppression, and to avoid their oppressors.

#### 4.7 Getting Liberate

*“Major wants trans and non-trans readers to understand how getting liberated requires being aware of how oppression can cause trans people to adopt the ways of their oppressors—that the sometimes, vicious competition and gaslighting in the trans community comes from trauma, poverty and class oppression that many trans people face.”—McEwen (2023, p.29).¶*

Figure 18 - *Getting Liberated*, (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p.29).

These factors apply to all Indigenous people who likewise come from communities of trauma, poverty, and class oppression. Queens and Transgender people often react to how the public treats them. In their lives, respect is rarely practiced or experienced.

Indigenous Queens and transgender community members live in a world that is both deeply racist and deeply homophobic. This is the burden and legacy of colonization that forges a huge chasm between Indigenous culture and the influences of colonization, especially the Christianized and patriarchal values of white, religious, male-dominated colonization.

## 4.8 Cultural Identities and Queens

Among *Māori* and Pacific Islanders, 'gurls, trans, Muxes, Shira,' and in this case, Queens, the general society is guilty of enforcing judgment and prejudice. Tongan Leiti Joey Mataele, who produced the film 'Leitis in Waiting', spoke of the abuses of Leitis by the Christian churches (Mataele, 2018, cited in Anderst et al., 2022).

**CHAPTER 5**

## 5.1 Trannies and Fags Labels as Destructive, Persecutory, and Harmful

Miss Major clarifies that Queens are often called trannies and fags. These labels are designed to destroy, persecute, and harm. They feed public perceptions of sinfulness and generate hatred, rage, and violence. Whereas Queens (and trans communities, according to Miss Major) find these words very violent, dangerous, and life-threatening. These are the kinds of words that inspire murder, violence, and abuse. They do not align with the teachings of Christ.

Two of the Queens in this research are Christians. One is the daughter of a Christian Minister. She was raised in the Christian church. A second one was raised in a Christian home. However, often the establishment of the Christian churches defiles the teaching of Christ through judgment and hypocrisy, as was seen with the Destiny Church march against the Homosexual Law Reform Bill. Mormonism and other variations of Christianity have, over generations, become the agents and weapons of colonization. They continue to act as entrenched tools to legitimize capitalism and white supremacy. This is particularly salient and applicable to Indigenous Queens, transgender, and *takatāpui* individuals who suffer as a result of the intersections between racism, capitalism, and capitalism as promulgated and maintained by some (certainly not all) Christian churches.

Labels like *trannies* and *fags* are negative and undesirable for and towards Queens and trans and *takatāpui* communities generally. Nevertheless, this is some of the hateful language used by the community at large.

The attitude: Again, as Miss Major has outlined in her *kōrero*, doctors assert a right to decide which 'gurl' can move on with her transformation, e.g., whether she receives hormones or not. Queens, Transgender, and *Takatāpui* are at the mercy of Psychiatrists and medical practitioners.

## 5.2 The Health Sector in Aotearoa

Doctors and Medical Specialists practicing in Aotearoa have full power over whether or not gender change surgery should be provided for Queens. There is an inequity in the number of Queens and transgender patients who make it onto the surgical waiting list each year in *Aotearoa*. Most of the surgeries are performed on white men who want to have a sex change to become a Queen or a woman.

This is very different from those who identify as transgender or third gender (defined as having breasts and a penis) and identify as male/men with extras.

Whereas there should be equality and balance in the gender ratios of those seeking transformative surgery, due to the power of the surgeons, it does not exist. Access depends on the personal morals and beliefs of the surgeon and the clinical team. There are never any guarantees. Doctors and medical specialists have been known to use their positions to control who gets access to sex change surgery. Doctors and medical specialists are very powerful and able to make the lives of Queens and transgender patients miserable, and some succumb to self-harm or suicide unless those patients have favours with them. The majority of Queens and transgender surgeries in *Aotearoa* are offered to male-to-female rather than female-to-male. Many *Māori* Queens have no access to surgery.

In *Aotearoa*, as in many nations around the world, white male Queens get their surgeries performed ahead of *Māori*, Pacific, and people of colour. Although Queens want to fully transition to become fully *wahine*, they don't have the opportunity to achieve this as the health system favours white male Queens over *Māori* Queens.

### 5.3 Police Manipulation of Queens (negative label Trans) Visibility

The public face of policing has become an exercise in claiming to be trans-friendly to access funding earmarked for *Kaupapa*, such as the annual Pride Parade. This is a tokenistic approach to making the police behave in a politically correct manner by appearing to be trans-friendly. The inclusion of the police in annual pride parades in *Aotearoa* is one example of a global movement to raise the profile of the police.

In *Aotearoa*, the Police have posters of the Queens and Trans visible individuals taken at a Pride Parade alongside the Police, to imply that the relationship is warm and supportive. Contrary to the manufacture of trans-friendly policing, there are many examples of police violence towards the Queens. People have forgotten that it was an anti-police event due to the brutalization of trans *whānau*. Whereas, the sustained memory loss of the police has been supported largely by gay men to the extent that the police now participate in the annual gay pride parades in *Aotearoa*, driving a rainbow-colored police vehicle, after they have hurt so many Queens and Trans people. The prison system has been used

as an adjunct to police brutality in the story of at least one of the Queens in this research. However, the pain of the treatment occurs both at the hands of the police and in hospitals.

For example, a young trans person was assaulted by the police when attempting to protest police brutality towards incarcerated trans persons as part of the movement “No Pride in Prisons” (Lamusse, 2016). While there has been an active campaign to ‘educate’ New Zealand police about the rights of Queens, Trans, and *Takatāpui*, this has been provided in a void and has not included any holding to account of the treatment of Queens and transgender, and *takatāpui* prisoners in the public prison system (Lamusse, 2018).

The treatment of transgender individuals by the police is one of violence. Miss Major concurs with the role of the police in brutalizing transgender people in the United States. According to her, Pride was always an anti-police event.

*Figure 19 - Miss Major goes on to say ...*

*“When I started out, people would say, “why are you like that?” “Because I like titties, and instead of going around touching other gurls’ titties, I can touch my own. Child, I’m just a gay guy with tits. “Shocks the hell out of them.” (Miss Major, McEwen, 2023, p. 93).*

*“Before santa cruz, this lady I saw for about three seconds in 1978, she got hold of my parents to get me a message: “before you moved to the west coast, you left me with something.” She said we had a son together.” (Miss Major, McEwen, 2023, p. 96).*

*“When people ask for your pronouns for some event you’re doing, my direct orders from you are, “tell them she goes by all pronouns. (Miss Major, McEwen, 2023, p. 97).*

*“t-l-g-b-q-i-w-f-u, that fuckin alphabet soup shit. Try and fit those letters on to a spoon. You know, even though my ‘id’, says male, I have no problem walking into a women’s bathroom and letting whoever’s in, there deal with it. (Miss Major, McEwen, 2023, p. 97).*

Figure 19 - *Miss Major* (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p. 93,96, 97).

I have met one *Māori* or *Pasifika* Indigenous Queen who had a child by adoption, but I do not doubt that some have produced children of their own. After all, one is born with all the male physical characteristics and can reproduce accordingly; this applies to many *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens.

Additional interviews were conducted to contextualize these stories. One storyteller speaks of the death of Queens in the prison cells. The details will not be shared here. However, the evidence of the brutality of selective prison guards towards *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens has been recorded in a closed archive. Again, having a rainbow car at a pride parade does not erase history or justify the absence of police accountability.

The use of seclusion is another form of brutality leading to suicide in prison. These stories are not part of this thesis. However, it is important to clarify that at least one of the Queens in this thesis shared details of her experience at the hands of the police. She is not one of the three. However, she raises issues that need to be raised. These issues will be summarized in the *pūrākau* of the three Queens featured in this thesis.

Miss Major recounts her experiences at the hands of the police and prison system, and the police behaviour she has witnessed in the United States in her efforts to support Queens or 'Gurls'. Her tenacity is on full display in her biography, *Miss Major Speaks*, when she says

*"I didn't get to eighty years old being sweet and gentle. I'm no flower. Fuck that. I'm a cactus – get over it."* (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p.72).

Elders like Miss Major inspire many Queens, Trans, and Gurls. The way that people like Miss Major react to how they are treated today and how they were treated yesterday is evidence of their intolerance and staunch resilience. This drives their efforts to shelter and protect younger Queens. Were it not for her, the number of Queens who died at the hands of bigots and haters would probably have been much higher. As it was, generations of Queens and Gurls have lost their lives through entrenched hatred and sustained violence. For some, this has been a result of suicide when the pain of their lives has become too much. There are similar *pūrākau* of Queens and trans people ending their lives by suicide in NZ prisons. Two of the Queens in this study have asked for these stories to be told without naming those who ended their lives in the NZ prison system. That request has been honoured.

Many of the *Māori* Queens in this study have voiced their concerns about how the Police have treated them. These stories are similar to their sisters in the USA, and no doubt in other parts of the world.

These same thoughts and feelings hold true for many *Māori* Queens who strive to be accepted for who

they are. They are tired of being made to feel ugly or required to assimilate into society and have to change to be accepted and safe. Moreover, hurt and horror have been wrought upon *Māori* Queens by their *whānau*, *hapū*, and *iwi* and the community at large, leaving very little room for them to just be authentic. In the words of Miss Major,

*I want the gurls to realise that the pressures that we had to go through as trans women really makes us a tough bunch of bitches. You know, because we go through the abuses that people give us directly. One in five of us goes through homelessness. As we're growing up, abuses from our families who are supposed to love us and care about us. And the moment they get this news -----crickets,"*

Figure 20 - (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p . 83).

## 5.4 Mother Queen

This is a perfect example of Kay'la's *pūrākau*. She recounts the violence and abuse that she lived through at the hands of some of her *whānau* members. Many Queens residents experience homelessness and seek out those who provide shelter from within the community of Queens. These are called the Mother Queens or Queen Mother, for example, 'the House of (Charlotte)'. Here, the older Queens teach and look after those who seek her help, and her role is to help her fellow sisters. This was the role that Miss Major provided.

Many Queens in *Aotearoa* have also taken on the role of Queen Mother or Mother Queen. Older Queens have provided shelter and other forms of practical support to young Queens. Without this level of practical *aroha* and support, younger Queens may not have survived the trauma of their lives. Moreover, they likely would have been subjected to violence, verbal abuse, and all other unnecessary harm. This includes the medical system and the use of electroconvulsive therapy to shock the gay out

of them to become normal or assimilated. For the record, what happens in the prison psychiatric hospital can lead to suicide. However, the Queens tell a different story of extreme violence and beatings in police cells, which took place from the 1970s to the 1980s. The number of Queens ending their lives by suicide in prison reflected the impacts of systemic violence and the brutality of some of the prison guards in the prison system (Kay’la, Wai, and Chanel, personal testimonies).

Most *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens prefer to be called by their names. The reason is that *whānau* and significant others in their lives struggle to call them by the correct pronouns. Asking a Queen for their preferred pronoun is wrong. Even though she has a dress on and makeup, and breasts, she is still asked for a pronoun. People refuse to accept what or who stands before them. While important, asking for the obvious is an attempt at political correctness that dismally fails.

*“This was before the axe murderer known as Dr Benjamin started operating on the gurls: the word ‘transgender’, hadn’t been invented yet. Pronouns are important. But is some fag calls me a “he – she” in the street, that’s not what keeps me up at night. It’s important for the gurls coming up behind me to know that yes, everything is relative, but there has got to be perspective.”*

Figure 21 - *Miss Major* (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p 97-98).

## 5.5 Pronouns

This is important because it speaks to the family-like process in many Queen and trans communities. *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens in Aotearoa look out for those coming up after them. It’s about keeping them safe. Pronouns are important, but also dangerous when they are weaponized.

## 5.6 Surgery

A similar process is applied to *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens; thus, the same principles and procedures apply to Queens and transgender and *takatāpui* individuals seeking surgery in *Aotearoa*. Much of what is practiced by the medical system and the hospitals is considered to be unnecessary for the Queens who are treated like children. The state takes a paternalistic approach, and the Queen's voices are not heard. When they speak to a psychologist or a doctor, this does not necessarily mean they are taken seriously. The Queens, therefore, have learnt to say what they think the doctors want to hear. They assert that only by doing so will they then get what they want, i.e., hormones.

Most *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens felt that they too were put aside and not given access to the treatment. The number of Queens who received bottom surgery is few and far between. According to the Queens in this research, the doctors often said they missed out without further explanation. Many wanted the surgery when they were much younger, but once they turned sixty- plus years of age, they gave up. What they did find out when they were younger is that the white boys who applied at the same time as them got their surgeries done. They achieved their full desire to become a complete woman with a vagina in place of their penis.

*“In the seventies you could go into the DMV with a F on your ID and leave with an M. It wasn't a pain in the ass with all these forms where now you need a lawyer to help you fill out the damn forms. They had none of this unnecessary shit like REAL ID cards, or implanting prisoners with computer chips.”*

Figure 22 - *Miss Major* (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p. 99).

Miss Major described their reality in the USA Here in *Aotearoa*, most Queens may look and appear

feminine. However, in terms of official documentation, that is not the case. On most of their identification cards, they are still documented as male gender. The system here in *Aotearoa* does not make it easy for Queens to correct their gender on their passports/birth certificates or driver's licenses. One can make the changes; however, there is a long, time-consuming process that one must endure before they can change their gender on official documentation.

People forget that what they are born with does not make them infertile, just human. This means whether they are born a he or she at birth does not stop them from having children. A very clear statement that, despite what everyone else thinks of them, many still have the characteristics of males, especially the ability to produce children.

Like Miss Major points out that it's not being all about trying to be femme but rather just being what and who they feel is right for them. Most *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens feel the same way. There's no need to try and keep up with other people's expectations when others' expectations are wrong for them. Most but not all *Māori and Pasifika Queens wāhine* have a rough time. Some, more so than others. including mental, physical, and emotional abuse

## 5.7 Children

Unfortunately, what Miss Major has described in detail about having children comes with stereotypes amongst their small community and others. Other members will and do feel betrayed by those who choose to have children. This is not only true amongst the Queens but also with other queer groups such as gays and lesbians.

*“gay”, or “queen,” that’s what you called yourself initially,”* (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023).

This is confirmation of what or how some Queens identify themselves. Most start as being just gay until later on down the line, they realize that they are still different and come to terms with their new identity of being a Queen.

*“Yeah. What’d I know? I’m falling in love with men. Let’s fight this battle and see if I can get ‘em. It’s worked out just fine, so far. But if you don’t take the time to figure out what it is you want to do, and by that, I mean who you is, that will get in the way. If you don’t take time to enjoy yourself whatever creature that “self” may be, you won’t get very far.”*

Figure 23 - *Miss Major* - (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p. 109).

Most *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens cannot stress it any less than what it is. It takes time, a lot of time, to go between the *whānau* and at the same time want to be true to oneself.

*“Major,” the individual.*

*“Yeah. I was major, and then I was, “major, the black person,” and then I was “major, the transsexual.”*

Figure 24 – *Miss Major* - (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p. 118).

## 5.8 Labels

Miss Major is talking about the many labels people call you, whether you want it or not, and at different times during your life, often because of your surrounding community at the time. Similarly, for *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens, who, throughout their lives, are called different labels by the public, whether it is correct or not, or whether they want it or not. These labels are forced on them,

not because they want to be called by different or any labels that aren't chosen by them for themselves.

*"There's a certain confidence we trans women have in our ability to be just who we are, and then behind that, the hurt and the pain and the suffering. We're smiling through that, and I think that emanates such a great feeling, if people would just take the time to stop and look at it to appreciate it, not point at it and laugh."*

Figure 25 - *Miss Major*, (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p. 141).

Cisgender people, in general, have no idea what Queens or trans women go through, although they regularly pass judgment and criticize them.

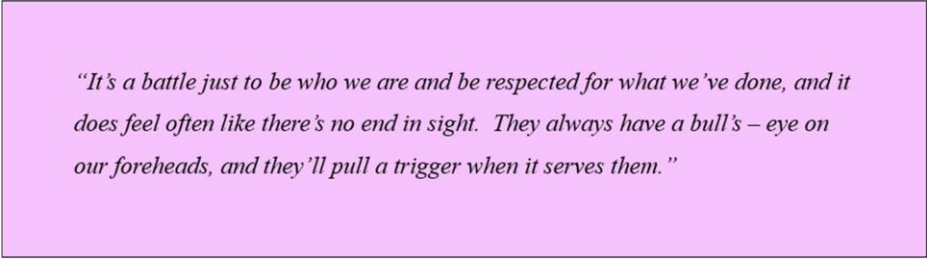
*Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens get that all the time. From the time they decide that they were/are going to live their lives as a woman, their journey comes at a very high price. Despite the hurt, pain, and suffering, they continue to be their authentic selves.

*"For nights that they got to you, as a black person, I learned a trick when I was little: when you get in a situation with a cop, do something that pisses him off enough to knock you out. Otherwise, if they don't knock you unconscious, they keep beating your ass till they hear a bone or two break, and you could end up dead."*

Figure 26 - *Miss Major* - (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p. 146).

What Miss Major has just described regards to do with unwanted contact with the cops. This is very much the same in *Aotearoa*. Many *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens have experienced the full brunt of the cops. Some have had their bones broken by the police. Unless one has been taught about safety on the streets of Queens, then you may just be able to live another day.

*Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens have made clear to me that the word transgender can start anywhere between one to ten and comes in many forms. There is no clear definition that clarifies who is transgender and who is not. There is no definition, nor should there be. This is explained in the following words:

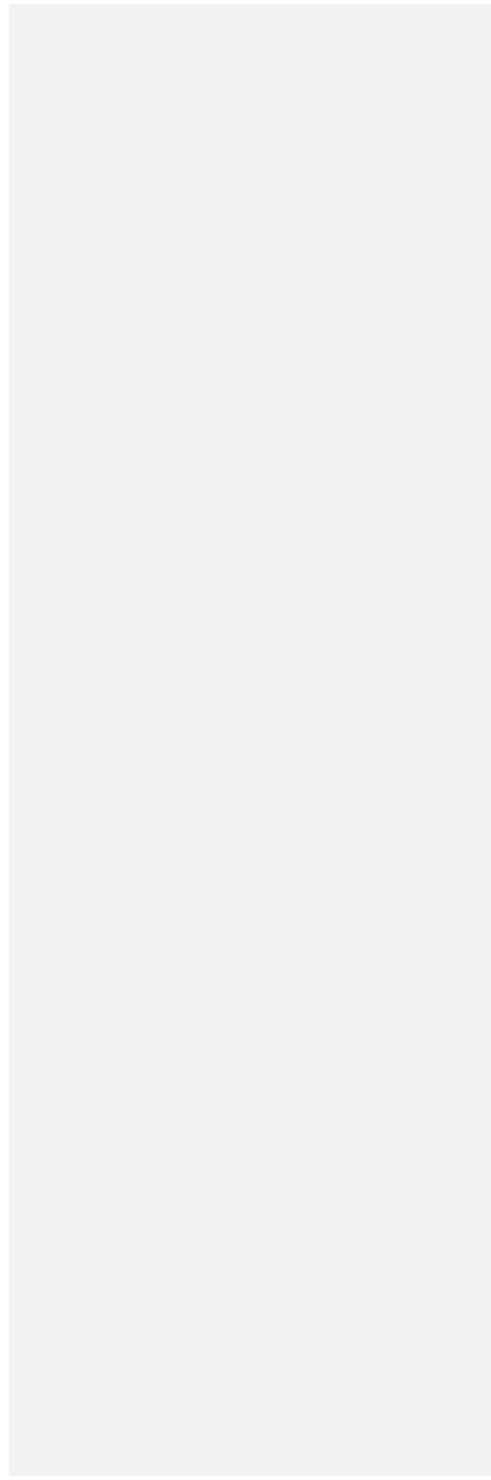


*“It’s a battle just to be who we are and be respected for what we’ve done, and it does feel often like there’s no end in sight. They always have a bull’s – eye on our foreheads, and they’ll pull a trigger when it serves them.”*

Figure 27 - *Miss Major* - (Griffin-Gracy & Meronek, 2023, p. 156).

Too often, *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens experience a similar approach that is unwanted or unwarranted, but again, by no choice of their own, society at large seems to have a vendetta against them. Miss Major describes this point. For *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens, everyone is different and unique. They constantly strive for the same respect, just like any other person. They mean no harm to anyone, nor do they practice or partake in violence. Instead, violence follows them. Not all Queens have had the experience of living in peace and harmony, as their upbringing or circumstances were different. Being loved and sheltered by one’s parents or *whānau* brings out a specific vibrancy, and that arguably is how one should be.

**CHAPTER 6**



## 6.1 MUXES

*“One is born this way not turned this way. Both of my parents knew but they hid it from everybody. My mother was very supportive but, also said I could never leave home.”*

*“It’s not being gay, it’s not being homosexual. It’s not about being another role in society, it’s just being muxe. Being Muxe is just being Muxe.”*

Figure 28 – *Born this way* (Schwarz, 2017).

The following two stories are told by *Muxes* (Queens/indigenous to Mexico). These stories provide a clear picture of what life is like for them in their country. The closest meaning to a *Muxe* in English is Queen.

## 6.2 Mexico’s Muxes

Juchitán, Oaxaca, Mexico

*“Mostly girls approached me to play. I wondered why the girls wanted to play with me instead of the boys. The time passed, and people started saying, Another muxe.”,  
(Schwarz, 2017).*

Same reference as below. Consistent with similar statements about Queens and transgender.

### 6.3 MUXES STORIES

**Mariano – Estrella**

*“The story starts when I was about four or five years old. My father used to be a fisherman and he didn’t really get this. He didn’t get if I was a he or a she. From seven in the morning until two in the afternoon, I was free. I could do anything I wanted. Since, I like to dance, one day, I was invited to a party, and I dressed up like a woman. Somebody took a photo and the next day the photo arrived at my house. My mother received the picture. I came back from work and my mother asked me, “Who is this girl?” She told me, I was in big trouble if my father ever saw that picture.”*

Figure 29 - Mariano – Estrella (Schwarz, 2017).

**Vidal – Mariana**

*“If I had children, I would never allow all I have been through to happen to them. But right now, I am Ok, all good. Everything that happened to me gave me experience, right? But... That’s the way it is. What can we do?”*

*“In my house I was beaten. I had to look over my shoulder all the time. If he was drunk, I was in trouble. I started working at a store and I would sleep there too. I’d rather get yelled at there. At the store they yelled at my mistakes. At home it was different they would beat me for nothing. I disappeared from home for two years, they never saw me in that time. And when they saw me again, I already had long hair and makeup. I didn’t know how my parents were going to react. I only knew that my mother supports me.”*

Figure 30 - *Mariano – Estrella* (Schwarz, 2017).

There are limited examples of the influence and impact one's culture has had, and continues to have, on Queens. This is not an in-depth story, but nevertheless, a story that needs to be told. Many Queens are trapped and have no freedom to fulfill their potential to expand and grow within themselves, or to be able to leave home. This is just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak, that tells a story within a story. What better way to express themselves to their family and community than fully dressed and representing the way they want to live? Despite the harsh treatment of some and the consequences that may lie ahead, they continue to be their authentic selves, regardless of the punitive responses from their families and communities.

The *Muxes*, who appeared in the film, upon which this analysis is based upon, are clear that nothing is more important to them than being true to themselves first and foremost. However, being true to themselves comes at a high price.

Like *Māori and Pasifika Indigenous Queens*, not everyone gets to enjoy the love and safety of their *whānau* or community. Their *whānau*, *hapū*, and *Iwi* can be very frightening for them. This often extends over their entire lives. Always looking over their shoulders to avoid what they fear will hurt them. Some are fortunate if they have someone to protect them, such as their mother, grandmother, or whoever. Life is never easy for some of these *Muxes/Queens* or other cultural groups that may be referred to in their languages. This is their reality daily. Their only wish is that things will get better. The importance of their stories means that other Queens might and can gather strength from these and others' stories.

## 6.4 Overall Picture

This work traces the transformation stories of three plus seven older *Māori and Pasifika Indigenous Queens* aged 60+ and one *Pākehā*. While their transformation stories are anchored in a courageous positioning of their authentic identities and a desire to be open about who they are, there are many

risks associated with ‘coming out’ or ‘going in’, depending on how one is positioned as part of the community or when exiting that community. These risks are embedded in their *pūrākau* in this research. This is particularly salient where *whānau* and *Tikanga Māori* intersect to pathologize what might otherwise be considered authentic ‘normalized’ pre-colonial identities (Kerekere, 2017).and (Roberts & Mau, 2015).

Furthermore, while there is substantial literature on LGBTIQ communities, the literature on Queens communities is very limited. Literature for this study has been sourced using the search terms Queens and transgender and *takatāpui*, then filtered to remove community members who do not fit the definition for this research. Of note is that the literature pertinent to Queen's narratives and storytelling is particularly small. Subsequently, these *pūrākau* have been unpacked and analyzed to weave key themes of culture and identity into an intersectional analysis. This approach is described in the methods chapter and aligned with thematic analysis as described by Braun & Clarke (2006); (Bach, Luh, & Schult, 2011), and key public health literature on intersectionality. The construct of intersectionality is interpreted and applied in this study as woven *pūrākau* that together represent and reflect *whakapapa*. The analogy is that of a *korowai*, whereby the different patterns of the life *pūrākau* of the three Queens in this thesis form a beautiful, colorful, vibrant set of narratives that teach about courage, resistance, and sisterhood. They also teach about *mamae*, colonization, hatred, and ostracization, among other destructive *Kaupapa* brought forth from colonization and sustained in contemporary society.

