Article

Storying Toward Pasin and Luksave: Permeable Relationships Between Papua New Guineans as Researchers and Participants

Vincent Backhaus[1] $\textcolor{green}{\textbf{\textcircled{iD}}}$, Nalisa Neuendorf[2,3], and Lokes Brooksbank[2]

Abstract

In Oceania, Papua New Guinea (PNG) appears large in the consciousness of exploring social life through the notion of sociality. Scholarship within the Melanesian region employs sociality to interrogate forms of social life and the different ways research methods account for the understanding of interactions between individuals and communities. Yet for the three PNG authors this assumed coherency between epistemes and method highlighted specific conceptual challenges for us as researchers and participants. We identified with two conceptual notions: "pasin" and "luksave" as distinct Austronesian language ideas derived from Tok Pisin—a creolisation of English utilized as a lingua franca throughout the country. We explored the development of pasin and luksave and the ways the conceptual claims served a dual function of developing a methodological and epistemic pathway toward an ethical assurance of meaningful relationality. We extend on current understanding in two ways. Firstly employing the methodology of story as critique of research assumptions and secondly, extend on the process of story work to suggest storying as a novel but relatable research methodology. Storying such research experiences as both method and epistemic accountability, guided our responsibility toward the relationships we hold to people, community and knowledge. Pasin and luksave embed an emancipatory and de-colonial intent through the guise of oral stories. These intentions in our scholarship fostered a form of coherent expressions of research claim and method assumption and also raised questions for us regarding what decolonizing Papua New Guinea ought to consider. Our paper also highlights a reformulation of the different ways research considers Oceania in particular Melanesia and the Papua New Guinean research context.

Keywords

emancipatory, indigenous research methodologies, melanesia, luksave, pasin, sociality, story, ethical inquiry, narrative, oral histories, autoethnography

Date received: November 15, 2019. Received revised July 13, 2020; Accepted: July 16, 2020

Introduction

Social life has been explained through the various ways people enact and re-enact relationships and connections to many things inclusive of people, land, sky, water, flora and fauna. Perhaps, the desire to understand the evolving sense of personhood we all inhabit frames the research intentions to explore these relationships and connections through the notion of sociality. Ecologically, we[1] could consider sociality as an emerging function of ideas like reciprocity, acknowledgment; transactability; respect and expectation through the communality of human and non-human life (Ingold, 2012).

[1] Indigenous Education and Research Centre, James Cook University, Cairns, Australia
[2] College of Arts Society and Education, James Cook University, Douglas, Queensland, Australia
[3] Sexual and Reproductive Health Unit (SRHU), Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research, Goroka, Papua New Guinea

Corresponding Author:
Vincent Backhaus, Teaching and Learning, Indigenous Education and Research Centre, James Cook University, JCU Cairns 1, 14-88 McGregor Road, Smithfield, Cairns, Queensland, Australia.
Email: vincent.backhaus@jcu.edu.au

Problematically, the notion of sociality is broad and ambiguous, and much maligned. Sociality per se can refer to "literally every aspect of being human" (Toren, 2012, p. 67). Furthermore, Long (2015, p. 856) recognizes "all entities in the world as being social" which bears the notion that all are "thus embroiled in sociality." However, he also notes that this does not mean that all entities have the same socialites. On this point, the ambiguity of defining sociality we argue, weakens and limits its capacity to engage with the everyday experiences of our intention to story relationality in more meaningful ways for a Papua New Guinean context.

In contrast we identify with the relationality of *pasin* and *luksave* as opposed to the western construct of sociality. This guides us to re-inscribe meaningful purpose and outcome in a more dynamic way as Papua New Guineans. We follow Hukula's understanding of *pasin* by suggesting the term can be thought of as a principled assessment of actions interpreted by people. *Luksave*, itself forms an acknowledgment of actions by people. *Pasin* and *luksave* can also be thought of as having a dual and interchangeable capacity to their respective linguistic forms. In this way both can make known the relationships and people involved in the everyday (Hukula, 2019).

A general illustration of someone showing or has *good pasin* [*gudpla pasin*] and/or *luksave*, can be distilled from the notion of morality and what constitutes an image of moral persons. Evaluating a person's capacity to show good pasin and/or luksave can be assessed through local everyday interactions between people. A good person can be seen to be generous and giving, a person personifying a kind demeanor and approach to family and close neighbors or to individuals they meet in specific contexts like the market or in urban contexts—interacting on a bus or in a local trade store. In these examples we get to see how people qualify and evaluate others seen to be acting and interacting in ways that support good social interactions. Further, asking after the care of your neighbors in conversation, looking after your Elders, sharing of food, offering to help out individuals in need; also all offer ways we might also gain a sense of understanding how good *pasin* and /or *luksave* can be evaluated against people who may show *bad pasin* [*nogut pasin* (bad behavior)] or *luksave* [to *not* recognize and or acknowledge someone]. Overall, *pasin* and *luksave* provide avenues to evaluate how social intentions emerge relationally and how social interactions can be qualified through an ethic of good relations. For us this occurred through research practice, whereby Papua New Guinean researchers were working with Papua New Guinean peoples.

The aim of this research paper is to qualify the use of *pasin* and *luksave* as distinct conceptual tools originating within a Papua New Guinean specific context but also extend on the assumptions embedded within the deployment of the terms. *Pasin* and *luksave* also assists in defining the significance of how the everyday can be meaningfully explored in scholarship. We argue that in defining the scope of *pasin* and *luksave* our paper attests to the fundamental role language plays in knowledge creation, but also in defining the accountability of method to such epistemic claims (Koitsiwe, 2013). We further suggest,

these tools enable a relationality beyond the island geography as a way of navigating the Papua New Guinean diaspora that exists outside of the country. The paper also illuminates the capacity of three Papua New Guinean researches to actively develop distinct narratives of relationality independently but share through the different ways each story embodies the notion of *pasin* and *luksave*.

