



***Teu le Va* (nurture the space) in-between intersectionality**

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Abstract

A workshop focused on the ServDes. 2020 theme of 'Plurality' with the intention to provide innovative tools that generate experiences validating participants from diverse backgrounds through the lens of Intersectionality and the Samoan concept of space; called 'Va' or the space in-between.

Pacific author and academic Albert Wendt states that:

Va is the space between the between-ness, not empty space, not space that separates, but space that relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the Unity-that-is-All, the space that is context, giving meaning to things (Wendt,1996).

Teu le Va is a call to nurture the space in-between, premised on forgiveness and reconciliation (Muliaumaseali'i, 2017). Here we use its literal translation to tidy, beautify the space in-between (Muliaumaseali'i, 2017).

For the purposes of this workshop, Intersectionality is defined as a concept seeking to dismantle the power dynamics and cultural structures that discriminate against race, class and gender to create advocacy and remedial practices towards an egalitarian society (Crenshaw, 1989).

We explore Crenshaw's (1989) notions by identifying where individual identities intersect (Coatson,2019) and how Va might bridge these intersections towards an even playing field. These themes influence a tactile, audio and visual experience aimed to present interventions that might Teu le Va (nurture the space) in-between Intersectionality.

Acknowledgement

The workshop is designed around Indigenous knowledges of Fa'asamoa (Samoan way of life) and principles of Fa'amatai or chiefly rule (Stewart-Withers, 2011). These methods are used in the successful running of a Samoan village. We will build on this knowledge to co- create safe spaces to understand social capital and elements of team cohesion. We pay respect to the past, present and future of Australia through acknowledgement and engagement with Australian Indigenous culture.

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