## 6.5 Methodology

*Pūrākau* is a *Māori* cultural process of storytelling (Hamley, et al., 2021; Lee, 2009). This is the main methodology in this thesis. Storytelling has become an integral part of Indigenous research the world over. Each *pūrākau* in this research is powerful. However, the point about the stories is not that they simply tell a story. These new stories contribute to a collective *pūrākau* in which each indigenous person becomes the storyteller, without which and without whom there would be no indigenous *pūrākau*. There would be no *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queen's stories. Without Indigenous *pūrākau*, the truths and realities of Indigenous lifeways would be lost to the reinterpretation and violent legacies of colonisation.

The *pūrākau* in this thesis employs the Indigenous storytelling approach called *pūrākau*. In these powerful

and inspirational stories, life intersects with cultural identities including *Māori*, Indigenous *Pasifika*, and *Pākehā*. There is no conflict between these identities for the Queens in this study. Societal and political conflicts are socially constructed, (Nikora, & Te Awekotuku, 2016) and anchored in the judgements of those who stand outside the realities of the Queens in this study (A.J. Scones – *Pūrākau* interview, 2023).

In one *pūrākau*, the key critics of Kay’la have been and are *whānau*. In the other two cases of De’Anne and Teresa, any potential criticism is replaced by unconditional *aroha*, which shapes their support for their *whānau* member *ahakoa te aha* (regardless of how they identify regarding their sexuality and gender identities). Although the colonization of identity pronouns is a salient consideration, *whakapapa* is the central indigenous process and identity construct in these stories.

Specifically, *whakapapa* is the pre-eminent unifying relationship for *whānau Māori*. This is also applied to *Pasifika ānau*, although the Christian churches have more often demonized Queens and *takatāpuitanga* than accepted them as ‘normal’ and historically (and therefore contemporarily) valid. This leads to a misconstruction of the fundamental tenets/*kaupapa* of *whakapapa*. It has also led to various forms of abuse, such as conversion therapy and Christianity-centered political activism, for example, the Destiny Church march against the Homosexual Law Reform legislation.

## 6.6 Christianity

Moreover, ancestral *whakapapa* is often secondary to the *whakapapa* of colonized/colonizing institutions such as Christianity, which offers an entirely different creation story. However, the overwhelming love of Christ for believers in the Christian narrative does not negate *whakapapa*.

The cultural organizational form of early Christianity was anchored in tribalism and, therefore,

kinship-based relationships that *Māori* reframe as *whakapapa* and Pacific Islanders reframe as *akapapa'anga*. The tensions between the Christian churches and indigenous peoples are constructed out of an idea that certain types of sin (those that breach the Ten Commandments of Christian lore) are unacceptable. Changing one's gender surgically to align *ā wairua* is considered to be a sin in some Christian churches in that one is born into faith by way of the 'body' of the church and is therefore a child of God. Confirmation requires a conscious decision for baptism into the body of the church, a release of any beliefs that do not line up with the word of God, and an unequivocal acceptance of God's word and the implementation of the word of God through Christian lore. Changing one's gender does not align with the word of God. Nor does it legitimate a homophobic response from the Christian churches, as the love of God exceeds all.

Queens, Transgender and *Takatāpui* individuals and communities face specific challenges. The Office of the United Nations Human Rights states:

*“Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people face both common and distinct challenges. Intersex people, (those born with atypical sex characteristics), suffer some of the same kinds of human rights violations as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. They also face institutional violence within healthcare systems, with lifelong consequences to their physical and psychological health.”*

Figure 31 – *United Nations Human Rights* (Alston, & Mégret, 2013).

## 6.7 Discrimination

Whereas discrimination against LGBTI people undermines the human rights principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the discrimination and violence exercised against people in the LGBTI community are common. Homophobic, bi-phobic, and transphobic attitudes remain deeply embedded in many cultures around the world. The most recent international report found the legal

criminalisation of trans people in 37 countries. The Trans Legal Mapping Report, released by ILGA World in 2017, found that only 96 countries have processes to allow trans people to change their gender legally. Moreover, only 25 countries are described as not having “prohibitive requirements.”

This thesis is not a treatise on Christianity. Nor does it offer an in-depth critique of globalized homophobic policies and practices from these shores. This thesis seeks to understand the issues from the sharing of three plus seven heartfelt *pūrākau* from these storytellers who have exercised their rights to be their authentic selves and have been willing to tell their stories. The focus, however, is on the lives of three plus six Indigenous Queens and one *pākehā* and their stories. There is no need to analyse these *pūrākau* against international occurrences of transphobia other than to align some of the key issues for the narrators in this thesis as they apply to their lives.

**CHAPTER 7**

## 7.1 Narrators

The first of the storytellers was born a boy who changed to affirm his *wairua* identity as a wahine. She remains a devout member of the Pacific Islands Christian church. De'Anne Jackson has the unconditional support of her *whānau*.

The second storyteller is Kay'la Rian, was raised in a home where violence marred her early life experiences of growing up biologically a boy until she reached the point in her life where she was able to make the conscious choice to step into her authentic identity as a female. However, the violence continued until well into her young adult life. The third storyteller, Teresa Tessa Christian who was born male but had the support of her adopted parents (who were both *Pākehā* Pastors) to undergo gender change surgery at a young age and thereby become their daughter. Hers was a life of unconditional love and support.

Three identity processes and knowledge systems have shaped their lives since childhood. These are ethnicity, relationality/*whakapapa*, and Christianity. All are relevant to the Queens' narratives. They are also found in scholarship written about Indigenous two-spirit, LGBTIQ, and transgender. As such, these identity processes both inform and shape their decisions to transform and the pathways each has taken to achieve their transformation. The value in these stories teaches how their journeys might inform the transformation journeys for future generations of Queens.

## 7.2 Kaupapa Māori as Methodology

There are many issues concerning 'research methodologies' when discussing *Mātauranga Māori* and Indigenous knowledge. Research methodologies are often associated with specific disciplines of knowledge and viewed as the primary, if not singular, way knowledge is generated (Smith et al., 2016). In this case, the *mātauranga* belongs to the *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens, *who* are the orators and creators of their *pūrākau*.

Applying a *Kaupapa Māori* lens means supporting the participants' freedom to speak. In this research, the free flow of *kōrero* was inspired and supported by key questions, which were also developed and

approved by the research participants. The participants supported this during the research interviews and filming.

### 7.3 Questionnaires

Questions were also developed that they could respond to, or use to stimulate additional *kōrero*. The research participants viewed the questions before the interviews started. They held the *mana* to stop if they felt it necessary. In this event, they were not asked to justify individual decisions to exercise their *mana*. None of the participants pulled out. Also, they did not have to answer all the questions, only those they thought appropriate to their stories. The research participants agreed to be filmed with full transcriptions and check for any changes they wanted to make following the process and before the data was used. Part of the process included the promise that no filming would be made public unless they agreed. The film footage was used to collect data only to obtain a thorough and correct analysis. Cellphones or Facebook were used to set up interviews and schedule meetings. The participants chose the location and time for the interviews. A *koha* was given to the participants for their time and *kōrero*. This was deposited directly into their accounts. After the interview, they had a choice of either lunch, dinner, or a takeaway. Transport to and from the interview was provided if they requested the interview to be conducted at home or elsewhere. On some occasions, I interviewed the same person twice or multiple times, as necessary, to obtain a thorough understanding of how their experiences and stories impacted them throughout their lives. The data was collected, and an undertaking was given that the stories would be dedicated to all *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens.

The consent form was completed by the participants before the study took place. A second consent form had to be distributed and signed by those participants who had moved.

Throughout the process of my master's thesis, I had no supervisor for guidance or support. Later, many faults and errors were discovered, so I carried out a major reworking of my thesis.

## 7.4 The Indigenous Polynesian

As Polynesian, we share a common *whakapapa*, one in which we come from *Avaiki* or *Hawaiki*, and when we die, we return to *Avaiki*, (James et al., 2024), or *Hawaiki* (Boast, 2021) or *Savaii*, (Smith, 1893). As Polynesian, it is culturally accepted that we will return to the sacred place from which we come. *Me hoki atu ki Hawaiki/Avaiki Nui, Hawaiki/Avaiki Roa ki Hawaiki/Avaiki Pāmamao*. These words are recited during *tangi* or at the *Nehu* to remind the *tūpāpaku* to return to our sacred home, which we all Polynesian believe to be our Ancestral Land.

This affirms that, as Polynesian people, we cannot deny who we are. We have sailed the great *Te Moana Nui o Kiva/Kiwa* since time began. We are a proud people, and no matter what path we choose, we can only move forward. No practitioner or academic, or anyone for that matter, can tell these Queens who or what they are. This thesis supports the *kaupapa* of *mana* enhancement. Indigenous Polynesians are made up of *Māori* and *Pasifika*. One must understand that to fulfill one's life as a Queen, and to be in sync with one's culture. This means acknowledging and embracing their *whakapapa*, *tinana*, *hinengaro*, *wairua*, and *tikanga/kawa*.

To give a more detailed approach about what it means to be a *Māori* or *Pasifika* Queen, and the meaning to each individual can only be expressed in their own words. A definition that is compiled together to suit the individual Queen. Each *pūrākau* is unique, and their lived experience is untouchable. It is difficult for an outsider to comprehend what the Queens have gone through. What is it that they have lived their lives the way they see fit and true to themselves? At the ripe age of sixty-plus, they need no permission or consent from anyone, medical practitioners or academics, to define themselves. For each Queen, each *kaupapa* from *whakapapa* to *tinana* to *hinengaro* to *wairua* to *tikanga/kawa* holds a whole new meaning, and what better way to express that than through their own words, which provide us with rich testimonies never seen before.

## 7.5 Whakapapa

Genealogy, lineage, descent – reciting *whakapapa* was, and is, an important skill and reflected the

importance of genealogies in *Māori* society in terms of leadership, land and fishing rights, kinship and status. It is central to all *Māori* institutions. The following *pūrākau* are *whakapapa* extracts recalled by the three *Māori* Queens in this thesis, and additional stories from the following seven. As *Māori*/Polynesian, it is believed that when we die, our *tūpāpaku* will return to *Papatūānuku* from which we came. Below is an example of an extensive *whakapapa* of where *Māori*/*Pōrinetia* believe to have come from. Because of *whakapapa*, the people of Polynesia derive from, the *tūpāpaku* is *tapu*.

The wider *whānau* has the right to claim and care for the *tūpāpaku*, (Nikora et al., 2013). The *tūpāpaku* has rights equal to those of the living person. *He mana tō te tūpāpaku*. What this means is that when an autopsy is conducted on a *Māori* person, this desecrates the *tūpāpaku* and the natural process in which they would have returned whole without being desecrated, to their beloved *Papatūānuku*. Colonization has transgressed the sacred rituals of indigenous peoples all over the world. This offers no available comfort for both the living *whānau* and *tūpāpaku*.

How we interpret our understanding of each situation and response to *whakapapa* begins with our language and thoughts (Moriarty, 2019). As Professor Poia Rewi said (2005), *whakapae*, 'Ko te reo te waka o te whakaaro. Ko te reo te aho ki te ao Māori'. *Whakapapa* for most Queens is precious, albeit many Queens leave their *whānau* to build new *whānau* for many reasons, such as to keep the peace. Some of the Queens in this study communicated in English and *Te Reo Māori*. However, some preferred *kōrero* in *Te Reo*. By doing this, they were able to better convey their stories. There were no English words that could convey what two of the Queens wanted to express and voice.

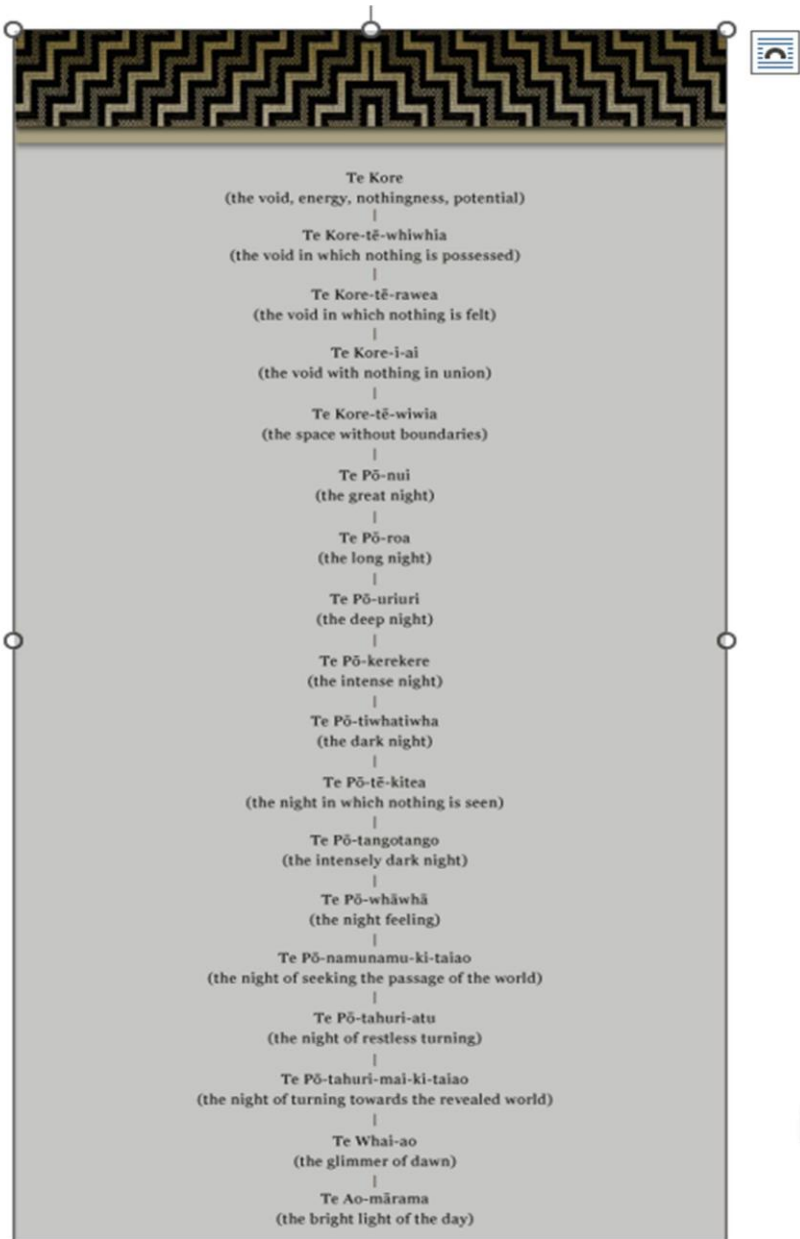


Figure 32 *Whakapapa 1* - Refer to link - <http://www.maaori.com/whakapapa/creation.htm>

*“This whakapapa (genealogical chart) represents the transition over time from Te Kore (the realm of potential being) to Te Pō (darkness) through to Te Ao Mārama (the bright light of day). In some traditions, Te Kore is where ‘ultimate reality’ can be found.”*

Figure 33 - *Whakapapa 2* – Refer to link - <http://www.maaori.com/whakapapa/creation.htm>

## 7.6 Pūrākau Whakapapa

*Wai Thompson:* “I was born in *Rāetihi* and I grew up in Taumarunui. My father got a job at the Ministry of Works as a diesel mechanic. So, we moved to Taumarunui, that’s where the Ministry of Works was, that’s where the *Tongariro* area was then. And I just grew up normal. It wasn’t until my cousin, who was gay. And he ended up going transsexual after he left school.”

*Renée Paul:* “Personally, for myself, I’ve never actually thought about it because for the simple reason that I’ve always had support around me. I’ve been really lucky because I’ve had *whānau* and friends around me to stop me from thinking that way.”

*So, how many of you and your siblings are in your family?*

*Wai Thompson:* “There are nine of us, but the eldest one is to another woman. Our father’s son to another woman. Then he left her and fell in love with my mother and had eight of us. So, I’m the seventh.”

*How has your wider whānau reacted to you?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “They knew I was always tipsy when I was growing up. I was always the one doing most things that most other people wouldn’t do. I was never *whakamā*, and I was always curious as well. When I first told my grandfather, because my grandmother had two marriages. The first marriage was my father’s father, my *koro*, Huriwai or Johnny. I told him, and his *whakaaro* to me was ‘when I told him, I must have been around 19 or 20 at that time. And so, I said to my *koro*, *Koro*, this is me, and I was in a dress, and all he said to me was ‘Oh well, you’re just like your *tipuna* because you like wearing a dress.’ Now, at that time, that never really made sense to me.” “But as long as you’re happy, boy, that’s the main thing.” “Now it wasn’t till I started University that I’d learned the *kōrero* from *Te Rangi Tāheke* of ‘*Hinemoa* and *Tūtanekei*’ (Treadwell, 2020). As you know, there was the word *Takatāpui* being used, as we all know, which he put in his *kōrero*. And I clicked that day, oh, *koro*, is that what you meant?” “You’re just like your *tipuna*”, “The only difference is that you like wearing a dress. For me, at that time, I was looking for acknowledgement as opposed to acceptance. As for my grandmother, my mother’s mother, she was hilarious, I mean, she was more intrigued about it. When I took my *tane* to go and meet her, she kept on saying to my aunt, Hera! Hera! And my partner and I were right in front of them, and you know *te mea*, *te mea*. And my *Nānā* kept on laughing, Hera! Hera! you know, and my aunt would shush! Shush! So, I just basically turned around and said Oh, Nanny, it depends on what mood I’m in? And she laughed. I think for my *Nānā*, it was more of an intrigue. But I did hear from one of my grand uncles or her husbands- brother was also *takatāpui*, but I think it was different times back then as well. So, I do think time does change things in a way. I think I was just lucky and blessed to have *whānau* that supported me in what I do, and they still do.”

*Because Carmen was Mum’s cousin, would you say you have a role model?*

*Wai Thompson:* “No, the only role model that I ... and that’s just been recently is Georgina Beyer and how she’s coped with her life. She’s actually my role model. Because she’s just so herself. But yes, I used to go to Carmen’s when I ended up running away from home. Jumped out the window and ran away from home, and then came down to Wellington with my cousin. Harisha, another Queen.”

*Renée Paul:* “I cast myself as just a woman, I only say transsexual, the majority of time. I’ve always cast myself as a Queen. It’s a slang word for transsexual. I look at myself and feel as a woman.”

*Renée Paul:* “Since I’ve been there, I found them very supportive and that, very, very supportive. I’ve written letters to them when I first started out, and changed my lifestyle. And I wrote everything to my father, and I explained this to him. If you don’t agree to this, I will stay in Wellington and never go back home. If you want me to do that, I will do that for you. I don’t want you to feel ashamed of me or anything. But my father actually rang me up. He told me to go home. I want to see you all dressed up. I went home, and he started crying when he saw me, and he said, “You remind me of your mum.” My mum passed away when I was 16, right? He gave me one big hug and said, “No matter what, I Love You, and all you’ve got to worry about is your sisters, your brothers, and me are all behind you. Don’t worry about your aunts, your uncles, and everyone else if they run you down, just go and tell them to get stuffed. We’re here for you.”

*Renée Paul:* “Ever since that day, it’s been amazing. I can talk to my family about anything. About street work, about medical stuff. Anything, they will sit down and they will listen to me. My sisters brought all their children up to respect me. I’m always aunty full-stop.”

*Today, how does your whānau relate to you?*

*Wai Thompson:* “There’s like a generation gap between me and the six eldest. Like my eldest brother, he’s eighty. Mum and Dad didn’t have us two younger brothers until about thirty years apart from the sixth eldest. So, they are in their seventies and eighties, my elder brothers and sisters. So, we were brought up with our nephews and nieces.”

*M:* “32 years I *whāngai* me a girl, her name is Peppa. So, the mother who offered me the child got pregnant again. And again, came back to me and asked if I wanted the child? And, yes, I do want a child. So, I got Peppa, my daughter, now. So, getting, having Peppa, I schooled her to *Kōhanga* through *Whare Kura* and all that, and even went to University but didn’t finish her papers yet, doing a Bachelor of Science. She fell pregnant at school, had a child in the seventh form. I took over the child. Took over my granddaughter, who’s now fifteen, I took care of her while her mother went to university. But Peppa ended up back in Brisbane, and I brought up my *mokopuna*.”

*Renée Paul:* “My parents were really open-minded.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “I’m lucky because I was fourteen when I changed and decided to be a *Queen*. And I had a sister who was a *Queen*, so there are two of us, but she died.”

*Did you have a mother drag or a mentor?*

*Wai Thompson:* “Yeah, I did have a mentor. Yes, I did have someone take me under their wing, and that was my cousin, who brought me down. Harisha Downs.”

*So, what would you call her?*

*Wai Thompson:* “Just an older cousin. You’re going to have to come out with us and do the streets because we can’t afford this house, flat for free, and blah, blah, blah. Oh yeah, okay then. But what do we do? You see, I was so green. Oh, yeah, it was so quite funny. She said I will take you out one night, show you the Trix, sex, the lot.” Oh, okay then. And she did.”

*Where is she today?*

*Wai Thompson:* “She died in *Kaitauki* Prison down in *Wanganui* from the end of a drug overdose.”

*Tell me a bit more about her. did you visit her?*

*Wai Thompson:* “No, by the time I found out, she had already passed, and the funniest thing was our aunt in *Wanganui* said that she went to this medium. This *Pākehā* medium and that she could see the letter ‘V’ above the bed of this person. And my aunt goes, “We haven’t got anyone in our family with the letter ‘V’? What Harisha had done when she went into jail she took the name Virginia Lake. You know the Lake up there in *Wanganui*. She went into jail under the name Virginia Lake. And that’s when we found out. But it was just lucky that there was another Queen who was inside with her who

knew the family. So, it was she who told the Screw in *Kaitauki* Prison where her family were.”

*Renée Paul*: “Well, with me, my mother passed away when I was young, so I left school in the end. So, our father was different. I kind of wish it would be our father because I was the one actually living in Wellington and not back home, so I wrote a letter to him and told him about my lifestyle. And told him if they didn’t agree with my lifestyle, then I would stay in Wellington and never go back home, and that. And the next thing, a couple of days later, I get a phone call, and it was my father. And he says I want you to come home Labour weekend and bring a friend if you want. But I want to see you. So okay then, I took Sheila back home with me, back home. I went around and visited him, and I walked towards him, and he started crying. Oh, I’ve upset him, so I said sorry, Dad, for making you cry. No, I’m looking at you, I’m looking at your mother. He goes he turned around to me, and he goes, “You know what, your sisters love you, your brothers love you. I Love You. No matter what, we are here for you. If your aunts and uncles give you shit, you tell them Go get fucked!” And ever since that day, my family has been really excellent.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “I said, I really appreciate that I really do, thank you. But it does not sit right with me because even though you know the appearance is a woman, well, if it were to come to *whakapapa*... and that’s how I looked at it that way through *whakapapa*, I wasn’t born a girl but a boy.”

*Wai Thompson*: “My mother came from the chieftain line, from the Parapara of the *Ngāti Waikarapu*. My father is well, he’s *Ngāti Kāhungunu* and *Wairoa*, *Tamihana Brown*, and our *Ngāti Porou*. Our father’s *marae* is down *Ruataniwha Road*, *Ruataniwha* is the *marae*.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “My mother didn’t give birth to a *wahine*, so if I want to liken it that way through *whakapapa*, I was raised in more of a Western form of practices and more colonized. But I was raised with the love of *tikanga* from both my parents. “But that was around *hui*, *tangi*, and collecting food and all the rest of that.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “I did transition around about 15 going on 16 years of age.”

*Renée Paul*: “*Māori* are quite lucky, aye? I’m not saying they are all good. A few of the *Māori Queens*, some of their *whānau* have disowned them.”

*M*: “If I kept on just ignoring all the negatives and there were heaps of negative feedback from all my relations and all of my cousins and my family anyway, who really didn’t accept, accept me, asking the questions or didn’t accept me for who I was.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Now, the last sister, I found it difficult to tell her because we were close, but not only that, she is quite conservative. She was ashamed of me just being a male, “I know I shouldn’t say this word”, you know she was ashamed of me being a Poofter. You know, and people would say, Isn’t that your brother? And she would like, say, where? No, that’s not my brother. So, she would deny me in that sense, and that was hurtful in that sense.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “Family support and friends. When your family isn’t here, your friends are your family. I have a first cousin, and he lost his son to suicide. But six months later, he couldn’t cope with the fact that his boy was gone, so he did it too. Well, you know it’s, it’s, I wouldn’t say it’s an illness? Is the question real? When you feel like the whole world doesn’t care.”

*At that stage, whakamomori was in front of you? How were you able to step away?*

*What made you move on?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “As I mentioned, my cousin, when my cousin was there, it was just having him around to sort of *awhi* me and sort of get me to a calmer state. My cousin was 17 at that time, and I was 18. It was the way my cousin sort of *awhi* me. That was enough for me to sort of snap out of it.”

*Renée Paul:* “Yeah, I love my family.”

**CHAPTER 8**

## 8.1 Tinana

*Tinana* refers to self, person, and reality. In this case, the Queens speak of the physical changes that they have had to go through to become their authentic selves as women. Each Queen has taken this path to change at some stage in their lives, and most were at a young adolescent age, but one *wahine* took this path before reaching puberty, and another was in her much later life. It is also interesting to note the different paths that have been chosen as to how they are buried or cremated. The final resting place for *Māori/Pasifika* Queens throughout *Aotearoa* has seen much change over the decades.

*What was puberty like?*

*Wai Thompson:* “Puberty. Yes, that was discovering your sexual self.”

*What were the other boys and girls like towards you?*

*Wai Thompson:* “They were fine, they were fine with it, but they gave a lot of cheek though. But yeah, they were fine with it.”

*Renée Paul:* “Yeah, that was just horrible. I’m so glad my family isn’t like that. I’m so lucky, you know. I really appreciate the fact for my family how they were. I’ve heard stories like that, and oh, you poor thing, you know. So yes, it’s so sad. I think they come right later on years and years afterward.”

*Renée Paul:* “Then you wonder why their lives were.”

*What is intersex?*

*Chanel Hāti:* “They would have called them Hermaphrodites back then, but they are not, they are two.”

*So, when did you come to Wellington?*

*Wai Thompson:* “I came to Wellington in 77 1977. I was sixteen going on seventeen then.”

*What was Wellington-like back in '77?*

*Wai Thompson:* “Oh, it was stunning. The nightclub scenes. But I didn’t realise that I was underage. Yeah, I always wondered when they dressed me up. I didn’t realise that you weren’t allowed into nightclubs and pubs and that.”

*So, you got in?*

*Wai Thompson:* “Yeah, I got in, but I was always getting booted out of the bistro bar. Yeah, that used to be in Pigeon Park there. The Bistro Bar was notorious the Bistro Bar. But the nightclubs, I got away with getting into the nightclubs. It just didn’t dawn on me, even though I had started prostituting out on the streets. At that age, I didn’t realise that I was underage.”

*Renée Paul:* “Usually when they are born like that, they do the operation while it’s still young, aye?”

*When you discovered yourself being a wahine, were you here in a big city like Wellington?*

*Wai Thompson:* “No, no, Taumarunui. That was a different lifestyle, coming out. You see, we all grew up together, and we are all cousins and we’re all related and we didn’t have much ....”

*Was there any violence?*

*Wai Thompson:* “No, no, there wasn’t because we all knew one another. Being in a little town, you see. My mum and Carmen were cousins.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “What they should do is let them grow up first, and then they can choose.”

*Did you have support from the family?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “I had lots of support from my siblings. My mother had passed away by the time I had transitioned, so I can’t speak for her or how that would have been, even though I could romanticize about it as much as I want, it ain’t going to change a thing. My father, however, it took him most probably about 16 years to accept my new lifestyle as a Queen or transgender or *whakawahine*. He acknowledged me, but as his son. He would still call me by my birth name, and for me personally, I was okay with that in some ways. I mean, the older I got, the more mature I got, I would say, but when I was first transitioning, it was horrible and I hated it. Like I said, getting older and having more experiences, I’ve made peace with it. Since then, well, he said, *he pono*, he’s telling the truth, to a degree. He was the one who gave me my name. So, who am I to question that?”

*What would you say about “that Prostitution is a survival?”*

*Wai Thompson:* “I didn’t at first, but after a while, it became like a survival. The thing was that I never got educated. I didn’t go any further into my education, but Mum and Dad tried to push me into education, but I wasn’t academic. It just wasn’t my ... all I went to school for was to read, write, and maths, and that’s it. I’m just not academic, my brain is just not geared for that.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “In the 70s, Queens were called Drag Queens. Then it goes into the 80s, where we drop the Drag, and yet in the 90s, the Gay Boys took it when they performed. Today, a Drag Queen is not like someone in the 70s, so today a Drag Queen is a Gay man who performs as a woman. So that Drag Queen has moved up. Just chopped it in half in the eighties. Dropped the Drag bit and those boys picked it up in the 90s, Rū Paul, you know everybody is about Drag Queens these days.”

*So, how did your siblings react to your change?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Mixed reactions, I would say. I am the youngest of five siblings. I have two brothers and two sisters, but my oldest brother passed away a few years ago now, so I only have one brother left. But I told my oldest brother first. The reason I told him was because he was *whāngai*, well, he was raised by our grandparents. I called him up into my bedroom, there was a knock on the

door, and when I opened the door, he just started giggling. He said, is that how you want to be? And I said yes. Well, as long as you are happy. So, you know, he was the first one that I told. He went downstairs and told my sister. My sister comes knocking on the door. She just came in and looked at me and then laughed and but it was the same *whakaaro*. As long as you're happy. And then, I told my closest brother in that sense after my sister found out through my brother. He was fine, you know. They were just happy for me. And all they just encouraged me to do was to tell my father. Now, the last sister, I found it difficult to tell her because we were close, but not only that, she is quite conservative. She was ashamed of me just being a male, "I know I shouldn't say this word", you know she was ashamed of me being a Poofter. You know, and people would say, "Isn't that your brother?" And she would like to say where? No, that's not my brother. So, she would deny me in that sense, and that was hurtful in that sense. So, I thought I had to approach her sort of differently. So, I eventually probably told her a month after all my other siblings knew. And she must hurt as well because of our closeness. She said, We shared everything. Why did you not tell me first? So, there was a lot of *mamae* for both of us. But today they have all been loving and supportive with every step to this day."

*So, what age would that be?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* "When I first exposed myself? I was 15 going on 16."

*How about closest friends?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* "There was one friend in particular, I heard that she, sort of supported me in everything that I had done. And the moment I told her that I wanted to live as a woman was when she turned around and said, "It's about time." She even chose my name for me. My first name, which was Courtney, and I felt that that name didn't really sit well with me. But I was walking around being called Courtney for probably about a couple of months until I found my new name. But yes, I have good school friends' support. When it came to Queen and transgender friends, I also have another great support there as well-being, my drag mother and my drag sister."

*Ko wai tō rāua ingoa?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick: “Ko Tyra rāua ko Mushroom a rāua ingoa.”*

*Do you know of any Queens that might have children?*

*Wai Thompson: “Yes, there are quite a few Queens with children. Some had children before they became Queens, and some had children while they were Queens. There was one Queen Sherall, who was quite open about it. She was never closed about it. Yeah, there are lots of closets around. Back in the eighties, we didn’t take much notice of it; we thought it was just normal. A lot of the Queens who have children that I know of have moved away from Wellington. There’s one, Sherall Brooke Williams, she goes under, but she’s actually an Enon, but she lives in Hawera.”*

*Renée Paul: “I’ve got a good G.P. (General Practitioner), very understanding, very supportive, which I really do need. You really need to be able to talk to them and be honest with yourself, too. When it comes to medical things, I’ve been one of the lucky ones. I’ve heard a lot of bad stories.”*

*Wai Thompson: “Suicide. Yes, I have. It was way back...in the seventies, and it was my cousin I told. And had gone to the doctors to get valium and all that. Heaps of Valium from my doctors to commit suicide. The worst thing I did was to tell my cousin. She went around that night and knocked on the door, and told my mother. And I was getting home with my pills, ready to take them. And Mum just came through the door and came into the sitting room. And she just broke down crying, and she just told me that she loves me and couldn’t understand why I wanted to do something like that. Commit Suicide? And that’s what stopped me.”*

*So, you went to the doctor and asked for Valium (Diazepam)?*

*Wai Thompson: “Yeah, it was easy back then. Valium is, are sleeping pills, but if you take too much, it will poison the system and kill you.”*

*With your transition, have you had any problems going to the doctor?*

*Wai Thompson:* “With hormone pills, yes. It was Harisha who took me and her drag sister Jodie Downs, who just passed away a few years ago, too. To the doctors, as we didn’t know how to or what to say. She explained to Doctor Hole, who used to be in *Taumarunui*, that we wanted to be women and that we needed to be on hormones, Stilboestrol. Not a problem, until she explained everything to him, he understood where she was coming from and how we were. 25 milligrams of Stilboestrol. It comes from the urine of a female rat.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “We grew up young and everywhere we ran, we ran at with other Queens. Oh girl, oh no, I’ve got a *Teke* because I’m a woman. Oh, fuck! Whatever.”

*How about Winz? (Work and Income)*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “When I first went onto the *Benefit*, I was 18 years of age, yes, and because at that time the only way I could live in caution legal was that I had to deed poll my name, but my name was not by deed poll. So, at the first meeting of Winz, or at that time it was Work & Income, or was it something else? It’s been so long. The person came out and called me by my first name. And I walked straight up to them and I said, “Hello! *Kia Ora!* And looked at me and went, Huh? And I just said I’m transgender. To be honest, at that time I said, I am transexual. Because *transgender* wasn’t around then, it was nothing I hadn’t used. Yes, the early 90s, when I went on changing. Transgender for me never came out, maybe before I heard that word, just before the millennium? It may have been used, but I never really heard of it. At that time, I was calling myself transsexual. Well, that’s what I was labelled by everyone else, I suppose.”

*The government departments, how have they been towards you?*

*Wai Thompson:* “They have been good, might be because I’m a bit strange? They have been really, really fabulous because these are Housing NZ places. I pay \$67.00 a week, and I only got this place because I came up from the Christchurch earthquakes. I had moved down from Auckland to Christchurch, and the earthquakes started up a year later, about ten and eleven, and then I came back up because it was June 13<sup>th</sup> that wiped out my flat, it was the third biggest earthquake. But all the boarding houses and motels were already taken from the previous earthquakes.”

*What is the difference between a Queen and a Drag Queen?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “To be honest, not really? For me, a Drag Queen would be more like an artist. About performances. For me, that’s how I would look at a *Drag Queen*. Someone like Rū Paul, someone in that sense. But if we were talking about Queens in that sense? I would consider a *Queen* like transgender or transsexual in that sense, but it can still be quite confusing. I guess really, these days I try to stay away from those sorts of things now. Just to create a more neutral environment and allow them, if I don’t know them, to approach me and let them tell me how they prefer to be called in that sense.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “A lot of people these days, because of the internet, are ... they know more about us than the generation before them. Because the ones back in the 70s didn’t want to know. It’s just that, that’s all you will ever be is a Queer. So, what did Carmen do? She ran for Mayor. She didn’t win it, but the campaign sticker was to get behind, was on a car. And that’s not her saying that, that was Barry Crumps saying. And she just took it and put it on the back of her car.”

*So, when you came out, which town was it?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Porirua, *ae*. My hometown I grew up.”

*How did Porirua react to you?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Well, back then, it was mixed reactions. I mean, (Queens) Transgender, even though it had been around for a while, it was a lack of exposure, I would say. It was still a relatively new idea, having the (Queens) transgender women running around in dresses and things like that. I would say it was more about curiosity, but if I could just say this, it was more accepted, though, and that’s because of the multi-cultural community that Porirua is.”

*Explain in your own words what Trans is.*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Well, I couldn’t explain it in my own words because I have never really

had the time to put it into my own words. Because I'm being something that everyone wants me to be."

*In other words, you are being labeled?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* "Well, yeah, the doctors will encourage you to be a woman. But it doesn't leave room for me to share my *whakaaro* on it or just that."

*So, do you plan to have surgery if you could?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* "No. Long ago, I did have that *whakaaro* that *whakaaro* changed more because of my partner, who passed away. He always said to me that if I were to have my surgery changed, then he would leave me. So, it gave me a lot to think about. The difference is what I want to get rid of, but it was the difference that he loved. But I always gave myself to the age of 40, and now that I've passed 40, well, no in that sense."

*Do you have any regrets about your lifestyle?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* "No, not at all."

*Like in your younger days, how do you respond to those who deliberately insult you publicly?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* "In my younger days? Back then, I would usually react; most times, I would just ignore it. But if they were to strike at me first, then I would prepare myself in that sense. But I would say, okay, okay, yes, laugh over, move along, and let's all have a good time. Like I say, some of them are so persistent that they just need to be heard, oh well, and they just want to carry on. And then there are those ones who would strike at me first, and then I will strike back at them."

*Have you ever encountered any violence throughout your transition?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “No, not really, I couldn’t say. Not by being called (Queen) transgender, no. I prefer to be with country people because when I go past them and I know the look. Hey, what are you? Are you from the country? Yeah! You must be from Lower Hutt, Pōirua, or Johnsonville. And then you get those that just walk straight past, Oh well, you must be from the city?”

*Now I’m going to leave this bit up to you; you can talk about whatever you want. Let’s just say, has the health system been good to you?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “The Health System has been good to me.”

*How about the Police Department?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “They have all been wonderful.”

*Renée Paul:* “I was always putting on dresses back at home, putting on mum’s clothes.”

*So, tell me about the health system. Have they been supportive of you? Whether it be your GP or the Endocrinologist, how have they been with you?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Well, I should say, I don’t take female treatment anymore. So, I’m not on HRT and have not been on HRT (which is the hormone replacement therapy) for probably about 19 years. My *whakaaro* changed as my life as a *whakawahine*, is when I was doing studies at Victoria University. I have a B.A. in *Māori* and a double major in ...and that’s *Māori* Studies and *Te Reo*. But my post-grad or my honours paper was looking at *Whakawahine* pre-colonisation. So, I learned quite a lot doing that research. And I decided to stop taking hormones because I came to the idea through the research that I had done, that being *whakawahine* or (Queen) and transgender was something that was natural. I’m not an abomination of health, I am not a birth defect, I am who I am. I am me. I was treated well, and in a lot of situations there were, there was a hiccup at one stage with one of the endocrinologists, but that was sorted. I made a complaint, and he was made to apologize, and I was given back to my old Endocrinologist. The one who stuffed up was Dr Bob Carole. My

endocrinologist at that time I was 18 going 19, was Dr Robin Tumazz, and I was living in Lower Hutt at that time. Dr Tumazz was coming back into Wellington, and to save me, to travel into Wellington to see her because of the distance, she offered me another endocrinologist at Lower Hutt, which was Dr Carole. The first moment he met me, I had a cold, red eyes, and a running nose, and that's just how he goes to me; Dr Carole: "No, I know what you girls are like, you're not getting anything out of me. All you want is pills." Shaniqua: "Excuse me, how dare you?" And I made the complaint, and like I said, he was made to apologize, and Dr Robin Tumazz herself apologized because she did not realize that that's how he would react. Well, I didn't expect that either, but like I said, there was only one hiccup that I had; otherwise, no. I think the Health System was good in my case, anyway. Whether it was with my G.P. or with my Endocrinologist or sexual health doctors and all the rest of that."

*Wai Thompson:* "Suicide, I've *had* many who have thought about it and succeeded, ya many. Because of the hormone therapy, I noticed a lot of the old Queens who were on it did their head in. We were all on the same hormones at the time, and Stilboestrol was the main money at the time, then came Ethanol Australia, the female hormones. Well, you're mucking around with the hormones and the body, and that was just a bit dangerous, especially as you get older. And it wasn't till I found out later, I found it in the doctor's book. The white pages will give you the names of the drugs, and the pink pages will give you the side effects of them. The side effects (experience), yeah, it gives you mood swings. That's why I had to come off the hormones. I've been off them for like ten years now because I ended up with heart palpitations, thrombosis, that's what they called it. Because that's one of the side effects, and water retention. This is where it would make your tits come up."

*Did they tell you about the side effects?*

*Wai Thompson:* "No, no. They did *know* about it because it's in their doctor's book. That's how I found out about the side effects. I had actually been through it, and then after I had read about it in the side effects of the drug, it just freaked me out. But I don't think about how psychologically it is really bad. That's why a lot of Queens were committing suicide at the time, a lot of them back in the seventies, the drug was screwing with their head. But they were mixing it with alcohol and other drugs, recreational drugs as well, as well as the hormones. Those chemicals, 'Māori Tops Tail', you know all that, and chemicals going on in the body, the whole thing affected their mind."

*Wai Thompson:* "(Succeeded in suicide). Yeah, there was a *couple*. There was Violet Prat, who ended

up in jail here (Wellington). She was put in jail, and she ended up killing herself in jail. She wasn't in jail; she was in the Police Station in the Cell and ended up committing suicide.

There are quite a few like that. Another friend of ours was *Helen Hohaia* in Rotorua, she was another one who killed herself in the Cell (prison cell)."

*Renée Paul*: "I remember meeting my mother's first cousin, who was *Takatāpui*. And the first thing she said, my mum's cousin's name was Gypsy, and the first thing she said to me was, "*Kia Ora*, I'm your *auntycle*." "And I went to mum, what's an *auntycle*? She's actually, she's *takatāpui*. What's that, mum? You know, she lives her life like a woman. You just be respectful, and I went, Oh, cool. You know she's a person just like you. So, you just respect her, no matter what? And that's your *whānau*, just so you know, and I went Wow! So, she was the very first person I ever saw."

*What is your gender?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: "I use *whakawahine* as my gender or transgender woman."

*Renée Paul*: "I've always considered myself a Queen or *whakawahine*."

*Wai Thompson*: "Oh, ok, yes, I identify as a Queen."

*How do Gay Boys and Lesbians treat Queens like you?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: "For me, I can only speak of my own experiences. I've been treated well. No one has done me any wrong."

*Do you have an idol? Someone famous that you put up there on the pedestal? Is someone Queen or Trans? Is there such a person?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: "Yes, my role model and this *person* is aware of it, is a dear friend of mine, who is Chanel Hāti. I admire her way of living. I've even told Chanel myself. And that's why I love her, because she turned around and said You don't have to be me, just be you. But that's just how she is, so humble. Yes, she is my role model and has been even though I had a drag mother. My

drag mother taught me how to be a woman. But I think Chanel taught me how to be the best woman I could be.”

*So, who was your drag mother?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Mushroom.”

*How do you feel when you go on to the marae when you are amongst your people?  
How do you present yourself? How do you compose yourself when someone stares  
at you for whatever reason? Pēnei he tangihana? For whatever occasion? You’re  
right in there on the Māori scene?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “In a way, this is only due to my research that I did for my postgrad. It saddens me to sort of feel, you know, how the Māori culture or the influence of colonization, I should say. For my research, as I was saying, it was a natural process; it’s just who you are.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “But really, what we do is, we all dream. We all *dream* of having .... but not everybody has surgery. Money is the barrier. But in saying that, here in New Zealand, there are government-funded sex changes in the Health Care System for us. The only thing is that the line is so long, you might as well go to Thailand. Because you will be waiting for like 10 years? That’s how long the list is.”

*How do you feel about surgery?*

*Wai Thompson:* “When I was young, yeah, I preferred it. But, urgh, I think they are a bit racist (the medical profession), especially with Māori. Yeah, we did the psychology buzz and everything like that, and the endocrinology and all that. I went through all of that, and that was back in the eighties. I just completely forgot all about it because they completely put me off it. They would go, Oh no, we don’t do it here (the male-to-female surgery), and I found out years later that they do, yeah. Argh, they are just being racist, especially towards Māori, because a lot of Pākehā were going through and getting it

done (the male-to-female surgery), which I found out many years later, and that was down in Christchurch. The medical system put me off, definitely did for the sex change and things like that, and that's why I didn't pursue it anymore. The doctors just kept saying 'No', they did. Because I'm almost sixty now, now nah (no point in pursuing surgery). Well, I pursued it back then when I was in my Twenties and things like that, and that's when I needed it when I wanted it, but no, not now. That time has been and gone, move on."

*Renée Paul:* "I think Carmen was the one that I looked up to, and that's because she's the one who paved the way for all of us. And once you bring together Carmen, Canya, and Vera, and all of that, they did all the hard work for us."

*Chanel Hāti:* "Isn't that Trans in the fast lane, isn't that your last name? If I did, I would like to change and have my titties done. Not too big and not too small, just nice. I didn't realize how busy you were, lady in the purple."

*Shaniqua:* "At that time, it was probably just the difficulty of *transitioning*. I'm being a Queen, I feel that it may have been just overwhelming in relation to the hormone treatment, and that I would say in that sense. I had great support from *whānau* and friends, which was fine, but I think it was just sort of having the idea that the hormones made me feel that I was a woman, and along with the woman treatment, it was just the doctors, it was that as well. It was sort of like they encourage you to live as a woman. That you have to. So, I think myself personally, my own *whakaaro* was that I'm a woman and no one is going to tell me any different."

*Renée Paul:* "A rope around her neck and connected to the clothes line and then connected to the lawn mower while the father was mowing the lawn."

*Chanel Hāti:* "My dad died when I was eight. I don't really *know* him. But my mum, I think, with trans girls, the mum is the softer one. And you're most likely to get away with it with her, but not the father, not all the time."

*Renée Paul:* "They can't accept that we are people too."

*Chanel Hāti:* "Well, not all of them are like that."

*Shaniqua:* "I think I love being in a position where I can do *what* I want. I can help others when I want, and when things get a little bit too much, I can take time out. Long ago, when I sort of used to help my brothers and sisters raise their *whānau* and all the rest of that, and having a *tane* as well, I found it for

myself very difficult. Now, lately, things have changed. I find now that I do prefer, I wouldn't say my own space, I just prefer to have time to myself, so that I can recollect. And then I can sort of reflect, you know, see what I could have done better, and that's only in preparation for the next day, God willing."

*Chanel Hāti*: "When you grow up, I'm such a girl and I'm *so* pretty. But when you get into your 30s and 40s, and when you look back and think? Oh, fuck that's stupid. You actually say that when you're quite comfortable and happy with your body. It is because you have lived for so long the way you are. But if surgery came, I would take it straight away. No problem, show me on that bed and knock me out."

*Renée Paul*: "I've experienced someone who died by suicide, and that's my brother. He committed suicide back in the 90s. Well, I found out that it was because he felt that he was a burden on the rest of the family. And instead of talking to the *whānau*, he held it all inside, and then it got to the stage where he couldn't hold any more, and then he hung himself. My brother's name was Frank, he was the second eldest. I thought he was stronger than that, but he wasn't."

*Chanel Hāti*: "We had medical students that come here and they're new to their ... they're just starting out in their training. We bring them here and they ask us questions. One of the questions was? How do you think, when I should... You know, give me an idea of how I should be in terms of you know ... when they come into contact with a Queen or a trans person?"

*Chanel Hāti*: "I said, well, first this is, you never ask anything *personal*. Like, oh, have you had the operation yet? You don't do that. I said your job is to make sure that they are comfortable, and it would be nice if you came and met a Queen or a trans person. Just be mindful of the language that you use because that could quickly be taken the wrong way. Just talk to them and make them feel comfortable because Queens and trans, are very wary of health professionals, because they still have a lot of problems accessing health care. But that's why we train medical students, for giving them advice on how to .... Just in case they come across somebody who is a Queen or a trans. But today we've got Lesbians, *Trans*, and the *Boys*. Now it's the *Lesbians*, the *Queens*, the transman, the boys, *gender fluid*, *genderqueer*, *non-conforming*, *non-binary*, all this terminology has just evolved, and it's ... it was just us, but now it's not. And the difference between non-conforming and it's not about the visibility. Like it is with us. You know it's here, and I've met nonbinary people."

## 8.2 Hinengaro

*Hinengaro* is the mind, thought, intellect, consciousness, and *awareness*, and in this scenario, it is that told through the *pūrākau* of *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens/*wāhine*.

*Back at thirteen or fourteen, was there a word that you knew of?*

*Wai Thompson*: “No, no, there wasn’t. When I came out to my *mother*, she said that I was a homosexual, and all that basically.”

*Was she okay?*

*Wai Thompson*: “No, she wasn’t, but my father was surprised. He never *changed* any of us kids, but my mother was embarrassed. It was she who hit the roof. But she got along a bit later on as the years have gone by.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “I had a little out-pool, I remember telling *Gold (Marygold Te Kani, R.I.L.)* this, I would say it was a discussion, it was a huge *utuutu* at the *wānanga*. I decided to double major, you see, at the beginning, I was just doing *Māori* studies. *Whakamomori* is something I’ve only just learned from a *Māori* perspective, while at university. Growing up non-the-wiser with the term *whakamomori*. So, it wasn’t until I was in my thirties that I first learned the term *whakamomori*, and that was because of one of the papers I had to do at a three-hundred-level paper around *tikanga*. Customary concepts, and the lecturer at that time was Peter Adds. And one of his discussions was around *whakamomori*. And I would say it really has opened my eyes up in a different way to looking at *whakamomori*. And the question he posed was: “Are *Māori* depressed?” “*Nāku e whakautu, e kao,*” and I still believe that today. I don’t believe that *Māori* are depressed. I just believe that *Māori* are tired. Exhausted from living in a depressing, cold world. And I say cold because our papers, no longer do we unite like we used to.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “Learning about *whakamomori* itself was an eye-opener, because I didn’t realise that it was something we had in our culture. But I wasn’t that surprised. But after learning about

it in that sense, you know, you have other cultures as well. Especially in relation to that death being achieved amongst all their slaves or servants or whoever would be made to rest with them. Basically, *whakamomori* in that sense.”

*Renée Paul*: “I came to Wellington in 1979. I came here and have been in *Wellington* ever since. I’ve been a (Queen) / transsexual or *Takatāpui* for the majority of my life, and I’ve been with my partner for 33 years. I really love Prostitutes Collective for what they have really done for me and helped me as a person. I’ve been a volunteer worker since 1998 for New Zealand’s Prostitutes Collective. I’ve gone out on the streets, what we call ‘*Outraged*’, handed out condoms, and given out information to other girls on the streets. Before the NZ Prostitutes Collective came along in 1987, there was nothing out there for us girls and that. There was nowhere to go to for help and I got raped back in the 80s, and that, and I had nowhere to go.”

*Renée Paul*: “Itchcom goes to me.” “Why, don’t you go to the Police?” “*What’s the use?* They’re not going to do anything because of, what I am.”

*If you had the opportunity for an operation, would you go and complete it, finish it? If someone or an organization were prepared to fund you to finish it?*

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “I’ve never really thought about it since. I’ve had a few people ask me through Facebook because this is when we are having *kōrero* around gender diversity or cultural diversity. I didn’t exactly say no, I wouldn’t give them my research, but what I gave them was the tools that I sort of used. So, kind of giving them the idea where to go? My *whakaaro* was that they would not be learning anything. I know in the world of Academics, you know you stand on the shoulders of giants. But you know, from a different perspective, you know, like I said, if you were to go and research .... As you know, I just gave them the key concept of my research. It’s like the saying, “*You give a man a fish*”, but as you know, I wasn’t about to give the fish, but I had no problems with it if you want me to teach you how to fish. Because I think you will learn a lot more if you take that personal journey as I did, and not only that, but some of the research involved working with the archive. And some of the research was from Papa Hurinui Jones, one of the *whanaunga*, and *Tā* Apirana Ngata. Sorry to say this, but everyone who knows me knows that I would see this as patronizing. It was quite patronizing because I had to do a lot of training with the New Zealand Police for the DLR, which is

Diverse in Officers, and wherever I went, and I've done other workshops for the Ministry of Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, all of that, and it was basically how do you treat transgender? I don't know what to do.

Basically, it's the golden rule, if you don't even know what the golden rule is? *Then* you should not be here but back at school learning, that's my *whakaaro*. That's how I feel about when asked about fifteen times, saying the same thing over and over. It felt like nothing was ever getting through... But I would say, back then, around two thousand or so, they were sort of like, okay, we can't put it in law, but we can write policies. So, let's put it into our policies. So, I would say the millennium was a big turnaround in a lot of ways. Because prior to that, I couldn't be called Shaniqua because it wasn't, not my legal name. But my preferred name didn't come around until about the millennium. My legal name is Shaniqua Tillick, and it's on my birth certificate and on my license. My gender has not been changed. I just don't want to go through all that process, because I'm staying with my new *whakaaro* now, only after my research with the University of Victoria, is that I am me, and I'm happy being me. I've been at peace for almost a decade now, *kua tau te Rangimarie*<sup>57</sup>. In relation to being *whakawahine ko Kore* (Dr TeUrikore Biddle), *te Kaiako i taua wā*."

*M*: "My advice to *rangatahi* is to be who you are, love yourself, love all the *people* around you. If you need help, seek help. There are a lot of avenues out there where you can go and seek help. Get a sister or someone you can really trust and start talking to them. It costs nothing to talk. It's easier for someone else to listen to you, and you know, you just carry on. Life is too precious to throw away, you've got lots of living, lots of sinning to do yet! Be yourself, and if you really need help, go and talk to someone that you can really trust, or just tell someone, and let's hope that they will listen to you."

*Chanel Hāti*: "Exactly, like Georgina Beyer, she became the world's first *Open* Mayor. The first (Queen) or *Trans* to Parliament as a Minister of Parliament."

*Renée Paul*: "She did a really, really good job."

*Chanel Hāti*: "And that's because that pathway that was laid before Georgie, like *Carmen* and all those other Queens. Because Carmen wouldn't shut up about Gay Rights in the 70s, just shoosh and don't talk about it, yeah, but no. No, I don't, I want to talk about our Rights. So, everything that we had in the 80s, like the Prostitution Law Reform Act and the Homosexual Law Reform Act, the Gay Marriage Act, all of that is because of people like her who down those foundations for younger ones to walk on. Georgina took her place there."

*M:* “Most of my friends here were cousin girls, I had no boyfriends at all, like I *mean* I wouldn’t play rugby at all, I would pass the ball back to the person who threw it to me as I go skipping along.”

*Shaniqua:* “My thoughts were...my mind was quite strong. At times I found it *some* in motions, could be more overwhelming than others.”

*Renée Paul:* “We always say to a lot of people, there’s good and bad in every *walk* of life, in every different group. There’s good and bad. Just be yourself, you know. Be kind and true to yourself, then you don’t have to worry about what others think.”

*Renée Paul:* “I’m really glad I did it because to me, I’m going back to my *roots* when I do *kapa haka*. I think of my mum, my old *koro*, and old *kuia*, and that they all did that. They are all teachers and *Kaea*, and that, and oh well, must be in my blood.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “I would divert the advice away because ... and not put it on *them* because it’s like, what are you talking about? Are you trying to tell me how to live or something? Yeah, but your advice has to be very sensitive. You know, you’re walking on eggshells around very vulnerable people. So, you have to be very careful.”

*Renée Paul:* “I think I have a strong *whānau* base and that. Like I mentioned *before* about my brother committed suicide. Dad made us all stronger; he made us all sit down and made us talk about it. Which I think is a good thing to do, and then we all promised each other that if we ever had anything that serious in our minds to just speak out because we would all be there for each other. So, we live by that now, so if anyone has any problems, just jump on Facebook or talk to us, whatever you know. And we will listen. And actually, that’s a big thing to actually listen to what they are saying and to understand how they are feeling, and that is so that you can help them out on their journey.”

*Chanel Hāti:* “But some of them don’t ask. And if you don’t ask, you don’t know?”

*Renée Paul:* “We can only advise them from our own views and that. Everything evolves. Like when we first started out, everything was really Ratshit! compared to what it is now.”

*Shaniqua:* “For me, it would really depend on the contents of a lot of things in *that* sense. I would be more likely just to suggest that they could find a safe place. If it meant being with me in that sense, so be it. Just somewhere safe where they can rest, because I feel that most times it’s just our *hinengaro* that is just overworked at times. So, if we just get a bit of rest and let our minds settle a bit more, we may be able to clear things out.”

*Chanel Hāti*: “I would, I probably wouldn’t advise them. I *wouldn’t* because you know when you are talking to them, you are talking to them as a person and not as somebody, I think that might make them go and kill themselves. So, you need to talk to them in a different way from what you usually talk to them because of that sensitivity that they are carrying; it’s like a spark that is forming. You talk about everything except for .... Some of them don’t want advice. Some of them might appreciate it?”

*Shaniqua*: “How often do we stop in and see our *whanaunga* or our *grandparents* or even our parents for a cup of tea or a catch-up? We are all usually too busy or have things to do. It sort of lessens the values of our *tīpuna*, and as you know, ‘*he aha te mea nui? He tangata he tangata he tangata.*’ So, as you know, our ancestors valued people in that sense, as opposed to the dollar or gold. When it was like that, I think life was a lot smoother, happier, but it also had difficulties as well.”

### 8.3 Wairua

Spirit, soul – the spirit of a person, which exists beyond death. It is the non-physical spirit, distinct from the body and the *mauri*. To some, the *wairua* resides in the heart or mind, while others believe it is part of the whole person and is not located in any particular part of the body. *Wairua* is the spirit within us all. How one perceives that is up to them. In this case, the Queens affected tell of their experiences as to how *wairua* has had an important impact on them throughout their lives. As Polynesian, we believe that when we die, our *wairua* will return to our *Ipukarea* (Ancestral land) from which we come, from *Hawaiki/Avaiki Nui*, *Hawaiki/Avaiki Roa* ki *Hawaiki/Avaiki Pāmamao*.

Wairua Participants identified the following elements as critical to success:

- The importance of spiritual sustenance
- Feeling good and engendering a good feeling (Lee et al., 2012).

*How would you describe yourself?*

*Wai Thompson*: “As a woman.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “Usually, cheerful. Usually, *happy-go-lucky*. I can be reserved at times depending on the situation. I love helping people, but you know all the rest of that. I think, as you know, *me waiho nā te tangata hei mihi*.”

*Renée Paul:* “I’m proud of what I am. Since I’ve been in *Wellington*, I’ve worked on the streets, I’ve done floor shows, I’ve done *kapa haka*, and I’ve worked as a kitchen hand.”

*So, at what age did you discover, or first came out, or discover that you were slightly different?*

*Wai Thompson:* “Yes, I was about thirteen, fourteen then. First realized that I didn’t like women; I liked men basically.”

*Shaniqua:* “The way that she is, I think about her *whakaaro*, her *wairua*, her *āhua*, and I try my best to practice my, you know, to be as...like her the best I could, and it’s hard.”

*Was there a time that you were at your lowest point and you thought about ...?*

*Wai Thompson:* “Yes, there was. Well, I didn’t really know what I really was, basically, then. I hadn’t come down to Wellington then. I had just left school, and then I just mucked around back at home, you know. Going out to nightclubs and things like that with my mates and that, before I came down here to Wellington. It wasn’t till Harisha came along. She came down from Auckland, and she saw what I was going through, and she said, “Come along, you are coming down to Wellington with me.” And I’ve never looked back after that, and I loved it. I absolutely loved it. She was like a lifesaver. Yeah, I was able to connect with who I was, and that’s how she did it.”

*Renée Paul:* “To be true to themselves and then understand that there are *differences* in this world. You know, we are not always going to agree with other people, but that is part of life, you know. There’s going to be good times and bad times and that sort of thing.”

*Renée Paul:* “You’re being true to yourself.”

*Shaniqua*: “My personal opinion is that I believe there are a lot of reasons why *whakamomori* happens. Anger may be one, broken-hearted may be another, but what I’m really saying is that it really depends on, is to how their situation is, for me to have a better idea of how to direct them. Or how to guide them. I mean, broken-hearted is quite a common one. So, I would go along the lines of, if somebody had just finished a relationship, for example, and they weren’t coping too well with the breakup changes. I would try and coach them into you know, just take one minute at a time. One day at a time. Don’t be too fast or take action, you know, give time to just think about things, and that’s how I would approach it, somewhere along those lines. Distract them in other words.”

*Renée Paul*: “My earliest memory of being a Queen (*takatāpui*) is? I think I’ve always been this way full-stop. It’s always been me and that. I mean, I was my mum’s right-hand; she was asthmatic. So, when she was sick, I played mother. There were twelve of us, and I’m the oldest in the family. I’m number one. And my sisters and brothers all look up to me. So, when my mum passed away, I became their mother. So, I made sure they were dressed for school and their lunches were made. Everything was done; we all had our chores when we got back from school because that’s how we were brought up.”

*Chanel Hāti*: “It’s true, I’m lucky I live by myself, so I don’t have anything that makes me angry. I’m just there by myself.”

*Shaniqua*: “Like I was saying when I was doing that research, I treated the *house of Io, te whare wānanga, ahakoa he rerekē te wā ki ēnei rā mai taua wā* (despite the times being different from then till today). *Ki āhau nei*, whenever I have done my research around *te whare wānanga*, I would do my *karakia*.”

*Renée Paul*: “I would describe myself as quite straight up, uhm... I don’t *care* stuff all of what other people think. I honestly don’t. If they don’t accept me for who I am? No skin off my nose. They can either like me or don’t like me, and if they don’t, that’s fine. As long as they keep respect, I can do the same to them.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “To me, the major concept or the main *foundation* of society for *Māori* is *wairuatanga*. I mean *ko tērā Atua, ko tērā tangata, tērā Atua*. *Wairuatanga* is the most important foundation for me, and that’s my own opinion when it comes to *Māori* culture.”

*Renée Paul*: “I think when the time comes, I will be going back home. Because I want to be around my

family before I pass away. I mean, that's just me, I know they are just waiting for me to move back home. But I don't want to go back yet. I'm not ready."

## 8.4 Tikanga / Kawa

... Identify the *tikanga*, the *pou*, and the protocols on which the early *communities* were established. The principles of *tikanga* were commonly accepted as authoritative and established ideals... (Ross, 2015).

"*Kawa* is also a very important *tikanga* process for managing relationships. *Indeed*, as *Tā Hirini Mead* and *Tā Pou Temara* describe it, *kawa* is *tikanga* wrapped in *tapu*." (Whata, 2024).

## 8.5 Tikanga

*Tikanga*: Correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, *rule*, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol - the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context (Mead, 2016).

## 8.6 Kawa

*Marae* protocol – customs of the *marae* and *wharenui*, particularly those *related* to formal activities such as *pōhiri*, speeches, and *mihimihi*. This seems to be a modern extension of the word. *Kawa* is also the way in which we host people. (Schubert-McArthur, 2019).

Both *Tikanga* and *Kawa* play an important role in the lives of *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens. They tell us how these take effect in their daily lives.

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: "I had to commission to read their writings, and their work was around the *Whare Wānanga* or Free House of Learning. This is what I mean, for me it's the emotions, the tears go, because we are no longer living traditionally. I'm not saying that it's a sad thing, I'm just

saying that some cultural concepts haven't really benefit and I think another reason why I didn't go back to university is because the one question I pose during my honours to the lecturers at that time was okay I get that our language is dying and I get that we want to hold on to *te reo* by holding onto *te reo* such as words that have a lot of meaning to us such as *te whare wānanga*. But I really did not feel comfortable, that's why I don't say, "*Whare Wānanga*", I would say, "University". I don't really feel comfortable applying a common term to ... I get it that it's a learning institution, but traditionally, the *whare wānanga* was the house of *Io*. And it was not a common house. So, the way I saw it was.... What price are we willing to pay? Because the way I see it, by calling a common institution a *Whare Wānanga*.... What does that do for our culture? And if they are willing to use such words so freely in that sense? Then what about all of our ancestors who treated that house and revered it with respect? Are we to *takahi*, you know, are we to trample their *mana*? I even went to seek the advice of my elders on both sides, you know, from my *Ngāti Porou* and my *Te Arawa* side as well. It saddens me more because, hmm, yeah, that *whakaaro*, it's just sad to know that long ago, as you know, we may have probably been an institution like *whakawahine* themselves. Kore, my lecturer, first got me interested at that time, writing about gender, but for her, it was about gender and *kapa haka*. And that's where it first started for me personally. Taking that journey and looking at gender through a different lens."

*Do you go back to your marae, and how do people react?*

*Wai Thompson*: "I haven't been back to our *marae* for ... and it wasn't just me, it's between the different families and different *whānau*. A big *raruraru* or problem went down. I'm from further on *Ngāti Waikarapu*, which is my other *hapū*, actually my main *hapū*, down *Parapara* through *Wanganui* to Rārahi. Well, one of our grandfather's sisters' children went and turned the name of our farm, *Tuhiariki*, into a *hapū* of *Ngāti Rangi*. And that, *Ngāti Rangi* lot, they are very *waewae tapū* (sacred feet), you know, tramp ... and we are in a bit of an argument, a *raruraru*, with them about that. And *Ngāti Rangi* doesn't even come down that (*whakapapa*) of *Parapara*. But because of our cousins, their mother was *Ngāti Rangi*. They thought that they could just do that, oh, they are naughty. So, there's a big *raruraru* going down there, so we don't go. It's just to do with our cousins, who are greedy. Haven't been back to the *marae* since Mā and Pā died back in 1994 and 1995."

*M*: "I'm a *kai karanga* and I stand up on our *marae*, I *karanga* every time I go around the *motu*. I still *karanga*, especially if any of our sisters pass away. I will go down and represent my *hapū* and all our

friends, and I will *karanga* for, *karanga* to the deceased to have a nice journey to the next life.”

*Do you attend tangi for other Queens?*

*Wai Thompson:* “No, no, because most of the Queens I know now live up North, up in Auckland ways. And now you will have to go all the way up there, and it’s a big, long trip ... and no. It’s One good thing about Facebook is that everyone can give their condolences to the family, social media. Travelling is the biggest concern.”

*Shaniqua:* “I have one *kōrero* that I found particularly interesting, which is the *koro* that comes from *Wairarapa*. And it was about a young chiefess, who was said to be so beautiful that her husband was a *koroheke*, and he could not believe that she was interested in him. So, one night while she was asleep naked, he let his friends view her. She woke up, and she was disgusted and ashamed. The next morning, make a long story short when they were out free fishing. She walked to the cliff, waved to him, threw her cloak off, and jumped off the cliff. Now, for me, the idea there really was for her about regaining *mana*. That’s what my *whakaaro* on it is. It wasn’t that I hate you, to her husband at the time. I think it was more about, “You’ve taken my *mana* away from me by doing that, so the only way I could regain my *mana* was to take myself away from you.” Because your greatest loss now was, she was probably feeling that to lose her life would be the greatest loss he would ever suffer. And I suppose what greater way to regain your *mana*. It’s just quite interesting to know that one of the questions, as well, was “*Utu*”. The discussion in itself in regards to her was like a cycle. Her *mana* was taken away, and she had to take the necessary steps for her *mana* to come back. She went through this whole sort of repository to get her *mana* back, and I found that story interesting, and if I could remember the name, I would say it.”

*M:* “There were other learned *kaumatua* there when I asked the question, *but* when he came back, and there were a few whispers around in the *whareniui*. You know everybody is talking, and you can now feel the vibes like the knives are kind a sticking into you, from all your aunties and uncles, more or less. ‘How dare you ask that question? You should not be seen or heard or be sitting at the back’, but the aunties came back and said, “You are who you are”, you know, you dress like a woman, and you walk around like a woman and you do all the woman chores, so like he recognized me, saying yes, you are a woman.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “At that time, the *Kaiako* was Prof. Rāwinia Higgins and *the* paper was *whaikōrero* and *karanga*. Now she had put me down to do the *karanga*, and I disagreed. She wasn’t very happy, and I said No, I’m not going to do the *karanga*. But because we were in class, I said How about I’m going to do *whaikōrero*, end of. She goes, “And Shaniqua, why don’t you want to do the *karanga*?” And well I said first of, “Thank you for your support and *tautoko*, but you know inside my mind and inside my head, I’ve got my mother standing behind me with a broom whacking me on the head. “What the fuck are you doing? 89\*/4563^%%6///\*--859.” Well, this is how my mother .... And it would have been because of the anger that would have come from her. You know that I was doing the *karanga*.” Basically, that’s what I said, “My mum is in the back with a broom, Whack! Whack! “What the hell are you doing? You know that’s not your place, now take your place.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick*: “I decided to do the *whaikōrero*, but long story short, I *ended* up getting an ‘A+’ for it, and I ended up getting the Broughton award, which I won. In that year when I got the Luka Broughton award, as you know is all about *te reo*. They couldn’t decide at the time because there was only one award. So, they created two, one for males and one for females. I was the recipient for female, and *Taiahu* was the recipient for male, and it was the first time that had ever happened, and I think that is how they do it today.”

*M*: “When I was young, we had a *wānanga* held at the local *marae*. The *whareniui* was so full, but there was an opportunity for us to get up and ask questions. And the question that I stood up and asked, “What is a role for Gay (because Queens and transgender weren’t the words back then), it was gay. What is the role for a *poofter boy* or gay person who is standing up on the *marae* and they’re transitioning, what purpose or role? What should they be doing, you know? Yeah, and that was quite an important time, at that time with the old man, because he was a very learned and a spokesperson for the Māori Queen, *Te Atāirangikahu*. That’s when I just came back from Sydney, and I was trying to fit back into the community, and it was quite hard for me.”

*Chanel Hāti*: “I’ve heard about *suicide*, where some *marae* won’t take them if they find out that they killed themselves by suicide.”

*Shaniqua*: “For the *whaikōrero*, well, see, I’m getting there. For the *whaikōrero* to appease both, the way I thought, it was my birthright being born *he tane*, it’s my birthright to do *whaikōrero*. But, *I raro o ngā tikanga o Ngāti Porou*, you know *wahine* can do *whaikōrero*. And so that’s why I said to Rāwinia, under that *tikanga*, I will be doing the *whaikōrero* as a woman. Because that’s why she was saying that; the university sees me as nothing but a woman.”

*M:* “The concept of me being (Queen) / *transgender*, you know, at that time it probably wasn’t anything new, they just didn’t talk about it. So, it was something that they were getting to learn to accept. But there was a time when you were at the *marae* and your duty was to set the table. Make sure that *Manaaki ki ngā tāngata*, you know.”

*Renée Paul:* “And I’ve heard that, and another thing they do is when they go to the *urupā*, they bury them in a certain way with the head facing this way, well, they do it the opposite way around. They don’t have their head facing up the right way, but it is at the bottom.”

*Shaniqua:* “On the voice of the *marae* is not just the *tāne, e rua, e rua*. They were all lovely at the *marae* itself. They had no issues with me being a (Queen) / *transgender*. If anything, they were a bit more supportive than I would have liked. I was sad to say that because it felt like having to justify my *whakaaro* and my beliefs to them. As I was saying, *Rāwinia (Higgins)* was rather quite impressed, after it all, that I decided to do *whaikōrero* and I went ahead with it. I did it with still being the *Ngāti Porou tikanga*, I stood in front of the *marae* at the *poho* with a dress on.”

*M:* “Look after the people when they come in and work in the kitchen washing dishes, and you would be flamboyant running around, you know, in your skirt doing circles and ignoring everybody, whatever names they call you.”

*Shaniqua Karawana Tillick:* “But also, I likened it much further using our ideas of *ko tērā tikanga*, which comes from the Atua, and the most popular one would be from the idea of *whaikōrero*. The inspirations of *Rangi* and *Papa*. You know, *tū atu, tū mai, or tauutuutu*, you know that’s where that *tikanga* was based and comes from the heavens. So, my research, my *whakaaro* was that (Queens) or *transgender* was basically, well, (Queens) / *transgender* and *whakawahine* to me in traditional times, were servants from *Io*. And in a traditional society, they were viewed as beings or servants or as an instrument of *Io*. And the reason why my *whakaaro* went that way, well, was because *Io* contained both the female and male elements, and they were personified as *Rangi* and *Papa*.”

**CHAPTER 9**

## 9.1 De'Anne Jackson – Pūrākau Tuatahi

An interview with De'Anne Jackson tells her *pūrākau* about how it was for her to step into her true identity.

*Do you consider yourself to be a Queen?*

*De'Anne*, Always, why? When I started back in the 70's we were Queen's. *Nothing* has changed.

*Your choice of topic?*

*De'Anne*, "I've never thought about suicide. I was brought up in a very strict *Catholic* upbringing, and to have suicide, that was Ooh, Ooh. And even when one of my friends passed away, I was going to her *tangi*, and my *mother* said,

*Mā*, "You're not going".

*De'Anne*, "Oh, yes, I am a mother".

*Mā*, "You're not going".

*How did she die?*

*De'Anne*, "Well, they said she committed suicide."

*Mā*, "You're not going, I tell you, here and now".

*De'Anne*, "So, I wasn't allowed to go because that was a big *tapu*. Anyone who died of suicide was the end of evil, of the evil back in those days, and I'm talking about the '60s and '70s. And coming from a strict Catholic upbringing, that's what we were taught. Sad to say."

*De'Anne*, "Ae, they put them outside the gate where the *urupā* is over here, and they put them along the side." "I think that is so sad, or I think they just stand them up."

*Did you have family support for being who you are?*

*De'Anne*, "Sexually? Oh, absolutely, for me, my mother was just ... nobody could say anything bad against me. My father, oh... a bit different because he didn't have anyone this kind in his country. No, we never ever had any Cook Islanders, meaning *Queens*. Not until I went up to Auckland and lived up in Auckland, and there were just busloads and busloads of *Cook Island Queens*. Hey, I had a big party at my home and I said, "Can you ring my dad, please?" "*Auroara* speaking in their language, and that rang home to dad, and dad loved them. He loved them; they got on so well. They told him about their lives and everything. And he loved them and asked, "When are you going to bring your friends down to Fielding?" He loved them. So, I was lucky in that sense."

*Did you have supportive friends, any special friends?*

*De'Anne*, "I did, my friends were all girls. The only boys I had were boys from my class. But those guys that were in my class, those girls went after them."

*De'Anne*, "And you haven't got that help, you haven't got that *tautokotanga*, *whanaungatanga* ... you haven't got that."

*What were your parents like towards your change? What were your siblings like towards you?*

*De'Anne*, "Yeah, I had no problems with mine. I was the second-eldest from a family of twelve, so what could they say?"

*De'Anne*, "Yeah, mine too! Yeah, I get on well with my family. I love my family."

*When did you come out?*

*De'Anne*, "Yeah, I was 14."

*De'Anne*, "Yeah, I think I was like that too. When I met all those *Queens* from *Ngāti Kāhungunu*, there was Gaye Hawkins, Jackie Webb, Paula, Duchess, the four of us, all of those *Queens* up there took their town."

*Who was your closest friend?*

*De'Anne*, “My best friend was my next-door neighbor because she had a record player, and she knew who I liked. I loved Donnie Osmond and Mark Bowland and all those, and she liked the guys, and then she said,

*Friend*, “You know, you’re not supposed to like boys?”

*De'Anne*, “Oh, who says?”

*Friend*, “Oh, I don’t think you’re meant to. She’s a *Pākehā* girl, lovely girl.”

*Who would you consider to be in your close circle?*

*De'Anne*, “Now, *inaianei*? Chanel, Renée, and our *whānau*, and then our own *whānau*, and Kerry-Lee. Shaniqua, yeah, we Wellington girls, yes, and *Tīwhanawhana*.”

*How often are you in contact?*

*De'Anne*, “During this pandemic, oh, not close. Yeah! this is the first time that we have met up here for months and months and months. But if we didn’t have that, probably monthly, weekly?”

*What advice would you give to others?*

*De'Anne*, “*Kia Ora* Renée, being kind to the world. Being kind to the environment. *Being* kind to animals and being kind to people. And if you don’t like somebody, you walk away. Don’t like to get for the press, the Police brutality, and the world. I’m not against the Police; I’m against Police brutality. I’m a “black-lives-matter” person. I’m against black Police brutality. Not a Policeman, I love all policemen because of my cousins and ....”

*Advice to Rangatahi?*

*De'Anne*, "I think they would appreciate anything because we are the older generation."

*De'Anne*, "Yeah, but still, how, what do we have to give to them? Our life *experiences*, not that we've been on this earth like forever."

*How do Lesbians and Gay Boys treat Queens and Trans?*

*De'Anne*, "That's a really good one, thank you for that."

*De'Anne*, "The ones that I've found, the *Lesbians* and *Gay Guys* are really nice, but oh gosh, some of those fucken nasty *Queer* Guys have been nasty to *Queens*. You know, like *Queens* have been murdered over in ... black trans people have been murdered over in America. Some of these white guys would say, "Well, she shouldn't be standing there on that block. Who the fuck cares, they can stand wherever they like". Like some of the Lesbians, like JK Rowling, are so anti-trans people. She's a great big author, and she is so down on trans people. She needs her face punched. Yeah, can you see what I'm saying, trying to say, about all the nastiness of all those people against *Queens* and Trans? And we are all in the same boat together, we are Queer. We are all Queers."

*Why does the public in general fear or spite Queens or Trans?*

*De'Anne*, "Yeah! They just don't understand. Not all of them."

*Who is your favourite or ideal Queen?*

*De'Anne*, "Oh, Rū Paul hands down."

*De'Anne*, "They opened the doors for each and every one of us to be who we are today." "She opened the doors."

*De'Anne*, "And to legalize where we can walk down the street and not have eggs and tomatoes chucked

at us while we are walking down the streets. Not that that ever happened to me”.

*What does Queen mean to you?*

*De'Anne*, “Back in the mid (1970s), it was always *Queen* this, *Queen* that, we were always *Queens*. Yeah! but I wasn't a *drag queen*. I was just a *Queen*. So, it stuck for me, always been a *Queen*.”

*De'Anne*, “I would tell everybody that I'm not a Trans, I'm not a *gender hopping*, gender fluid, whatever? I am a *Queen*, okay.”

*What is a Drag Queen?*

*De'Anne*, “But *that's* not us. We're not *Drag Queens*.” “We are just *Queens*.”

*Do you plan to have surgery?*

*De'Anne*, “I would *definitely*. Yeah, whatever. And who knows if you would be alive by then?”

*So, what changes would you like to make?*

*De'Anne*, “I would like my face taken so far up there.”

*De'Anne*, “My nose, a nice, *beautiful*, little micro petite like a chicken and bust way out here.” “Yum! Yum! Delicious will be my name. Ms. Yum! Yum! Delicious!!”

*What do you think about Christians who hate or dislike Queens and Trans?*

*De'Anne*, “Nothing, *that's* their business, it's got nothing to do with me.”

*When they insult you in front of your face?*

*De'Anne*, "Oh no! They better not think too far, I will be right up in their face."

*How do you take their insults?*

*De'Anne*, "Before, I *would* punch their lights right out, but now, because we have matured .... Nah. It's changed because we have matured."

"Back then, we were so rebels, just rebels. Riding on the back of a motorbike with some of the guys."

*Do you have any regrets about your lifestyle?*

*De'Anne*, "Hell, No!!" Yup, No Regrets whatsoever!! I'm the better person, being who I am. I'm so better today than I ever was back then. When I first *started*, I really didn't know who I was."

*When you are at your lowest, who do you seek?*

*De'Anne*, "Ah, Mary, I have a statue of Mary."

*When are you happy?*

*De'Anne*, "Yeah, I'm *really* happy when I see my niece and my *moko*, it's nice to see *whānau*."

*When are you not happy?*

*De'Anne*, "When work *gets* on top of me and so I ring up all my drivers. Hey, are you able to? No, sorry." I'm sick today. Oh, okay then, I will try and get a driver *for* you here ... Hi, how are you? Are you able to do a job ... No, sorry. I'm sick today... Oh, okay then, thank you. People are *saying*, and

here's another one, he's sick too, then I've got about five drivers who are all sick today. Right, how am I going to work this out? That's the only time when it pisses me off. But it's not that bad, bad, bad where I'm going to go and suicide myself."

*How are we with the medical sector? If you could tell a bunch of doctors, what would you tell them?*

*De'Anne*, "Bisexuals are by themselves. You're sexually active by yourself. No, No, No, it's a love of yourself."

*What is an intersex?*

*De'Anne*, "A person *with* two sexual genders. Yeah, exactly, because when they change them into a girl and the girl comes out butch, and when they change them into a boy, they come out girl. So, they've got to make sure ... like you said, grow up, then they can make their own choice. They need to let them grow to become who they are."

*Do you grieve your past? That other you.*

*De'Anne*, "Wow! Wow! Well, that's a beautiful *kōrero*. Wow! No. I grieve for my mum, my dad, my friends who have passed, but like that for myself, no, because it's made a better person of who I am."

*Have any of your family members told you how they feel about your change?*

*De'Anne*, "Yes, Good. Because I was there looking after all the kids and babies, and my brothers and sisters would say, "Hey sister, can you look after... or Are you cooking some kai, can you make some scones and biscuits", and that, and I would say, "Oh, I was going out. Fair and beautiful golden hair."

*De'Anne*, “Yeah, like Louisa, she used to get good hidings, and she wasn't allowed to go to school. She had to go to the shed where she got good hidings.”

*“Did she get the same thing?”*

*De'Anne*, “See what I *mean*, I was just horrified when I heard.”

*Have you ever had to defend yourself against a bunch of nasty people?*

*De'Anne*, “Oh, yes. I was at a party with two *Pākehā* guys. I fell off to *sleep* on the couch, and they were removing my clothes. I got up in a fright and reached over and grabbed two of those handles (beer handles), picked up those and went smash, smash, smash, smash, smash. I got arrested, and the Police put me in jail. Oh my god.”

*De'Anne*, “But no, they were taking my clothes off. Excuse me? No, I didn't know what was going on. I was just 16. And the neighbors came over and heard all the screaming. I was screaming, and the place just went ... oh, you assaulted them. I got arrested. Um, they were taking my clothes off. Hello! I was about to be raped. No, but you attacked them. Oh? Was I meant to let them do what they like? Anyway, I went to court and the Judge chucked it out of court. Because the two guys who were meant to come up to court and be witnesses for the Police didn't come to the Police Station. The Judge said I have nothing more to do but to chuck this out of court. But that was really nasty because a lot of people thought that I was quite a *butch cannel*, a *butch cannel*. I wasn't, as those scary men.”

## 9.2 Kay'la Tarryn Rian – Pūrākau Tuarua

An interview with Kay'la Tarryn Rian tells her *pūrākau* about how it was *for* her to step into her true identity.

Kay'la, “I changed my name out of respect for my father and my mother, and *that* was many years ago, and this is who I am.”

Kay'la, “Suicide, I first thought of attempting suicide at around the age of 11 *years* of age. My family wasn't as accepting, and I had been *whāngai* across the road to another family, and I had those dark thoughts. This goes back many years, so even though there were no doctors available to talk to and stuff like that.”

*Where did you grow up?*

Kay'la, “I was born in Taranaki, and we moved to Tawa, Wellington, when I was one year old, so I've lived mostly in Tawa. As I grew older, I moved to different parts of the country to live. I've been in Wellington 50-odd years now.”

*Did you have support from your family?*

Kay'la, “No.”

*Support from friends?*

Kay'la, “Yes, it wasn't till I grew up and matured, so to speak. I lived in *Wellington* and I realized there are more people out there like myself, and we formed like close *whānau*. Bond, so I can actually talk to them and they can talk to me, and that's where I found my support.”

*What do you think of your parents?*

Kay'la, "Constantly, although I had no support from my *whānau*, I always *constantly* think of my parents, my father and my mother. I looked after her for 20 years before she passed away, so yeah, I think about them every day."

*What were your parents like towards you when you came out? their first reactions?*

Kay'la, "Okay, the first thing that comes to mind, my mother's reaction. we were living in Masterton at the time. I come in and I have love bites on my neck and my little sister says Is so and so your boyfriend? I turned around and said, "Yes, he is. Why?" My mother looked at me and muttered a few words, and then, um... this was actually around Christmas time, and we had around 50 family members there, she went out and told my father. He went off his nut a bit, so I ended up, nah! fuck ya, I'll leave and walk out. Halfway down the street, I got called back from my father, and so yeah."

*What were your siblings like?*

Kay'la, "Okay, my oldest sibling is a silver-cleaned Christian Pastor, uhm, she's a *nasty* piece of work. And I had suicidal thoughts when she entered my life. She felt it was her Christian duty to A. tell my employer about me, have me run out of town, and I was about 17 or so at the time. I've got three other brothers who... the oldest one of them beat me up. The one below him beat me up. The one below him got his friends to beat me up and bullied me for years right throughout my high school years, and to this day, they still try to do it, but the thing is, I grew up. And my support of my friends, I learned never to back down. But I now get some support from my nieces and nephews due to more understanding. But yeah."

*Who was your closest friend at the time?*

Kay'la, "It wasn't until I was back in Wellington and I met a lady by the name of Chanel, and we have actually been best friends for well over 45 years now. It's like we know each other so well; it's like she is actually my sister. If I could replace half my family, I would."

Kay'la, "One of the main things was, I remembered was what my father said before he passed on, and from that, I live my life by that. Was, three rules: have a roof over your head, have *kai* in your cupboards, have an open door, and I stuck to that for quite a while, and that's got me through and made some amazing friends through it, and dark thoughts don't enter my mind anymore."

*What advice would you give to rangatahi about going down that track?*

Kay'la, "First and foremost, if they have got a good friend that they can talk to, just mention to that friend and have a bit of a conversation, and then go from there and try to seek out avenues like a group, a support group, and try to build up. You need your self-esteem built up first, your self-confidence, so that you are strong enough to face what comes along. The hardest decision will be whether to stay in the situation where you have those thoughts. Or you totally remove yourself and create a new life, and have to get on with it. If that means having to move away from your family? That's one of the hardest things anyone has to face."

*How would you describe yourself?*

Kay'la, "Well, when I was growing up, I was bullied and abused physically, and that was by siblings, and I was short. Till I reached the age of 13 years by then I was outside of the family. I realized I had to make it on my own, as to speak. Which meant I had to grow up really fast. Simple things like lifting myself, paying bills, food in your cupboard, make sure you're a bit strong so that you know you've got your own place, and that's what you created. And you don't have to tolerate this, and you don't have to tolerate nasty comments from bullies. But now, many years later, I still get little bits of bullying from family members, but the thing is, I'm six feet three and a half, and they're not even five feet eleven. So, it kind of balances out, and I'm a big believer in karma. So, the ones that had bullied me, the funny thing about that is, one brother, his son, is *Takatāpui* in Australia, and my other brother, his daughter, is a Lesbian living up North. And I thought that was fine; these are the two main things that bullied me. My oldest sister, her granddaughter, has just come out as a Lesbian in Australia, and to me, that is the perfect karma."

*And how are they dealing with their son/daughter/grand/daughter who is Takatāpui?*

Kay'la, "My oldest sister, I don't have contact with that side of the family. My brother with a son who takes after his father. As in he downgrades like because I'm a *whakawahine* and it's a NO! NO! But if you're *Takatāpui*, a crossdresser, or a drag queen, then that's yeah, okay. He's in Australia, so you're nowhere near me. The other one, his daughter, loves me. Loves Aunty Kayla. And she's like, she is a bit like me. She's down to earth, she's straight to the point, and will be there for anyone. A good support person."

*And what is your gender?*

Kay'la, "Female."

Kay'la, "Because my father is *Māori* and my mother is *Pākehā*, but I identify myself as *Māori* from *Ti Ati Awa*, and I've had a few run-ins with some *Pākehā* who go, "Oh, but you're transgender." No! Or oh, you're this? No! because I don't really accept the *Pākehā* terminology, because I do understand what it means, and if they really annoy me, then no, I am an indigenous *Māori Whakawahine*. Deal with it. And because they can't change it because .... Oh yeah. I've even got that on my passport."

*How do Lesbians and gay boys treat you? Are they nice?*

Kay'la, "I have quite a few gay boys and Lesbian friends who are really nice, but *then*, of course, you get in every community, you get the bad ones. The ones that think they are superior, and it's like not when you talk to me, when it's face to face with me, because I will just tell you straight. But yeah, you know it's the people who aren't accepting of Queens and trans, and I just keep my space, but the majority of *takatāpui* and lesbians that I know are really, really good. And I've been friends with them for many years."

*Do you have a famous Queen out there in the world that you look up to?*

Kay'la, "Yeah, there is actually. It will be the famous Carmen Rupe. My mother passed away in

2014, and my family started attacking me on Facebook. One of my friends that I've only met twice through catering put on Facebook. That's enough if you want a break, come down. And I ended up living in Hokitika for about a year or so, and her name is Jackie Grant. She is transexual, she has a business, and everything about her is just like business-oriented. Or takes no from those that are, you know, doesn't take a negative answer from people who want to esteem themselves. Alright, you're one of those, and I've watched her while I was living down there, and if she wants something done, she would get out and do it."

*What is a transsexual?*

Kay'la, "Okay, now if you go back years ago uhm the colloquial term for us was *transvestite*. Moving on. We were called *transvestites*, and then those who had the operation were called *transsexuals*. See, with the *gay* crowd, we were also known as *drag queens*. Then the *gay* crowd decided to call themselves *drag queens*, so we had to move up another level. We went from that name, trans aha... Became transsexual or *whakawahine*, which covers everything. To me, a *transsexual* is one who lives their life in the gender that they were meant to have been born in. And I've been like this for over 50 odd years, and yeah, it doesn't necessarily mean you have to have the operation, it's the lifestyle you lead 24/7, and yeah, that is me."

*What is a Queen?*

Kay'la, "*Queens* was like an all-time seen term. We were called '*drag queens*', as I mentioned. One-on-one in history, oh, you're a '*queen*'. It's sort of like a term of endearment but a term of recognition, so when you have a term '*Queen*', it's like it would relate to us trans, '*whakawahine*'. It's like, oh, she's one of us. But the *gay boys* these days use that term as well. But they don't tend to use it around us that much."

*If you were in Parliament, what would you do?*

Kay'la, "Honestly, I've got relatives who are members of parliament. There's an *equality* for

everyone, and I'm not just talking about 'gender'. Work equality, wage equality, and women's equality so that everyone is on a level playing field, so to speak. So that there's no rich person here, moaning about tax cuts, and the person down here is moaning about not having money issues, all will be equal. Yes, you can have a business, and yes, you can make a profit, but yes, you've got to take care of your workers, etc., which will increase its productivity. An equal footing for *whakawahine*, indigenous peoples from around the world would be up there."

*In regard to the health system, how do doctors treat you? Do you get everything that you could get from the health system in general?*

Kay'la, "I have three, only because I've got the second opinion thing. I have a base G.P. (general practitioner), I have one for sexual health, and I also have one for my HIV's STI testing things and stuff like that. With my G.P. (General Practitioner), I basically get what I need. And if I'm asking about things like cancer testing and that, that's where the difficulty comes in. And it's always an excuse, and it's way too late, and I have been in the hospital a few times. The funny thing was, I was choking, and my son had been in there watching me. While eight doctors stood around the bed watching me choke. And they looked at me and argh! I can't see anything. They gave me a paper cup, and they just stood there, and a nurse came up from the side. I could see her with a needle, and I managed to get out the words, "If you're going to take a blood sample and do an HIV test without my consent, you're gonna get sued." And everyone just stopped then and watched me choke. And my poor son, big boy, was crying, but. No! being the stubborn one myself, I refuse to allow something in my throat to end my life. Coughed it up and had a bit of a go at the doctors about doing nothing."

*Have you ever had to see Delahunt or approach them? What was your experience?*

Kay'la, "Doctor Delahunt, completely useless, transphobic, got spoken to by me *because* I was at a *marae* for trans people, '*Rehua Marae*' in Christchurch, and I was doing chef work. And all of a sudden, I heard this mighty slam of a glass door and a transman come in. And I said What's wrong? And he explained that he had mentioned to Doctor Delahunt, in front of these people on the *marae*, that certain things had to do with hormonal treatment. And the response from Doctor Delahunt was; You

don't really need it; you look alright as a female. I turned around and grabbed this transman by the scruff of the neck. Come on. Walked him into the *marae* and to Delahunt because of what you said to him. You need to apologize right now because what you've done is wrong. He apologized, and since then, I've altered his name to Doctor Delahunt to Doctor Diala, yeah. There is tolerance for those who are like endocrinologists, and there's another doctor, Tumeer, who doesn't believe in giving hormones to trans. Because she classifies us all as men and prostitutes... ooh, hello, get a life. Now I work with the city council, I educate people, and I do it through the work, the networking, showing elderly people how to install computers and use bytes, and that. So, when we ask for hormones, it's because we want to get a balance in who we are."

*If you could have surgery? What would you choose?*

Kay'la, "First of all, I've been on hormones for ... my top half doesn't need surgery. At my stage in life, if I were to have bottom surgery? I would have my entire face redone because people can't see what's below my waist. And if you want to live your life and have your surgeries done, it's like people come and look at you, and yeah, not being rude, but their eyes are up here. People cannot honestly see what's down there. Some people have operations, and then they still look the same. And the way that you are spoken to by members of the public, but oh no, but I've had .... Done, I'm a woman. Ah, how can they tell? Hello?"

*When someone denigrates you publicly, how do you respond?*

"With calm, and pray for masses of doses of karma. I know how to handle people who think that they've got an education, because, um, yeah, so do I. I speak back to them on their level, not to question them, but once or twice is ... some people have done that. Oh yeah, okay, I'm like a rock, try and move me. Yeah, most of the time it just goes right over my head."

*When are you at your happiest moments?*

Kay'la, "When I'm surrounded by my friends. When we are having a gathering, when I'm catering

because that's my pleasure, it's food, making sure they are all taken care of, and .... I will actually give my last two dollars to someone who needs it rather than watch .... you know."

*When are you at your lowest?*

Kay'la, "More likely when I'm about to go to bed because that's when I realize that I'm by myself and I have no one. And most *trans* people, it's the one thing that's missing from their lives. Well, some of us, anyway, it is the companionship, partnership, you know."

*Do you grieve your past? Is that an issue?*

Kay'la, "No. I don't grieve my past because without my past, I would be a strong-willed and determined as I am today. The off saying is: "You can forgive, but you never forget."

*Are there moments in your life when someone has deliberately insulted you?*

Kay'la, "Yeah, every time I go and meet my family. My brother today still does it. His *daughter* is Lesbian, but we were at my sister's *tangi* and our family homestead. And for forty years I've been saying, the only difference between transgender, *whakawahine*, and gay, I said, I'm not those. And he makes a crack of a joke about gay guys, and he calls me in and says Oh, you will relate to this. My first instinct was to punch him. Yeah, but just looked at one of my nieces and nephews and fully understood, and not going there. As if to say, Oh, let me have a go, Aunty. And I just laughed and walked away. But yeah, I still get it. Even when I walk in the streets, the occasional person will have a frown on their face, and I just look down and Oh, poor you. I've got my life, I'm actually quite happy. I'm happy in the place that I am, because I went through all that traumatic stuff, junked twice when I was younger, and from that, I've learned to be stronger. And my house is solid, it has an open-door policy. I've got *Kai* in my cupboards, and I've got the roof over my head. And not only for me but for anyone who needs one, and that's what I took from my father."

*When you see someone who is obviously queer and what if they came to you for help?*

Kay'la, "Not a problem, see that's what I prefer. Because I've been around for a while and I've got like a persona type thing, people can come and talk to me, especially young ones. But I don't, I won't sit in an office, no. My reply to them is okay, here's my address and phone number, call me and come around home for coffee, and we will just sit and chat in a comfortable and relaxed environment. Through the work that I've done over the years, I actually have a *huge* list of contacts. So basically, whatever they say to me, I will know exactly which area they will need to go to. Whether it's with a counselor, support networks, or what have you? And if I could do it myself, well, okay, how about you come along and come and see me for a cup of coffee, once or twice or three times, I don't care. Come at whatever time you want, be that two or three o'clock in the morning, I don't care. Come along and we will have a chat. And to me it's, I get a little bit of a pleasure out of it, knowing that I'm helping someone who, first of all, and two, that they are being helped. Rather than seeing them go down that path. That path that we went through many years ago."

*So, you have had rangatahi come to you?*

Kay'la, "Yes, I have quite a lot. As I mentioned, I did a *hui* down in Christchurch for *transmen* and that. Out there, I *Whāngai* one of them. And he's been my *whāngai* son now for 10 to 12 years. Loves me he does; he's a good boy. I have a lot of *aroha* for people, but I have found that there are some who are attention seekers and say that they are trans just for the nurturing and attention, but yeah, I've learned to see through it. And when people mention certain things, it's like okay, your family."

### 9.3 Teresa Christian (Tessa) – Pūrākau Tuatoru (Kōrero 1)

An interview with Teresa Christian, who tells her *pūrākau* about how it was for her to step into her true identity.

*Tessa*, “Look, now I’m known as Theresa, but so many people would within the Health *Sector*, well, all over the Health Sector, all over the place, and in different organizations, I’m known as Tessa. My date of birth is the 30<sup>th</sup> of the fifth, 1955. I was born in Lower Hutt Annex. I was *whāngai* out at the age of two months. And I stayed with those *whāngai* parents right through their lives until Papa passed away first, and then my mum died at 94 years old. My *whāngai* mother. My real father, well, yes. On my birth certificate, my biological mother was Margaret Jean, aged 29 years of age and place of birth, Tahiti. My Papa, his name was Hake, which can also be known as Jack or John, Hake Herewini Karaitiana Taare from the Pitcairn Islands. He also holds the name Christian, which is Mutiny on the Bounty with Fletcher Christian and Captain Bligh.”

*Tessa*, “And that’s how I ended up working with or getting involved with Health *Pasifika*. For them, I was their *waha* with Aunty Elizabeth Alice Smith Lilo. Because I was on the Board of *Vaka Aula* for quite some time. Our chairperson of that board was no other than Papa David Isaia, and he was well known throughout all the different boards and all the different things he stood for. That ended up with Health, working with health, working with mental health, and I loved it. Funny enough, even though I’ve been told to slow down, it never leaves me. If I find like somebody on the streets or somebody who’s looking for help, we have our little talk, and with that I can guide them in the right direction of whatever help they need in health.”

*What does the word “Queen” mean to you?*

*Tessa*, “Well, this goes way back, well, Queens even back then it was, we had Drag Queens. With Queens, we also had *Queens* that were, who were male but also very feminine. We’ve got that today, actually, we’ve got ‘school is out’, and that’s our youth who are also now having problems in our schools. Where we are having to share the ‘*wharepaku*,’ yeah, the toilets. We’ve got our females, they are born more male within themselves, then we’ve got the males who are like, have been born

with more feminine. The ‘*Queens*’ go way back to Amanda Carmen. Carmen, even back then, she was like we were known as ‘*Queens*’. Even though now, I’ve moved out of...well- being, a ‘*Queen*’ to a Tessa. Even when I had to go through the courts to have everything changed legally to female. You still have that respect. Queens understand themselves best as to who they are, being a ‘*Queen*’. There are a lot of people who wouldn’t even understand right from the start. Why have we got males becoming females? Today, that’s known as ‘*Transgender*’. But back then, a lot of them still called themselves ‘*Queens*’. We’ve got a lot of *Queens*, but there are a few who don’t like to call themselves *Queens*.”

*How would you like to introduce yourself?*

Tessa, “Tessa, because you know, for fifty years, when I go to the doctor, it says that I’ve been on the ‘*Slow, Release Hormone*’ for fifty years. Right back, fifty years ago, I had started to see a doctor, and back then, if I hadn’t, I would most probably still be a *Queen*.”

*Does that mean someone has gone right through the procedure, or just the hormonal, like just the top, or is it top and bottom?*

Tessa, “Top and bottom are the total sex change. Also, having breast implants or the breasts is done through slow-release hormone tablets.”

*Are there many that you know of who have gone right through from top and bottom?*

Tessa, “Well, yes. There are a couple that I know who have also gone through the *total* sex change. I have to be honest and say that this costs a lot of money to have this done.”

*So, would you say that that is the biggest barrier is money?*

Tessa, "Yes, but also you have to be seen by a psychiatrist system, and you have to be well-minded. You need to go through the ropes, through their medical procedures, in order to qualify. Because once you've gone through the change, there's no way back. If you feel like, "I wish I hadn't done this."

"Then sadly, there's the thought of suicide. Or there's the thought of suicide, even *before* you want to go through this. But with that, you have to go through the family courts, the courts to have everything legally through documentation."

*So, if you had the opportunity to change, would you have gone through all of that to get to... to have a full change?*

Tessa, "Yes, I would have. Well, I did."

*Can you tell me about your experience? Where did you have these operations? Did you have to go overseas?*

Tessa, "Well, I was lucky because a lot of people would have had to go to Australia to get their noses done, to get their bones done. To have their breast implants and then if some had enough money or if they've worked hard on the streets to earn enough money, they could go to Japan or different places."

*So, where did you go?*

Tessa, "Okay, well, I was lucky enough that right from a child, I was recognized as *having* feminine qualities, but then I got scared of men. Got scared of the boys, and for a long time, I went to endocrinology. It was the endocrinology department that gradually took me through the referrals, and they spoke about the operations. So that was their role."

*So, who was the endocrinologist?*

*Tessa*, “Dr J.W. Delahunt, yes, I’ve met Dr Krebs, yeah, well, he was at the Wellington *Hospital*. Now we were in Dixon Street, just up the road from Willis Street, a lot of the Queens used to get their ...what was it called...those tablets called Strobes trial. They were horrible things *because* they used to make the nipples itchy. That was before the endocrinology department came into helping, but who was that famous psychiatrist from Palmerston North? he works with the *Māori*, anyway, he was the one who started helping me. And then there was Dr Delahunt, and I stayed with him for quite a few years; he got older and older and older. He’s retired, but he’s still there, just. But they also have young doctors these days, too, lovely females, Chinese endocrinologists. Before all that work, which is actually on the ... from the courts, family courts, and all that, and what took place to make me an “F”, it was Mr. Krebs, but they can’t just jump in and do the operation. They have to know that you are mentally, emotionally, yeah, that’s the psychology part of it.”

*So, let’s talk about like the aids foundation, with a lot of whakawahine, how does that like... I have no idea what the statistics are or are like for whakawahine, Queens, in regard to the death rate.*

*Tessa*, “You see, I go way back to our little girl, who wasn’t allowed to go to school, and we used to go down here to the lagoon. And all those who have passed from aids, we would shout their names and then let little flutter boats go out onto the lagoon, have balloons, and we would also have little buckets where people could put some money in, and that would go towards aids. It was Eve. It was little Eve right back then that started it all off; she wasn’t allowed to go to certain schools, and she wasn’t allowed to...because of the discrimination. She was HIV. But now we’ve got lovely organizations, where you can actually get tested and keep yourself safe. You see, we went through that too. The safety of same-sex.”

*So, with Queens in general, is it ... the HIV rate high? Is it higher with Queens or Gay boys?*

*Tessa*, “Gay. I’m not quite sure, but I think it’s more so higher in our *Gay* community who *don’t* know how to keep themselves safe and also, what do you call those places where you go and have a sauna and all the different start places where condoms vetting, were, where actually very, very

important to let people know how important it is. If you are having the same sex then that you must, then you must be really aware and wear condoms. Even today, you can go to a doctor's surgery and in a basket, and you know there are condoms. But it's sad that we had to revert to making sure you know."

*Let's talk about your childhood. Where did you grow up, and talk about puberty?*

Tessa, "Okay, let's talk about puberty. My puberty started very early, but it was quite *strange*. Because even though I had said that I was *whāngai* out at two months old, I must be honest, my *whāngai* parents, he, my foster father, was an Anglican minister. And every five years, we had to change churches and move to different places. So, if I was one-fifth of the year I was in Upper Hutt, then I was in Palmerston North, and then I was in *Aramahou* with my dear, dear friend, and he does the *Waka Ama* now in *Aramahou, Whanganui*. We used to call it *Aramahouhou*, you know, but that was in *Whanganui*. From *Aramahou*, I ended up going to *Pahiatua* with my *whāngai* parents. But I started dressing up, and I would need to ask my foster sister if she could sew the dress that I had, as it needed sewing."

*So, what age were you when you started to cross-dress?*

Tessa, "Well, I was about nine years old. Nine, eleven, twelve, I was very, very young, and that's when I had to go to a psychiatrist because they thought this was quite strange. The psychiatrist was a very famous psychiatrist from *Manawaroa* in Palmerston North. He was part *Māori* and part *Pākehā*. He's famous in the mental health sector. Everyone who works in mental health well knows this wonderful doctor."

*So, what was it like for you growing up in school? Like going to P.E. and having to go to the changing rooms?*

Tessa, "No, very difficult. I was very shy. I don't know why I was shy, but I was *terribly* shy of

having to undress in front of the boys. Even though I was possibly... nothing wrong with me because I was a boy anyway.”

*Were they just as frightened for you to be there in the same room? Were they more frightened of you, or were you more frightened of them?*

Tessa, “No, I was more frightened of them, but I wouldn’t go swimming. Yeah, because we *used* to have our towels wrapped up with our togs. And I couldn’t for the life of me get dressed up in little swimming togs. So, I wouldn’t do that. And yet there it is, I don’t know how. But I was swimming and I was hanging out more with our young women, young girls, than I was with the boys. You know I would play elastics, you know, where you had to kind of twist your legs and jump up and then land on the elastics, and then we had things like skipping. I would get my brother, I would tie the ropes to the taps, and I would get my brother to turn the skipping ropes, while I skipped. In those days, as you know, we had “Bull Rush”, and that was really a boys’ thing, but we somehow all seemed to get out there on the field and scream and carry on and play Bull Rush. But it was very difficult, even as I became a teenager, which was even more difficult. So, what I did was that I transformed and I started to dress as a woman, as a girl, daily.

#### 9.4 Teresa Christian (Tessa) – Pūrākau Tuatoru (Kōrero 2).

*Tessa*, “Maybe because psychologically, I was different from them. I don’t know. I did have a boyfriend here in Wellington. We stayed together for quite some time. I was about eighteen – nineteen. He worked in a good, high-paid job here in Wellington. Then we would go up to Auckland for a holiday; his parents lived down in Christchurch, and I had to be very careful and be very aware because of his parents. I had to be very discreet. But then it was twenty-one years, I found Love. In a lovely man down in Picton, and they used to call him *Koro Sid*. *Koro Sid* was deaf in both ears he used to look after all the flowers on the *marae*. We stayed together for a long, long time until he passed, and that was very, very difficult because I had to carry the coffin off the *marae* into the hearse.”

*So, he was from the South Island?*

*Tessa*, “Yes, he was. He was also brought up, *whāngai*, in Picton. And there we are, we’ve got our lovely *Māmā*, *Nānā*, Aunty, the Love *Whānau*. She used to stay here before she moved back home. But then they had the Loves in Picton too.”

*When you were young, did you have a mother, drag, or fa’afafine?*

*Tessa*, “Well, actually, it must sound very, very strange, even from a young child, I was known as, even at school, they didn’t see me, they didn’t classify me as a boy. They see me as a girl. And then it was slowly right back, getting stronger and stronger. And then getting Doctor Delahunt to give me Antrobas hormone tablets, and then we had to start talking about the operation and how long it could take, a little while. And then we had to take...how my psychiatric, how my mind was? Would I be able to...Am I ready for this? Can I go through it? Or once I’ve gone through it, would I want to return? But it didn’t. And that’s when...awe shivers...twenty years...I can’t remember Dr Krebs came onto the scene. Lovely Dr Krebs helped me through all this strange lifestyle. And it wasn’t strange to me, I felt quite normal. And then, when I did my national certificate in mental health. That’s when Annette King and I, with our great big “Like minds” flag, right across the steps of Parliament. Because that was so important, because also for us as transgenders (a wrong term used by others),

and also women who are transgender and gays, and lesbians. There was a lot of stigma and later discrimination. But now we have the Gay and Lesbian Fairs, and now we have our *kapa haka* girls doing their poi, you know it changed.”

*Would you say that there has been a lot of change amongst gay boys and gay girls? And then you have the minorities being trans.*

Tessa, “The older ones, that’s where the name ‘*Queens*’ came from. But now we’ve got like Aunty Lana’s secondhand shop. That aunty Lana’s clothes secondhand shop has nothing to do with our darling Lana. Lana/Dana, Lana, yeah, she passed away. Some people would call her a *Queen*. But because she was more woman, we just recognized her as a woman. And the same with some of our people who might call themselves *Queens*. To me, they are women.”

*So, these terminologies and labels are what? The medical profession, which gives them the right to put labels on people?*

Tessa, “Well, this is what it is, Labels. And it’s sad. And they know nothing about... especially our young ones of today. As you know, we hear it quite often on our TV. (*television*) that we have quite young boys who want to become women. Or they are girls trapped in boys. It’s sad, but that’s where transgender is now coming into it. But we have also now got problems in some schools where they now have to build *wharepaku*, our toilets, so that they can use. Use the toilets without being shamed, without being discriminated. Because we’ve got quite a lot of this, male to female, female to male now. We’ve got the same with young males who believe they are actually, really do believe that they are girls trapped in boys’ bodies. This is where Dr Krebbs comes in, the endocrinology department.”

*Have you had any trouble or problems with Winz or Housing NZ trying to find a home? Trying to get a home in your younger days?*

Tessa, “Well, I had a really big operation, I had a Serrable archery aneurysm and had to be clipped,

and that didn't have any (thank goodness) stop me from continuing to be who I wanted to be. But you know, ah... with Winz, I had a case manager, and that's when they started to realize that before I was naturally feminine or female, but they had my old name. But then, suddenly, I started to be ... they started to accept, and I had to go through advocates of all sorts and through the endocrinology department to make the legal changes. And through the arm...not the actual court cases where naughty people go, but I had to go way back into the family court, and they sorted it out. But because it went through the courts, it was stamped, and it was accepted. Through the letter from the endocrinology department, that letter went to the Judge."

*Can you tell me about when you were a youngster? did you witness much violence amongst Queens or towards Queens by the Police or the public in general?*

Tessa, "There was a lot, sadly. When I was very, very young, there was a lot of *teasing*. There was a lot of ...kind of pushing and fighting. Back then, we were in that era where you would never think of knowing that a boy is becoming a girl or a girl becoming a boy."

*So, have you personally come across violence from the public?*

Tessa, "No. But there were a lot of problems with being under the state, state *schools*, and also, sadly, psychiatric hospitals. That was shocking. People, not just nurses, but some nurses, were quite cruel towards those patients back then. Whether they had sexual problems or not."

*Were those patients Queens?*

Tessa, "Yeah, well, one *Queen*, her father was right up there with the head of Air New Zealand. But she was more, *Gay*. She was very feminine in her ways, but she was a feminine boy. *Feminine* male back then, but now I see it, she was gay. But we've got quite a few now 2020, we've got quite a lot of young teenagers, young boys who are quite feminine. Now they are starting to talk about how they may be able to get or go through, if they really want to go through the change. They have to be very

certain you know about themselves.”

*Tessa*, “Before, I used to self-harm when I was very, very much younger, and that’s what got me into a psychiatric hospital.”

*So, tell me about the self-harm?*

*Tessa*, “The self-harm, I used to cut myself on my arms. I used to get told by the *doctor* that I was cutting the wrong way. Instead of going that way, I was going the opposite way, and it would do nothing. And then it was the doctors and the psychiatrist who actually helped me get through what I wanted to get through.”

*Did you know of anyone, any Queens, any friends that you might have known who kind of went down that path?*

*Tessa*, “Sadly, way back in, it must have been the sixties and seventies? There were a lot of pills taken, there were pinkies, and there was ‘*chew anile*’, and there were all those kinds of and some of them will be taking those or some will be injecting. And sadly, that would sadly take their lives. They would die.”

*Did you know of anyone in particular?*

*Tessa*, “Yes. She used to be, she used to help Carmin with the till 56, and it *wasn’t* till a long time after that that she was living with and helping her mother. But she had a boyfriend.”

*What was her name?*

*Tessa*, “It was Maria. And she had a bit too much in the needle and ...”

*So, would you call that a drug overdose?*

Tessa, "Yes, a drug overdose, and it was horrible."

*Did she have an addiction?*

Tessa, "She did have an addiction as well to drugs."

*Do you know what a particular drug or addiction is?*

Tessa, "This is way before 'bath salts' and all that, even before like Smack. I didn't really know that many people who ... I knew people who used to like going to the Sunset Strip. Which used to be just down here. And everybody you know was a pill popper. Like, there was a lovely lady, Clare Templeton, and she was the one who wrote Pill Popper. She wrote the book, Pill Popper."

*Okay, tell me what Pill Popper is?*

Tessa, "A Pill Popper is somebody who likes to pop pills at nightclubs. We had a lovely *Queen*, and she is no longer with us. She was the very first one."

*"What's her name?"*

Tessa, "She used to do weight lifting. And she had lots of cups and trophies. *Layleen* was our very first Queen. Rayleen was down here with us in Wellington for many years, but then she went back up North. But Rayleen, she was beautiful, she's very feminine, but she had very big hands. And that's how a lot of the Queens were known, because of their big hands or because of their facial features, their big nose. And that's the first thing you wanted to do, was to go over to Australia and go and get your cheeks done or your nose. But it takes quite a long time before you can actually get enough money to go to Australia and have your nose done. But I've never had any operations on my face. Or have my nose made smaller."

### 9.5 Teresa Christian (Tessa) – Pūrākau Tuatoru (Kōrero 3).

*Tessa*, “They have actually got homes now. They’ve got their own little *homes*. But we still have too many homeless people. But a lot of them who are homeless are like, not long ago, we heard about this person who is Transgender (a Queen). Got kicked out of her home because she was a Queen, transgender. Yeah, that was just recently. Yes, here in Wellington. So, there is still a lot of discrimination. We got rid of the word illness because of the stigma. And that’s why now you hear mental well-being. And the word mental, well, I often call it mind well-being. Psychological, yeah. It’s really sad that there are a few, because they might be *gay* or because they might be lesbian or they might be (a Queen) or transgender. Their own parents are kicking them out of their homes. That’s sad when I saw that, a photograph of a (Queen) / transgender person.”

*Do you think that happens a lot with Pasifika people?*

*Tessa*, “No, because. I don’t know why. Like the Samoans, they have somehow *accepted* them more. As being *fa’afafine*. You know, that being *gay* or *poof*, you know. We were always put down as *poof*, you know.”

*So, who would call you a poof? The public in general?*

*Tessa*, “The public in general. Or even people at school. You would be known as a ‘*poof*’. But I don’t know why, but it didn’t worry me. Because I really wasn’t called ‘*poof*’.”

*That’s more like a lot of the other queens?*

*Tessa*, “Yeah, well, some of the other *queens*, I don’t know how they got through it. *Because* they would have been before they had changed into full dress to be *feminine*. Their attributes and their ways would be quite *feminine*. But now it seems... people aren’t so worried now. It’s more acceptable today than it was back in the sixties. We had our *gurls*, we had our *queens* working at Bellamy’s, and

that was 1975, Mr. Muldoon. But then we have Fran Wild, who was the one who actually brought it all out. Then we had Marion, what's her name, she was up in .... *Ongaonga* up around that way. Marion Wearing. She was, you know, we got Grant, our lovely Grant Robinson, who is very openly *gay*. But back then, when we had Marion, we were, well, she was a *lesbian*. There wasn't really much said back then about that. People all knew that she was a bit butch. But Grant, he's neither *butch* nor *feminine*. He's lovely."

*Tell me a bit more about your partner in Picton, what was his name again?*

Tessa, "He was *Koro Sid Nimo*. We used to walk from his house, we used to all dress up as Hippies. And we used to walk from *Waikawa* Bay into Picton. And on every Friday night, we would go down to Auntie's place. Grandma's place to do her hair, because she used to love going down there to what we call the Federal, down there to the disco. And that was Grandma Dolly *Matene* and all her family; they were all accepting of me and Sidi. He loved not just making sure the flowers were watered in the *whare kai* but even the *Tamariki mā* who used to go to *Kōhanga*. His two sons were profoundly deaf."

*And what were their names?*

Tessa, "It was Paris and Tyrone. And when I went down to go to the funeral, *because* I was up here (Wellington). It was an old, dirty old lace window cloth over him. So, what I did was go back to the house, because I knew that the *korowai* was there. And I knew all the photographs of his *Nānā* and *whānau*. And the *korowai* hadn't been quite finished, I had to ask the *Kaumatua*, "Could we use it because it was unfinished, could we use it?" We used it, and then we dressed him up, and he was lovely. With all the photographs and all that. Because I was shaking like a fish, because I had just gotten off the Ferry. I got picked up from the Ferry, and when I got there, I was standing over him, bent down over the coffin, and then I felt someone holding my back. And I turned around, and it was Sidi's sons, and then I hugged them. But what I was seeing was an old lace curtain. Anyway, we got rid of that and decorated it as it should be. Then I told his grandchildren, they were there, I said Right. This *korowai* is not going to go down with Papa. But what I'm going to do is have it blessed. I'm going to fold it up, and when I give you the nod, I want you to come up and I want you to lift your arms up. And that's when I'm going to fold that *korowai* over both of your arms. And then they

*karanga*, and it was beautiful.”

*Can you tell me about Blossom?*

Tessa, “Nanny Blossom, she was an amazing woman. We first started off by just looking after girls in mental health. Today it is now known as ‘*Maringi te pai*’, but back then it was known as ... anyway, she looked after a lot of women and one male, who is now just having a little sleep and just waiting for that great day. We would make sure that the women were safe, and the men weren’t allowed to go in. Mihi, Nanny, and Me and *Pāpā*, and that was *Matua* Phil Edmunds. We *lost* the house, but we’ve got two other houses in Rental Street (Newtown), and then we managed to get it back, and the place belonged to Tenth Trust. but she used to call it “that’s my house”, and she got it back. And today, that *whānau* is still going. And our lovely *whaea*, who looks after mental health now.”

*So was the house set up for those who are...*

Tessa, “Those who have lived with the experience of mental well-being. Especially for those who have lived with mental well-being. And they just need that extra Love and support, and make sure that they are taking their meds. About that ‘*Maringi te pai*’, right in the beginning, there was an elderly lady called Trixie. She was the one who started it off. To her, there was an anchor, the chain was to stop the boat from rocking, and the anchor went right down through the center, and then, there was the bar, and then you know how the anchor comes back up, you have equality and trust. That bar coming through the center, that was our Nanny Blossom; she started getting very thin, and she passed. But it’s still her *whare*.”

*So, when did she pass away?*

Tessa, “Oh shivers, I don’t know. Must have been about? I could have told you, but *where* that gap is, I took that back to the *whare*. (pointing to a space on her mantelpiece). And gave it back. And also, I had a little brass, real brass anchor. (pointing around her neck).”

*So, what is your age right now?*

Tessa, "Well, I turned sixty-five in May. May 30<sup>th</sup>."

*Do you have any ambitions for shortly? If you could make changes, what would they be in general for Queens?*

Tessa, "*Aroha nui and Aroha nui*, the Love and Respect, and also for our youth, our *youth* that are coming through. I've met a lot of youth, like when we had the *gay* and *lesbian* fair. We've also still got a lot of youth who are still at school, and ah 'schools out'."

*Do you have any words of advice for young doctors, the medical department? What would your message to them be? About how they deal with Queens? What is your message?*

Tessa, "Yeah, well, *Queens* of today, I believe that our doctors, our endocrinologists, *have* to listen to them. Must Listen. And not just jot down on a piece of paper, but really listen. As psychiatrists, as endocrinologists, as doctors, we don't want to push them away (*Queens*)."

Tessa, "You have to be very, careful, you must be very careful. Not to just stick them on, but to slowly release these hormones to help their breasts grow. Before they're ready."

*So, I suppose you are referring to the younger generation? Because by the time they have reached their forties or fifties, they know what they want.*

Tessa, "But we have got a lot of very, very young *Queens* and males. Through *psychiatry*, some of the questions that the doctors are asking are? How long have you been like this? Why did you change? And some of them are youth. Our youth, we've got a lot of seventeen, eighteen, and twenty who are very, very changed in gender, you know. Changing and wanting to become and live like a woman.

The nurses are very good to them. More so than it was thirty, forty, or fifty years ago. It's more out now. There's more understanding."

*Tessa*, "Like my darling sister upstairs, Shaniqua, she's lovely. When she *lost* her partner, she bought a rose bush. And now it's down in the garden with *paua* shells around it. We had a lovely... we had a *waiata* down there. Then Shaniqua brought a couple of things down which belonged to Greig and under the brand-new potting mix we laid to rest, some of his personal or Shaniqua's personal... and then we buried... and that's when we all sat there out on the hill, sang and *waiata*... You know, and that's why I go down quite often now. Just to make sure that the shells are upward, have not fallen over. And the seagulls, oh."

*For yourself in general, have you thought about how you would like to go? Do you plan to be taken to a marae or a church service of some sort?*

*Tessa*, "Well, I've actually, I've been working on that already. This is why it is so affordable, because there are so many funeral directors' brochures, which are very expensive. I've been given this one, which is a collaboration, our directors and reducing costs."

*So, you got this plan from some funeral director?*

*Tessa*, "Yeah, this one here is my advanced care plan. And when I get a bit unwell, everything is here."

*And you're happy with that?*

*Tessa*, "I'm very happy. I'm facing things like, if I'm ... had tubes up and down *out* of my nose. Or what happens at my death? What happens after my death? These are the care plans that I have to have if I go from here into a home."

*Have you got a particular home in mind to go to?*

*Tessa*, “Yes, and because I help out with the Wellington City Mission, the *Wellington City Mission* is part of the ...Titahi Bay...home and hospital. But I’ve also got my own thoughts about what happens at death. I know that when you die, you don’t just go whizzing up there. Or the Pastors or the Ministers are kind of making the people in the congregation laugh about what’s happening up there. And they’re looking down on you, and this is what they are doing, and if you were there, this is what you would be doing.”

*How do you want this to happen?*

*Tessa*, “I want to tell them the truth, I want people to know the truth. That’s *when* you die, it’s known as “A Sleep”. And then, when *Atua*, one day, we don’t know when? why? Or what hour? comes back. And with that great shout! and that great trumpet! And those who are asleep, she would be awoken, and she would be trickling through the night, and she would change, and then she would rise up to him. And those who remain, it says, will meet them together. Where? In the air, and they will go home with him forever. There are so many funerals you can go to, and they say that the people who are in the coffin are already up there.”

*Tessa*, “When it doesn’t say that. Because I get people to read 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians, chapters 4, 13 to 18. And then that last verse comforts one another with these words. And it tells you exactly what happens when you die.”

*That verse that you just mentioned, can you read that out?*

*Tessa*, “Yes, I’ve actually told people about it. And they’ve said that they have *never* ever heard anything like it. It’s very important. I’ve read this at *Tangi* and I’ve read this at funerals, and afterwards. People have told me that they have never ever heard anything like it. I call this the historical book of records. It is first, Thessalonians, Chapter 4, and verses 13 to 18. And this is what it says, and this is what people at funerals and *tangi*, that I’ve been to, and some of the pastors get a

little bit urch. After I've told them about what's happening up there and what's going on now, and then they actually hear *pono*. It says this. Verse 13. "But I would not have you be ignorant, 'Brethren', which means I will not have you not be known. Brothers and Sisters, concerning them who are asleep. That you so have not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, those who sleep within Jesus, God will bring with him. For this, we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which alive and remain until the coming of the Lord. Shall not prevent those who are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. With the voice of the ark angels and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be called up together with them in the clouds. "Now I tell them all (no, not these kinds of clouds) because I know that heaven is completely empty. The clouds are all the angels. Tens of thousands of thousands of angels that are coming back with Jesus. "Then we who are alive, that remain, will be caught up together with them in the cloud to meet the Lord. Where? In the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord." "And like I said, that final verse 18, therefore comfort one another with these words."

**CHAPTER 10**

## 10.1 The Impacts of Christianity

Christianity has been employed to establish behavioral norms and morals that uphold the patriarchal basis of Christianity. The Bible speaks of the patriarchs. Language matters, conveying as it does, the codes and generational power basis of colonization within and through Christianity. This has led to labeling, misgendering, mocking, physical punishment, and the generalized persecution of Queens over generations. The impacts of mockery and belittling from the pulpit transfer generationally, by impacting generations from children, youth, adults, to the elderly. This is interpreted in this work as a 'taught culture' which is normalized over generations.

## 10.2- Results

I interviewed three *Māori and Pasifika Queens*. Each *pūrākau* (story) was different but equally important. De'Anne was born and grew up in Fielding and was loved by her family regardless of her change from birth. She was born into a staunch Catholic upbringing and is still a strong believer. De'Anne's father is a Manganian from *A'uA'u*, now called *Mangaia*, and her mother is from *Papaōrotu Marae*, from the *Tainui waka*. She comes from a large family, and she is the oldest of all her siblings. De'Anne spent a lot of time helping her mother to raise her siblings, prepping them for school, and making their sandwiches. She never complained about any of the chores, despite the chores being meant for girls. Nowadays, when her siblings want to go out with their partners, they call upon her to babysit their children, which she gladly accepts. All her nieces and nephews love and respect her for who she is, and they have many fond memories of Auntie De'Anne looking after them.

Kay'la, on the other hand, came out about wanting to be a Queen. Her parents and siblings did not approve, and hell broke out. It was not an easy transition for Kay'la; nevertheless, she did what needed to be done for her sanity. It is never easy for them to make the changes, especially when the choices they make carry a high price, particularly fear, and not knowing how their immediate *whānau* will react to their wishes and their friends and extended *whānau*. Throughout most of Kay'la's life has not been a smooth ride for her, but rather a rough and hard journey that has made her the person she is today. She loves to cook and has done many catering jobs throughout the *motu* (island). Catering and

cooking are her passions. where she finds joy in providing only the best. Today, although some of her family members, especially siblings, do not approve of her choice of living, continuing to spite her with words and nasty comments, their children love their aunt, Kay'la.

Teresa's biological mother was Tahitian, and her father was from the Pitcairn Islands. She was adopted at two weeks old by two *Pākehā*. Her father was a Minister in a Parish (Anglican), and her mother was a housewife. She had an older sister who was fond of her and supported her decision to change. Not once did Teresa speak of any ill feelings towards her adopted parents and family. She loved her life, discovering that love goes a long way.

Teresa Christian is one of the very few that I know of who was supported fully by her adopted family. Despite that, they really could not understand why or how Teresa seemed different from a very young age; nevertheless, her parents took her through the ropes, seeing various doctors and psychiatrists who might just have the answers to their unusual child. Her father was a minister, and so she travelled with her family from town to town within *Aotearoa*. She attended different schools as she grew older. She was well-educated and was taught to play the piano, which she demonstrated very well. Not your usual 'A.B.C.' on the piano, but instead, brilliant. Well-spoken and polite, and well-mannered. She worked in the hospital as a nurse in Rotorua and other social services, giving up her time to look after people and just being there for support. A strong believer in her faith, and is well-known within her community and the public health sector as Tessa.

From viewing the *Muxes* on YouTube, one can see how they, too, have not been so fortunate. They too endure the same violent and name-calling, misgendering behaviours that the community, cisgender conservatives, continue to dish out. They, too, are Queens or women.

In comparison to other ethnic indigenous minority groups throughout the world, their stories bring a rich and encompassing whole new dilemma of what it means to be a Queen. Throughout their *pūrākau* is mentioned frequently, the time factor and location, which is crucial to their transformation daily. Their journey is a long one that comes with many obstacles that seem to appear out of nowhere.

Despite the many challenges before these *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens and those of other

ethnic groups have no fear, no choice but to take the necessary steps to transform their bodies and lives to how they perceive themselves to be true. As a result of their *pūrākau*/personal stories, we, the community, will hopefully have a better understanding of their culture and learn from what we did to them, throughout their transformation, and take responsibility for their mistakes. These *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens should not have to suffer or pay the price for our prejudiced or homophobic, brutal, and nasty actions.

The various categories, such as *Whakapapa*, *Hinengaro*, *Tinana*, *Wairua*, *Tikanga*, and *Kawa*, proved to be very helpful in identifying what matters and what philosophies are important to *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens. Each category was able to depict a time in each person's life that had an impact or an experience that they were able to share. They spoke of, as little or more, whichever they were comfortable doing. Although the participants were not among the three in-depth profiled Queens, their *kōrero*, however small, was unique and valuable.

Elizabeth Roberts was the only exception as a *Pākehā* to have been able to contribute her own life story and changes that were necessary for her at a time when homophobia was widespread and illegal. Her changes, both physical and legal, were the very first for *Aotearoa* (New Zealand) in 1969.

Miss Major provided many examples of how things were for her in America and for many others like her. She has claimed the title of Queen for herself and as a third gender.

The Kathoey are very much "Queens", who are mocked and looked down upon by their people. They are tolerated more than anything else, as they can never be legally called a woman on any documentation. They will always be known and labelled as men by cisgender.

Like all the participants in this study, even though they identify as 'Queens' or women or a *wahine*, the general public, cis-genders, and conservatives continue to be arrogant and disrespectful towards them. It is not up to us, the public, to tell them who they are. This project is a *mana-enhancing Kaupapa* methodology, where they define who they are.

### 10.3 Conclusion

These risks are embedded in their stories in this research. This is particularly salient where *whānau* and *Tikanga Māori* intersect to pathologise what might otherwise be considered authentic ‘normalised’ pre-colonial identities (Kerekere, 2017).

It is very clear to me that because my recipients were Māori and Pasifika Indigenous Queens, there is strong evidence that *Whakapapa*, *Tinana*, *Hinengaro*, *Wairua*, and *Tikanga/Kawa* are vital to their daily lives. Some of these same values have been cited amongst Muxes and Kathoeyes for the main religion in Thailand or the main faith, is Buddhist. This makes them a very faithful and religious people in general. Social Acceptability of Gay Monks in Thai Theravada Tradition. ( เฉษฐา บัว มารล, 2018). This is the beauty of Indigenous cultures, and that is their faith, which is well embedded in their society.

The *pūrākau* collected from the Indigenous Queens gives light to their reality within their community and country, many of whom have not had it easy to transform their bodies, due to a lack of finances to afford to pay for the necessary surgery required. Most leave home to go to the big cities to work so that they can pay for their necessary surgeries. They may often go under the knife multiple times to complete their transformations. It was important for these *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens to be able to tell their stories, to speak their truth, and to let others know that what they do has a huge impact on them, be that a positive or a negative one. They strive to become complete through their *tinana* transformations, their *hinengaro*, to make the right choices that are right for them, their *wairua* to be at peace within, and to embrace their *whakapapa* of who they are and *Tikanga*, where they can hold on to and keep their cultural values intact. Without all of the above, life can be very unstable for *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens to be able to move freely. We need only to look at ourselves, who we are as a people, our purpose, and ask ourselves, where do we fit? How can we become better humanitarians without prejudice, but with courteous responses to each other?

It is also hoped that their experiences will bring some comfort, concerning safety for those young upcoming Queens. Queens are not Transgender or *Takatāpui*, they are women. Transgender is the Third Gender. Transgender is used by cisgender, for transgender women/men, according to typical

cisgender. This is the negative term given by cisgender<sup>158</sup> people, not Queens.

## 10.4 Fakaleiti

“A *fakaleiti* (or *leiti* or *fakafefine* or lady) is a Tongan individual assigned male at birth who has a feminine gender expression. The term *fakaleiti* is made up of the prefix *faka* – (in the manner of) and lady, borrowed from English. *Fakaleitis* themselves prefer to call themselves *leiti* or ladies. Although *leiti* in Tonga do not necessarily associate with LGBT identities in the Western world, those who grow up in Tonga find a greater level of community and affinity to similar identities than *leiti* in the island kingdom.”

(Joey Joleen Mataae, personal interview, 2023).

It is hoped that a better understanding of their *pūrākau*/testimonies about the meaning of *Māori/Pasifika* and Indigenous Queen will bring compassion and respect for those of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. The next generation of Queens knows that they are not alone in discovering or coming to terms with their true selves. *Māori* and *Pasifika* Queens, this study embodies a *Māori* from a *Māori* Queen perspective. *Māori* and *Pasifika* Indigenous Queens comply with *tikanga* through their *pūrākau*. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2016), “Issues of *tikanga* are part of the dynamics of a living culture”, (Smith, 2015).

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## APPENDICES

In Juchitán, Mexico, muxes – children identified as male at birth, but who choose at a young age to be raised as female – are embraced as part of the community. Subscribe to The Guardian on YouTube ► <http://is.gd/subscribeguardian> Being muxe is often confused with being transgender, but it is an identity specific to the Oaxaca region and the indigenous Zapotec culture. Having a muxe person in the family has come to be seen as good luck and even a blessing. But life outside Juchitán is not always easy. For the documentary Muxes, the director Shaul Schwarz reconnects with the characters and culture he photographed extensively from 2002 to 06.

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/oct/27/muxes-documentary-gender-fluid-lives-in-a-small-mexican-town>

**Appendix 1: Individual Interviews**

A.J. Scones – *Pūrākau* interview, 2023.

Chanel Hati, Renee Paul, Shaniqua Karawana Tillick, and Wai Thompson, 2023.

Christian T, Jackson D., and Ryan K. Individual interviews, 2023.

Dr K. Lawson – Te Aho, 2023.

Joey Joleen Mataele, personal interview, 2024.

V.M. interview, 2023.

## Appendix 2: Electronic Resources

<https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/21123/enough-is-enough-march>

<https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?idiom=&phrase=&proverb=&loan=&histLoanWords=&keywords=tikanga+>

<http://www.maaori.com/whakapapa/creation.htm>

<https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.T2024042600007191803383685>

<http://www.maaori.com/whakapapa/creation.htm>

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/oct/27/muxes-documentary-gender-fluid-lives-in-a-small-mexican-town>

### Appendix 3: Ethics Approval



Te Kahui Manu Taiko: Human Research Ethics  
Committee Faculty of Māori & Indigenous Studies  
Te Pua Wananga ki te Ao

Thursday 11 May, 2023

#### Ethics Approval

Tena Koe e te Manu taiko e rere atu na i, ngā huarahi o te rangahau.

This letter is to confirm that Paieka Rongonui Tāmūera Ariki has received ethical approval for the study, "Taonga Maioha".

The ethics application was reviewed by members of Te Kahui Manu Taiko and was signed off by the chair of the committee on 11 May 2023. Good luck as you embark on your research.

*Mahia te mahi / hei painga mō te iwi - Na Te Pūea Herangi.*

Ngā manaakitanga.

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Dr Haki Tuaupiki  
Convener, Te Kāhui  
Manu Taiko Te Pua  
Wānanga ki te Ao  
Te Whare Wānanga o  
Waikato Faculty of Māori &  
Indigenous Studies  
The University of Waikato

#### Appendix 4: Glossary of Terms

A`uA`u	An island in <i>Te Moana o Niva</i> (C.I.), now known as <i>Mangaia</i> .
Ahako te aha	Regardless of.
Āhua	(modifier) somewhat, a little, quite, fairly, a bit, sort of – stands before the word it qualifies and has the effect of lessening the force of the meaning of the base it modifies. ( <i>Te Pihinga</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 42-43;).
Akapapa`anga	For Cook Island Māori (Māori) peoples, genealogical practices, or what is referred to as ' <i>akapapa`anga ara tangata</i> ( <i>'akapapa`anga</i> ), are central to identity-making, relationality and subjectivities.
Ānau	Family or children of.
Aotearoa	(location) North Island – now used as the Māori name for New Zealand. ( <i>Te Kākano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 78;).
Aramahou	Place name in New Zealand.
Aramahouhou	Slang, an extension of Aramahou.
Aroha	(noun) affection, sympathy, charity, compassion, love, empathy.
Atareira	Place Name.
Auntycle	To be an aunt and uncle at the same time.
Benefit	Work and Income Support
Bi-sexuals	Bisexuality is a <u>romantic</u> or <u>sexual attraction</u> or <u>behavior</u> toward both <u>males</u> and <u>females</u> ( <u>gender binary</u> ), to more than one <u>gender</u> , or to both people of the same gender and different genders. It may also be defined to include romantic or sexual attraction to people regardless of their sex or <u>gender identity</u> , which is also known as <u>pansexuality</u>
Bottom Surgery, SRS, or GRS.	Bottom surgery, Sexual Reconstruction Surgery (SRS) or Genital Reconstruction Surgery (GRS), refer to several different types of gender

	<p>affirmation or transition related surgical procedures which alter the patients' genitalia.</p> <p>These terms are preferred over "sex change operation" or anything with "reassignment." Not all transgender people choose to or can afford to have GRS. Subsequently, overemphasising the importance of GRS to the transition or affirmation process should be avoided.</p>
Boys - <i>A good boy</i>	<p>a boy split between two conflicting personalities:</p> <p>a good, mama's boy who frowns upon perversity and homosexual jokes. innocently ignorant and oblivious</p>
Butch	gender identity terms for butch lesbians and feminine les
Cissexism and CIS supremacy	Bias in favour of cis people over trans people, or beliefs that cis people are inherently superior to trans, more real, more natural, etc. This often refers to systems that advantage cis people over trans people or unconscious systems of thought, rather than transphobic individuals.
Cook Island Queens	<i>Akava'ine</i> is a Cook Islands Māori word that has come, since the 2000s, to refer to transgender people of Māori descent from the Cook Islands.
Drag King	drag kings, kink, trans men, and gay men. Through the 1980s and 90s, Science hosted drag king workshops and formed what is believed to be the first FTM meetup...
Drag Queen	A drag queen is a person, usually male, who uses <u>drag clothing</u> and makeup to imitate and often exaggerate <u>female gender signifiers</u> and <u>gender roles</u> for entertainment purposes. Historically, drag queens have usually been <u>gay men</u> , and have been a part of <u>gay culture</u> .
E rua, e rua	Both, both of them, both of you, just the same, tarred with the same brush, two of a kind – an idiom to suggest that something applies to both people, both things, or that two people or things have something in common.
Fa'afafine	Fa'afafine are people who identify themselves as having a <u>third gender</u> or <u>non-binary</u> role in <u>Samoa</u> , <u>American Samoa</u> , and the Samoan diaspora. A recognized <u>gender identity/gender role</u> in traditional Samoan society, and an integral part of Samoan culture, <i>fa'afafine</i> are <u>assigned male at birth</u> , and explicitly embody both masculine and feminine gender traits in a way unique to <u>Polynesia</u> . Their behavior typically ranges from extravagantly feminine to conventionally masculine.
Feminine	Femininity (also called womanliness) is a set of attributes, behaviors, and <u>roles</u> generally associated with <u>women</u> and <u>girls</u> . Femininity can be understood as <u>socially constructed</u> , and there is also some evidence that

	<p>some behaviors considered feminine are influenced by both cultural factors and biological factors. To what extent femininity is biologically or socially influenced is subject to debate. It is <u>conceptually distinct</u> from both the <u>female biological sex</u> and from womanhood, as all humans can exhibit <u>feminine</u> and <u>masculine</u> traits, regardless of <u>sex</u> and <u>gender</u></p>
feminine boy	<p><i>Femboy</i> (alternatively spelled <i>femboi</i>) is a modern slang term used to refer to a male who displays traditionally feminine characteristics, such as wearing dresses, skirts, and/or thigh-highs. It is a portmanteau of feminine and boy.</p>
Gay	<p>is a term that <u>primarily refers</u> to a <u>homosexual</u> person or the trait of being homosexual. The term originally meant 'carefree', 'cheerful', or 'bright and showy'.</p> <p>While scant usage referring to <u>male homosexuality</u> dates to the late 19th century, that meaning became increasingly common by the mid-20th century. In modern <u>English</u>, <i>gay</i> has come to be used as an <u>adjective</u> and as a <u>noun</u>, referring to the <u>community</u>, <u>practices</u>, and <u>cultures</u> associated with homosexuality. In the 1960s, <i>gay</i> became the word favoured by <u>homosexual men</u> to describe their <u>sexual orientation</u>. By the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century, the word <i>gay</i> was recommended by major <u>LGBT</u> groups and <u>style guides</u> to describe people attracted to members of the same sex, although it is more commonly used to refer specifically to men.</p>
Gay Boys	<p>Gay adolescents, boys, and young men are a uniquely vulnerable segment of the gay male population. In many countries, identity issues, <u>bullying</u>, and lack of family acceptance are some of the major concerns facing gay-identified youth. Additionally, gay boys and adolescents around the world are regularly subjected to more extreme forms of violence, including <u>conversion therapy</u>, familial violence, and other forms of physical abuse. These issues have been shown to have detrimental effects on the well-being of gay and bisexual male youth.</p>
Gay Girls	<p>A lesbian is a <u>homosexual</u> woman or girl. The word is also used for women in relation to their <u>sexual identity</u> or <u>sexual behavior</u>, regardless of <u>sexual orientation</u>, or as an adjective to characterize or associate nouns with female homosexuality or same-sex attraction. The concept of "lesbian" to differentiate women with a shared sexual orientation evolved in the 20th century. Throughout history, women have not had the same freedom or independence as men to pursue homosexual relationships, but neither have they met the same harsh punishment as <u>gay men</u> in some societies. Instead, lesbian relationships have often been regarded as harmless, unless a participant attempts to assert privileges traditionally enjoyed by men. As a result, little in history was</p>

	documented to give an accurate description of how female homosexuality was expressed.
Gender	includes the social, psychological, cultural, and behavioral aspects of being a <u>man</u> , <u>woman</u> , or other <u>gender identity</u> . Depending on the context, this may include <u>sex</u> -based <u>social structures</u> (i.e., <u>gender roles</u> ) and <u>gender expression</u> . Most cultures use a <u>gender binary</u> , in which gender is divided into two categories, and people are considered part of one or the other ( <u>boys/men</u> and <u>girls/women</u> ); those who are outside these groups may fall under the umbrella term <u>non-binary</u> . Some societies have specific genders besides "man" and "woman", such as the <u>hijras</u> of <u>South Asia</u> ; these are often referred to as <u>third genders</u> (and <u>fourth genders</u> , etc.). Most scholars agree that gender is a central characteristic of <u>social organization</u> .
Gender Fluid	Gender fluidity is a non-fixed <u>gender identity</u> that shifts over time or depending on the situation. These fluctuations can occur at the level of <u>gender identity</u> or <u>gender expression</u> . A genderfluid person may fluctuate among different gender expressions over their lifetime, or express multiple aspects of various gender markers simultaneously. Genderfluid individuals may identify as <u>non-binary</u> or <u>transgender</u> , or also identify with their <u>assigned gender</u> .  Gender fluidity may be a <u>transitory phase</u> , allowing people to explore gender before finding a more stable gender expression or identity. For others, gender fluidity may continue throughout life.
Gender Queer	<u>Non-binary</u> and <u>genderqueer</u> are <u>umbrella terms</u> for <u>gender identities</u> that are not solely male or female (identities outside the <u>gender binary</u> ). Non-binary identities fall under the <u>transgender</u> umbrella, since non-binary people typically identify with a <u>gender</u> that is different from their <u>sex</u> , though some non-binary people do not consider themselves transgender.
Gurls	Male to Female is called Gurls.
Hapū	(noun) kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe - a section of a large kinship group and the primary political unit in traditional Māori society
Hermaphrodites	Hermaphroditism, also referred to as intersex, is a condition in which there is a discrepancy between the external and internal sexual and genital organs. It is grouped together with other conditions as a disorder of sex development (DSD).
Hika	(interjection) heavens! Whoa! Heck! For goodness' sake! Goodness me! – a mild exclamation of surprise, dismay, or irritation.

Hinengaro	(noun) mind, thought, intellect, consciousness, awareness.
Hōhonu (-tanga)	1. (verb) to be deep, esoteric. 2. (adjective) be deep. 3. (modifier) deep, profound.
Huhua	- numerous.
Inaianei	(location) now, at present, presently – normally written as one word but when <i>tonu</i> , <i>tata</i> , <i>noa</i> or <i>ake</i> are inserted, the expression is broken into its parts, i.e. <i>ināia tonu nei</i> , <i>ināia tata nei</i> , <i>ināia noa nei</i> , <i>ināia ake nei</i> .
Io	(personal name) supreme being – some tribes have a tradition of a supreme being, which may be a response to Christianity. However, <i>Io</i> occurs in a number of traditions from Polynesian islands, including <i>Hawai'i</i> , the Society Islands and the <i>Te Moana o Niva (Cook Islands)</i> . This suggests a more ancient tradition. ( <i>Te Māhuri Study Guide (Ed. 1): 40-42;</i> ).
Ira Huhua	Gender fluid, or to turn, change, or move gender. Sometimes this can also mean transgender.
Ira kē	Gender Queer, or different gender. Gender fluid, or to turn, change, or move gender. Sometimes this can also mean transgender. <i>Ira</i> – gender, spirit, or essence. <i>Huri</i> – turn, change, move. <i>Ira kē</i>
Ira Tangata Tāne	Trans man, or a person with a man's essence, spirit, or gender.
Ira Tangata Wahine	Trans woman, or a person with a woman's spirit, essence, or gender.
Irahuri	<i>Ira</i> – gender, spirit, or essence. <i>kē</i> – different. <i>Ira</i> – gender, spirit, or essence. <i>Huri</i> – turn, change, move.
Irakore	Agender, or no gender. <i>Ira</i> – gender. <i>Kore</i> – none.
Irapūmau	Cisgender, or a permanent fixed gender. <i>Ira</i> – gender, spirit, or essence. <i>Pūmau</i> – fixed, constant, permanent.
Iwi	(noun) extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory. ( <i>Te Kāhano Textbook (Ed. 2): 42-43, 89, 113; Te Māhuri Textbook (Ed. 2): 80, 172;</i> ).

Kaea ('s)	(noun) leader of a <i>haka</i> or <i>waiata</i> . ( <i>Te Kōhure</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 72-72;)
Kai	(verb) (- <i>nga</i> , - <i>ngia</i> ) to eat, consume, feed (oneself), partake, devour. (noun) teacher, instructor.
Kaikaranga	(noun) caller – the woman (or women) who has the role of making the ceremonial call to visitors onto a marae, or equivalent venue, at the start of a <i>pōwhiri</i> . The term is also used for the caller(s) from the visiting group who respond to the <i>tangata whenua</i> ceremonial call. Traditionally, this role was based on one's status within the <i>hapū</i> or <i>whānau</i> , the eldest sister normally being given the role. Skilled <i>kaikaranga</i> are able to use eloquent language and metaphor and to encapsulate important information about the group and the purpose of the visit.
Karanga	(verb) (- <i>hia</i> , - <i>tia</i> ) to call, call out, shout, summon.
Kathoey	<i>Kathoey</i> or <i>katoey</i> (Thai: กะเทย), is a word used in Thailand to describe a trans woman, a person of a third gender, an intersex person, or an effeminate gay man. It is most often rendered as "ladyboy" in English. The term can be considered pejorative; It has a meaning similar to the English language's 'fairy' or 'queen'.
Kaumātua	1. (verb) (- <i>tia</i> ) to grow old, grow up. 2. (modifier) Elderly, old, aged. 3. (noun) adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman, old man – a person of status within the <i>whānau</i> .
Kaupapa	(noun) topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, program, theme, issue, initiative.
Kawa	(noun) marae protocol – customs of the marae and <i>wharenui</i> , particularly those related to formal activities such as <i>pōhiri</i> , speeches, and <i>mihimihi</i> . This seems to be a modern extension of the word.
Kāwanatanga	(loan)(noun) government, dominion, rule, authority, governorship, province.
Kia Ora!	(interjection) Hello! Cheers! Good luck! Best wishes!
Kings	Assigned female at birth but lives their life as a male.
Kōhanga	1. (noun) nest, nursery. 2. (noun) birthplace, cradle, homeland, stronghold, bastion.
Kōrero	(verb) (- <i>hia</i> , - <i>ngia</i> , - <i>tia</i> ) to tell, say, speak, read, talk, address. (noun) speech, narrative, story, news, account, discussion, conversation, discourse, statement, information.

Koro	(noun) elderly man, grandfather, granddad, grandpa – term of address to an older man.
Koroheke	(verb) (-tia) to become elderly. (noun) elderly man.
Korowai	1. (noun) cloak ornamented with black twisted tags or thrums – the illustration is of the <i>korowai</i> , <i>Te Whiringa Rongomaiwhiti</i> , woven by Floria Taituna of Ngāti Maniapoto. The feathers of the <i>korowai</i> are of <i>pūkeko</i> (dark blue) and <i>kererū</i> (white). 2. (noun) cloak – in modern Māori this is sometimes used as a general term for cloaks made of <i>muka</i> (New Zealand flax fibre).
Kuia	(noun) elderly woman, grandmother, female elder.
Lesbian	A lesbian is a <u>homosexual</u> woman or girl. The word is also used for women in relation to their <u>sexual identity</u> or <u>sexual behavior</u> , regardless of <u>sexual orientation</u> , or as an adjective to characterize or associate nouns with female homosexuality or same-sex attraction. The concept of "lesbian" to differentiate women with a shared sexual orientation evolved in the 20th century. Throughout history, women have not had the same freedom or independence as men to pursue homosexual relationships, but neither have they met the same harsh punishment as <u>gay men</u> in some societies. Instead, lesbian relationships have often been regarded as harmless, unless a participant attempts to assert privileges traditionally enjoyed by men. As a result, little in history was documented to give an accurate description of how female homosexuality was expressed. When early <u>sexologists</u> in the late 19th century began to categorize and describe homosexual behavior, hampered by a lack of knowledge about homosexuality or women's sexuality, they distinguished lesbians as women who did not adhere to female <u>gender roles</u> . They classified them as mentally ill—a designation which has been reversed since the late 20th century in the global scientific community.
Māmā	Mother.
Mamae	1. (stative) be painful, sore, hurt. 2. (noun) ache, pain, injury, wound.
Manawaroa	1. (adjective) be dogged, resilient. 2. (noun) stamina, doggedness, grit, staying power, endurance, resilience, fortitude.
Mangaia	<i>Mangaia</i> is the most southerly of the Cook Islands and the second largest, after Rarotonga. It is a roughly circular island, with an area of 51.8 square kilometers, 203 kilometers from <i>Rarotonga</i> . Originally heavily populated, <i>Mangaia's</i> population has dropped by 75% in the last 50 years.

Māori	(noun) Māori, indigenous New Zealander, indigenous person of Aotearoa/New Zealand – new use of the word resulting from <i>Pākehā</i> contact in order to distinguish between people of Māori descent and the colonisers.
Māori Queens	Queens who just happen to be Māori.
Marae	1. (verb) to be generous, hospitable. 2. (modifier) generous, hospitable. 3. (noun) courtyard – the open area in front of the <i>wharenui</i> , where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the <i>marae</i> .
Matakite	(verb) (-a) to see into the future, prophesy, prophesies, foresee, foretell.
Matatau	1. (noun) proficiency, competence, facility, mastery, Matua 2. (noun) father, parent, uncle.
Mother Queen	The eldest woman of the house who has authority and looks after the younger Queens.
Muxes	In Zapotec cultures of Oaxaca (southern Mexico), a <i>muxe</i> is a person assigned male at birth who dresses and behaves in ways otherwise associated with women.
Nānā	Grandma/Grandmother
Ngāti Kāhungunu	(personal noun) tribal group of the southern North Island east of the ranges from the area of <i>Nūhaka</i> and <i>Wairoa</i> to southern Wairarapa. ( <i>Te Kāhano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 89;).
Ngāti Porou	(personal noun) tribal group of East Coast area north of Gisborne to <i>Tihirau</i> . ( <i>Te Kāhano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 42;).
Non-Binary	The idea that there are only two genders is sometimes called a “gender binary,” because binary means “having two parts” (male and female). Therefore, “nonbinary” is one term people use to describe genders that don't fall into one of these two categories, male or female.12/01/2023
Non-Conforming	A gender-nonconforming person may be variant in their gender identity, being transgender or non-binary, or they may be cisgender. In the case of transgender people, they may be perceived, or perceive themselves as, gender-nonconforming before transitioning, but might not be perceived as such after transitioning.
Out Rage	Furious
Pākehā	(modifier) English, foreign, European, exotic – introduced from or

	originating in a foreign country.
Pakipaki	It is a pā kāinga <i>village</i> and rural community in the <u>Hastings District</u> and <u>Hawke's Bay Region</u> of New Zealand's <u>North Island</u> . The village is home to many Ngāti Whatuiāpiti hapū <i>tribes</i> represented by their three <i>marae</i> of Houngarea, Mihiroa, and Taraia. The village is also the home of the Hawke's Bay Catholic Māori Mission and displays the Foundation Stone for the Catholic Church in Hawke's Bay. <i>Pakipaki</i> is a Sacred Space in the Footsteps of Venerable Suzanne Aubert.
Papa	Shorten from <i>Papatūānuku</i> .
Papatūānuku	(personal name) Earth, Earth, mother and wife of <i>Rangi-nui</i> – all living things originate from them. ( <i>Te Māhuri Study Guide</i> (Ed. 1): 39-42;).
Pasifika	may refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Pacific Islander</u> people, indigenous peoples of the Pacific Islands</li> <li>• <u>Pasifika New Zealanders</u>, Pacific peoples living in New Zealand</li> <li>• <u>Pacific islands</u>, including Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia</li> <li>• <u>The Pasifika Festival</u>, an annual festival held in Auckland, New Zealand.</li> </ul>
Passing	Being read as the gender one wishes to be read as. The term 'passing' is falling out of fashion as it is seen to imply that one should desire to look cisgender
Poof	noun British Slang. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extremely Disparaging and Offensive. A contemptuous term used to refer to a gay man.</li> <li>2. Offensive. an effeminate male.</li> </ol>
Pūrākau	(noun) myth, ancient legend, story.
Queen	Many older generation trans women in New Zealand still prefer the term Queen,  Historically, before the term 'transsexual' was coined, the term drag queen or simply "Queen" referred to trans women. Men who cross dressed as women exclusively for performance were called "butch queens".  Many older generation trans women in New Zealand still prefer the term Queen, however, others may see this as an insult. Use with extreme caution, and always follow the trans person's lead.
Queer	Queer is an umbrella-term for people who are not heterosexual or are not cisgender. Originally meaning 'strange' or 'peculiar', queer came to be used pejoratively against those with same-sex desires or relationships in the late 19th century. Beginning in the late 1980s, queer activists, such as the members of Queer Nation, began to reclaim the word as a deliberately

	provocative and politically radical alternative to the more assimilationist branches of the LGBT community.
Rangatahi	(noun) the younger generation, youth.
Rangi	1. Short for <i>Ranginui</i> . 2. (noun) heavens, heavenly realm -there are believed to be twelve heavens, the highest of which is <i>Te Toi o ngā rangi</i> .
Ranginui	(personal name) <i>atua</i> of the sky and husband of <i>Papa-tū-ā-nuku</i> , from which union originate all living things.
Raro	(location) the bottom, the underside, under – a location word, or locative, which follows immediately after particles such as <i>ki</i> , <i>i</i> and <i>kei</i> or is preceded by <i>a</i> when used as the subject of the sentence.  ( <i>Te Kākano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 15-16, 29; <i>Te Pihinga</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 24-25;).
Rerekētanga āhuatanga ā-ira	Variations of sex characteristics.
Rongoa	1. (verb) (-tia) to treat, apply medicines. 2. (verb) (-tia) to preserve. 3. (noun) remedy, medicine, drug, cure, medication, treatment, solution (to a problem), tonic.  ( <i>Te Māhuri</i> Video Tapes (Ed. 1): 2;).
Tā	(loan) (personal noun) Sir, knight.
Tāhine, or ira tāhūrua-kore	Mixed gender, or non-binary. <i>Tāhine</i> is a literal blend of Tāne and wahine.
Taiahu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meaning: Trustworthy, Travel Lover, Capable</li> </ul> Gender: Boy / Girl Name
Tainui ( <i>waka</i> )	1. (personal noun) The crew of this canoe from <i>Hawaiki</i> are claimed as ancestors by tribes of the Waikato, King Country, and Tauranga areas. 2. (Personal noun (term used for the tribes whose ancestors came on the <i>Tainui</i> canoe and whose territory includes the Waikato, Hauraki and King Country areas.  ( <i>Te Māhuri</i> Study Guide (Ed. 1):
Takahi	(verb) (-a) to trample, tramp, stamp, tread, abuse, disregard.
Takatāpui	<i>Takatāpui</i> is a <i>Te Reo Māori</i> term, which is used similarly to a ‘rainbow person’ or ‘rainbow community’, or LGBTQI+. When speaking te reo Māori, the word for LGBTQI+ people is <i>Takatāpui</i> . Therefore, one would use this word to refer to both Māori and non-Māori. However, usually only Māori people would call themselves

	<p><i>Takatāpui</i> when speaking English.</p> <p><i>Takatāpui</i> originally meant an intimate companion of the same gender, as in the story of <i>Tūtānekai</i> and <i>Tiki</i>. <i>Tūtānekai</i> married <i>Hinemoa</i>, and his close relationship with <i>Tiki</i> was not necessarily a rainbow relationship. However, contemporary use of <i>Takatāpui</i> most often refers to <i>tāne moe tāne</i> (men who sleep with men), or <i>wāhine moe wāhine</i> (women who sleep with women).</p> <p>It is sometimes used to refer to other rainbow people, including transgender people.</p>
Tamariki ( <i>mā</i> )	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(verb) (<i>-ngia, -tia</i>) to be young.</li> <li>(modifier) young, youthful, immature (of people). (noun) children – normally used only in the plural.</li> </ol>
Tāne	(noun) husband, male, man.
Tangi	(verb) ( <i>-hia</i> ) to cry, mourn, weep, weep over.
Tapa Whā	<i>Te Whare Tapa Whā</i> is a holistic model of health that describes health as a <i>whareniui</i> /meeting house with four walls. These walls represent <i>taha wairua</i> (spiritual wellbeing), <i>taha hinengaro</i> (mental and emotional wellbeing), <i>taha tinana</i> (physical wellbeing), and <i>taha whānau</i> (family and social wellbeing).
Tapu	(stative) be sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden, under <i>atua</i> protection
Tautoko	(verb) ( <i>-hia, -na, -tia</i> ) to support, prop up, verify, advocate, accept (an invitation), agree. ( <i>Tautokotanga</i> )
Tauutuutu	(noun) alternating speakers between <i>tangata whenua</i> and <i>manuhiri</i> at a <i>pōhiri</i> as in the system used on <i>marae</i> in <i>Te Arawa</i> and <i>Waikato</i> . In most other tribal areas, the system called <i>pāeke</i> is used, where all the local speakers speak first.
Te Arawa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(personal name) people descended from the crew of this canoe from <i>Hawaiki</i> who form a group of tribes in the Rotorua-<i>Maketū</i> area. (<i>Te Kākano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 42;)</li> <li>(personal noun) canoe which brought the ancestors of the <i>Arawa</i> and <i>Ngāti Tūwharetoa</i> tribes to Aotearoa.  (<i>Te Māhuri</i> Study Guide (Ed. 1): 30;)</li> </ol>
Te Atārangikahu	Dame <i>Te Atārangikahu</i> ONZ DBE OSTJ (23 July 1931 – 15 August 2006) was the Māori queen for 40 years, the longest reign of any Māori monarch.
Te Āti Awa	(personal noun) tribal group to the north-east of Mount Taranaki including the <i>Waitara</i> and New Plymouth areas. A section of <i>Te Āti Awa</i> moved to parts of the Wellington area and the northern South Island in

	the 1820s. ( <i>Te Kāhano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 89, 113;)
Te Rangi Tāheke	Personal name.
Te reo	Māori, or te reo Māori, commonly shortened to te reo, is an Eastern Polynesian language spoken by the Māori people, the indigenous population of mainland New Zealand. A member of the Austronesian language family, it is closely related to Cook Islands Māori, Tuamotuan, and Tahitian.
Teke	(noun) vagina, female genitals.
Tikanga	(noun) correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol – the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context.
Tikanga ā-ira whānui	Gender norms. <i>Tikanga whānui</i> – code, convention practiced widely. <i>ā-ira</i> – relating to gender.
Tinana	(noun) self, person, reality - as opposed to an apparition.
Tīpuna	(noun) ancestors, grandparents – plural form of <i>tipuna</i> and the eastern dialect variation of <i>tīpuna</i> .
Tīrengi	unsettled, uneasy, anxious. <i>ā-ira</i> – relating to gender.
Tīrengi ā-ira	Gender dysphoria or anxiety.
Tīwhanawhana	<i>Takatāpui</i> - Kapa Haka Group in Wellington
Trans	A transgender person (often shortened to trans) is someone whose <u>gender identity</u> differs from that typically associated with the <u>sex</u> they were <u>assigned at birth</u> . Some transgender people who desire medical assistance to <u>transition</u> from one sex to another identify as <u>transsexual</u> . <i>Transgender</i> , often shortened as <i>trans</i> , is also an <u>umbrella term</u> ; in addition to including people whose gender identity is the opposite of their assigned sex ( <u>trans men</u> and <u>trans-women</u> ), it may also include people who are <u>non-binary</u> or <u>genderqueer</u> . Other definitions of <i>transgender</i> also include people who belong to a <u>third gender</u> , or else conceptualize transgender people as a third gender. The term <i>transgender</i> may be defined very broadly to include <u>cross-dressers</u> . The term <i>transgender</i> does not have a universally accepted definition, including among researchers.
Trans gurls	<i>Trans woman</i> may also be short for <u>transsexual</u> woman. <u>Transsexual</u> is a subset of <i>transgender</i> , referring to people who desire to medically transition to the <u>sex</u> with which they identify, usually through <u>sex reassignment therapies</u> .

	such as <u>hormone replacement therapy</u> and <u>sex reassignment surgery</u> , to align their body with their identified sex or gender. The term is rejected by some as outdated, though others within the trans community still identify as transsexual.
Transgender	<p><i>Irawhiti</i>, or Irawhiti takatāpui.</p> <p>Transgender, or gender that changes, transfers, or crosses over. <i>Irawhiti</i> specifies transgender specifically, so we are seeing a move toward using <i>irawhiti</i> or <i>irawhiti takatāpui</i> to replace the more generic <i>takatāpui</i> for all transgender identities.</p> <p><i>Ira</i> – gender, spirit, or essence.</p> <p><i>Whiti</i> – to change, transfer, transpose, or cross over.</p>
Transman	A trans man (short for transgender man) is a <u>man</u> who was <u>assigned female at birth</u> . Trans men have a male <u>gender identity</u> , and many trans men choose to undergo surgical or hormonal transition, or both (see <u>gender-affirming care</u> ), to alter their appearance in a way that aligns with their gender identity or alleviates <u>gender dysphoria</u> .
Transmisogyny	<p>The combination of misogyny, or hatred of women, with transphobia (as above). A key aspect of transmisogyny is the double bind; trans women are:</p> <p>Presumed to embody the worst of “masculinity” – sexually aggressive or predatory, violent, and domineering.</p> <p>Treated with the worst of misogyny – as objects to be used, without agency, hypersexualised, as though their existence is too seductive. And as though they are over emotional and irrational.</p> <p>They may be treated in either or both of these ways simultaneously, depending on what is convenient for those who would mistreat them.</p> <p>Consequently, they experience discrimination and violence (including sexual violence), at much higher rates than women in the general population.</p> <p>In a patriarchal society it is seen as a threat to masculinity when people who could have been men reject manhood in favour of a lower status position – womanhood. As such, trans women are often treated with abjection, or transmisogyny, both interpersonally and structurally. Additionally, it is in the best interest of those who would mistreat trans women to ensure that society sees trans women in this way. To this end, there is no shortage of dedicated anti-trans campaigners manufacturing transmisogynist disinformation.</p>
Transphobia.	<i>Transphobia</i> is used similarly to <i>homophobia</i> . Transphobia consists of three main parts – stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. Any of

	<p>these elements on its own can be transphobia.</p> <p>Stereotypes include, for example, the idea that trans people aren't real, that they are delusional, or that they are dangerous. Misconceptions of biology, and ideas of gender oppression revolving around reproductive capacity (gender essentialism) are two further examples of stereotypes – or over generalised ideas.</p> <p>Prejudicial feelings are usually based on these stereotypical ideas, and may include fear, anger, discomfort, distrust, disgust, or hatred directed towards trans people.</p> <p>Discrimination is actions, based on prejudice.</p>
Transsexual	<p>Transsexual people experience a <u>gender identity</u> that is inconsistent with their <u>assigned sex</u>, and desire to permanently <u>transition</u> to the <u>sex</u> or <u>gender</u> with which they identify, usually seeking medical assistance (including <u>sex reassignment therapies</u>, such as <u>hormone replacement therapy</u> and <u>sex reassignment surgery</u>) to help them align their body with their identified sex or gender.</p>
Tū atu / Tū mai	<p>Alternating speakers between <i>tangata whenua</i> and <i>manuhiri</i> at a <i>pōhiri</i> as in the system used on marae in Te Arawa and Waikato. In most other tribal areas, the system called <i>pāeke</i> is used where all the local speakers speak first.</p>
Tuakiri	<p>–identity. <i>ā-ira</i> – relating to gender.</p>
Tuakiri ā-ira	<p>Gender identity.</p>
Tūpāpaku	<p>(noun) corpse, deceased, cadaver, deceased person's body.</p>
Tūtānekai	<p>(personal name) <i>Tūtānekai</i> married Hinemoa, the beautiful daughter of <i>Umukaria</i> and <i>Hinemaru</i>, who lived at Rotorua. <i>Tūtānekai</i> married her against the wishes of her people when she swam to <i>Mokoia</i> Island, guided by the music of the flute he played. (<i>Te Māhuri</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 158-164; <i>Te Māhuri</i> Video Tapes (Ed. 1): 2;)</p>
Urupā	<p>(noun) burial ground, cemetery, graveyard.</p>
Ututu	<p>(noun) payments, reparations – a number of times.</p>
waha	<p>(noun) mouth, entrance, gate, opening, inlet, outlet – anything that is like a mouth.</p>
Wahine	<p>(noun) woman, female, lady, wife.</p>
Wāhine	<p>(noun) women, females, ladies, wives – plural form of <i>wahine</i>.</p>
Wairarapa	<p>The Wairarapa, a geographical region of New Zealand, lies in the south-eastern corner of the North Island, east of metropolitan Wellington and south-west of the Hawke's Bay Region. It is lightly populated, having several rural service</p>

	towns, with Masterton being the largest.
Wairua	(noun) spirit, soul - spirit of a person which exists beyond death. It is the non-physical spirit, distinct from the body and the <i>mauri</i> . To some, the <i>wairua</i> resides in the heart or mind of someone while others believe it is part of the whole person and is not located at any particular part of the body. The <i>wairua</i> begins its existence when the eyes form in the fetus and is immortal. While alive a person's <i>wairua</i> can be affected by <i>mākutu</i> through <i>karakia</i> . <i>Tohunga</i> can damage <i>wairua</i> and also protect the <i>wairua</i> against harm. The <i>wairua</i> of a miscarriage or abortion can become a type of guardian for the family or may be used by <i>tohunga</i> for less beneficial purposes. Some believe that all animate and inanimate things have a <i>whakapapa</i> and a <i>wairua</i> . Some believe that <i>atua Māori</i> , or <i>Iomatua-kore</i> , can instill <i>wairua</i> into something. <i>Tohunga</i> , the agents of the <i>atua</i> , are able to activate or instill a <i>wairua</i> into something, such as a new <i>wharenui</i> , through <i>karakia</i> . During life, the <i>wairua</i> may leave the body for brief periods during dreams. The <i>wairua</i> has the power to warn the individual of impending danger through visions and dreams. On death the <i>wairua</i> becomes <i>tapu</i> . It is believed to remain with or near the body and speeches are addressed to the person and the <i>wairua</i> of that person encouraging it on its way to Te Pō. Eventually the <i>wairua</i> departs to join other <i>wairua</i> in Te Pō, the world of the departed spirits, or to Hawaiki, the ancestral homeland. The spirit travels to Te Reinga where it descends to Te Pō. <i>Wairua</i> of the dead that linger on earth are called <i>kēhua</i> . During <i>kawe mate</i> , or <i>hari mate</i> , <i>hura kōhatu</i> and other important occasions the <i>wairua</i> is summoned to return to the marae.
Wairuatanga	(noun) spirituality.
Waka Ama	(noun) outrigger canoe.
Wānanga	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (verb) (-hia, -tia) to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider.</li> <li>2. (noun) seminar, conference, forum, educational seminar.</li> <li>3. (noun) tribal knowledge, lore, learning – important traditional cultural, religious, historical, genealogical and philosophical knowledge.</li> </ol>
Wanganui - Whanganui	Māori: also spelled Wanganui, is a <u>city</u> in the <u>Manawatū-Whanganui</u> region of <u>New Zealand</u> . The city is located on the west coast of the <u>North Island</u> at the mouth of the <u>Whanganui River</u> , New Zealand's longest navigable waterway.
Whaea	(noun) mother, aunt, aunty.
Whaikōrero	(noun) oratory, oration, formal speech-making, address, speech – formal speeches usually made by men during a <i>pōhiri</i> and other gatherings. Formal eloquent language using imagery, metaphor, <i>whakataukī</i> , <i>pepeha</i> , <i>kupu Whakaari</i> , relevant <i>whakapapa</i> and references to tribal history is admired. The basic format for <i>whaikōrero</i> is: <i>tauparapara</i> (a type of <i>karakia</i> ); <i>mihi ki te whare tupuna</i> (acknowledgement of the ancestral

	house); <i>mihi ki a Papatūānuku</i> (acknowledgement of Mother Earth); <i>mihi ki te hunga mate</i> (acknowledgement of the dead); <i>mihi ki te hunga ora</i> (acknowledge of the living); <i>te take o te hui</i> (purpose of the meeting). Near the end of the speech a traditional <i>waiata</i> is usually sung. (Te Kohure Textbook (Ed. 2): 243-247); <i>whakaaro</i>
Whakamā	(verb) to be ashamed, shy, bashful, embarrassed.
Whakamana	To affirm
Whakamana ira	Gender affirming, or to have pride in ones' gender.
Whakamomori	(verb) to commit a desperate act, act in desperation, commit suicide – in traditional Māori society spouses or close relations would express their grief with women lacerating their breasts and cutting their hair. Sometimes the profound grief would result in the spouse taking her own life. Intense grief over the death of a close relative or friend could also lead someone to attempt suicide.
Whakapapa	(noun) genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent – reciting <i>whakapapa</i> was, and is, an important skill and reflected the importance of genealogies in Māori society in terms of leadership, land and fishing rights, kinship and status. It is central to all Māori institutions. There are different terms for the types of whakapapa and the different ways of reciting them including: <i>tāhū</i> (recite a direct line of ancestry through only the senior line); <i>whakamoe</i> (recite a genealogy including males and their spouses); <i>taotahi</i> (recite genealogy in a single line of descent); <i>ure tārewa</i> (male line of descent through the first-born male in each generation).  ( <i>Te Kāhano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 3; <i>Te Māhuri</i> Study Guide (Ed. 1): 13-14; <i>Te Kōhure</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 237-240;)
Whakaputa ā-ira	Gender expression. <i>Whakaputa</i> – express, expression. <i>ā-ira</i> – relating to gender, spirit, or essence.
Whakatāne, fa'atama akatāne	Trans man, to create or be in the manner of a man. <i>Whaka</i> means to create or become or be in the manner of, while <i>tane</i> means man. Similar to <i>fa'atama</i> of Samoa, and <i>akatāne</i> of the Cook Islands. Like western trans men, <i>whakatāne</i> and pacific trans men do not see themselves as simply being “in the manner of a” man, they are men.  Note: the original use of <i>Whakatāne</i> was ‘in the manner of a man’, as with the naming of the town <i>Whakatāne</i> . The town is not named after transgender men.
Whakatauākī	is a Māori proverb, saying, or significant statement with a known or attributed origin, similar to an adage or aphorism, that conveys cultural wisdom, a principle, or a lesson, often using poetic and metaphorical

	language to teach or to inspire. The key distinction between a <i>whakatauaūki</i> and the related term <i>whakatauki</i> is that the speaker or author of the <i>whakatauaūki</i> is known, whereas for a <i>whakatauki</i> , the origin is unknown or unstated.
Whakatauki	Proverb, significant saying, formulaic saying, cryptic saying, aphorism. Like <i>whakatauaūki</i> and <i>pepeha</i> they are essential ingredients in <i>whaikōrero</i> .
Whakawahine	<i>fa'afafine, fakaleiti, and akava'ine</i> Trans woman, to create or be in the manner of a woman. <i>Whaka</i> means to create or become or be in the manner of, while <i>wahine</i> means woman ( <i>wāhine plural</i> ). <i>Whakawahine</i> is similar to <i>fa'afafine</i> of Samoa – with <i>fa'a</i> meaning <i>in the manner of</i> and <i>fine</i> meaning woman. Similarly, <i>fakaleiti</i> of Tonga, and <i>akava'ine</i> of the Cook Islands. Like western trans women, most whakawāhine and Pacific trans women do not see themselves as simply being “in the manner of” a woman, they are women.
Whānau	1. (verb) (-a) to be born, give birth. 2. (noun) extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people – the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society. In the modern context the term is sometimes used to include friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members. ( <i>Te Kāhano</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 3; <i>Te Pihinga</i> Textbook (Ed. 2): 52-54;)
Whānau pani	(noun) chief mourners, bereaved family – the relations of the deceased.
Whanaungatanga	(noun) relationship, kinship, sense of family connection – a relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging. It develops as a result of kinship rights and obligations, which also serve to strengthen each member of the kin group. It also extends to others to whom one develops a close familial, friendship or reciprocal relationship.
Whanawhana	(verb) to bend backwards and forwards, kick repeatedly.
Whāngai	(verb) (-a, -hia, -nga, -tia) to feed, nourish, bring up, foster, adopt, raise, nurture, rear.
Whare	(noun) house, building, residence, dwelling, shed, hut, habitation.
Whare kura	(noun) school – traditionally the place where esoteric lore was taught. In modern Māori it is written as one word.
Whare Wānanga	(noun) university, place of higher learning – traditionally, places where

	<i>tohunga</i> taught the sons of <i>Rangatira</i> their people's knowledge of history, genealogy and religious practices.
Wharekai	(noun) dining hall, refectory, cafe, restaurant.
Wharenui	(noun) meeting house, large house – main building of a marae where guests are accommodated. Traditionally the <i>wharenui</i> belonged to a <i>hapū</i> or <i>whānau</i> but some modern meeting houses, especially in large urban areas, have been built for non-tribal groups, including schools and tertiary institutions. Many are decorated with carvings, rafter paintings and <i>tukutuku</i> panels.  <i>(Te Kōhure Textbook (Ed. 2): 265-266;)</i>
Wharepaku	(noun) toilet, lavatory, convenience, latrine, loo, bog.
	<b>Quotes</b>
	<i>“He aha te mea nui? He tangata he tangata he tangata”</i> “What is the greatest thing? Tis people, Tis people, Tis people”
	<i>I raro o ngā tikanga o Ngāti Porou.</i> Under the guidance of Ngāti Porou.
	<i>Nāku e whakautu, e kao</i> My reply is no.