These stories embody the process of how people and relationships interact across time. This helps to guide a thinking through of how the Papua New Guinean contexts has inherited the taxonomic expressions that sociality scholarship defines and is deployed to make meaning of Papua New Guinean ways of knowing and being. The paper argues that challenges arise in the coherency of methodological traditions defined through the notion of sociality for us as PNG researchers as we engage aspects of social life, we identify, but also as we are tasked to engage in for the sake of contributing to the conceptual forms deemed as *social life*. Specifically, through *pasin* and *luksave*, we argue such terms provide a meaningful connection to build on the notion of sociality as an alternative frame of understanding notions of relationality. Our work on a specific transnational project and a doctoral fieldwork experience highlighted the challenges when three Papua New Guinea (PNG) researchers attempted to contextualize their understanding of the aspects of sociality as it emerged from meeting with and connecting with other Papua New Guineans.

The Everyday of PNG Living

Papua New Guinea is an Oceanic country identified within the region of Melanesia and containing a large base of Austronesian languages. *Pasin* and *luksave* are derived from *Tok Pisin*, *tok* meaning (talk); *pisin* meaning a creolisation of English. The language has become one of the lingua franca within the country. This context is the basis for highlighting how relatedness governs our own ways of knowing and being within particular social forms associated to and embedded within place and belonging. Such ways of relatedness have been nurtured and taught inter-generationally and forms a central focus in our thinking about being in relationship. Hukula (2015) illuminates the nature of *pasin* through her exploration of issues of urban life and sociality within the capital Port Moresby, PNG. She presented settlers' ideas of work and money through their income generating efforts and the perceptions held by giving participants toward the rest of the community (Hukula, 2015). The settler stories presented highlighted the forms that relatedness takes through everyday interactions of eating together, sharing and thinking of one another.

Rooney (2019) provides the example of how individuals can enact a moral valuation of sharing with others in a way whereby those that earn a relatively higher income are compelled to share with neighbors and kin even though this means diminishing their own family resources for the sake of such obligations. Alternatively, having or showing *good pasin* and/ or *luksave* can be highlighted in everyday talk whereby an ideal person is someone who has *pasin* and *luksave* or lives by a

moral understanding of how to treat others and also be around and engage with others in social public or private settings. In this guise someone who has *good pasin,* is able to think of others through sharing of resource or time, or someone who greets and acknowledges others as they go about their daily lives or for that matter having a general mindfulness of others within the everyday (Hukula, 2019).

In these instances, the way people shape and quite often intentionally or unintentionally define their knowing and being is by engaging in framed interactions with others. The framing suggests the concept of *pasin* enables a responsive dynamic toward enactment and embodiment of relationality in a variety of social processes (Dogimab, 2009; Hukula, 2015; Kaiku, 2011; Kula-Semos, 2009; Sai, 2007). Further, the dual nature of *pasin* usefully denotes a responsivity within which individuals necessarily interact, through acknowledgment and recognition of accepted ways of knowing and being (Hukula, 2019). Relationally, *luksave* points to the recognition of action and behavior as a form of acknowledgment emerging between peoples (Hukula, 2015, 2019). Consequently, the embedded nature of relational processes in deploying *pasin* and *luksave,* highlight a means of guiding relationship sets and acknowledging position and point of mutual recognition between individuals and groups of people.

Sociality as Every Aspect of Being Human

Long and Moore (2012, p. 4) consider sociality as a "relational matrix" in which people are continually interacting in co-productive and flexible ways. Each event and relationship can be understood as unique, therefore creating a form of sociality that reflects a network of relational representations (Papacharissi, 2015). Long and Moore (2012) also highlight, sociality's strength lies in its flexibility to engage with multiple field sites, and as a useful methodological tool for an innumerable number of relationships between a person and other entities. We would argue this flexibility weakens the terms capacity when we are asked to deploy and interrogate the assumptions of sociality's existence as a specific principled, intentional, reference point when exploring the everyday PNG context.

We observe the emergence of relationality in alternative directions to the assumptions fostered by the idea of a relation matrix or nodal representation of social relations. In one instance we argue relationality extends beyond predefined relational matrices or nodal representations. The nature of this ambiguity is illuminated within our stories when we aim to describe some qualities of relationality that are not predefined by us nor fostered at any previous time prior to the very first engagement between PNG researchers and PNG participants coming together in the spirit of community interaction. Sociality itself can tend to mask or subsume the relational experiences we have come to acknowledge and understand for the Papua New Guinean context. Smith (1999, p. 36) has echoed these concerns highlighting:

Many indigenous researchers have struggled individually to engage with the disconnections that are apparent between the demands of research, on one side, and the realities they encounter amongst their own and other indigenous communities, with whom they share lifelong relationships, on the other side.

We suggest the term *sociality* focuses our research to invariably *other* our thinking by presupposing upon our community engagements, a layer of presumption about the people we do meet as a community of Papua New Guineans. The term othering is important to note as it echoes commentary regarding hierarchical frameworks that are deployed to enact and represent meaning within Oceania (Hau'ofa, 2008; Mar, 2016; Smith, 1999). Importantly, Papua New Guinean researchers are expected to align their understanding to how sociality is deployed in scholarship as opposed to thinking about how the legacies of such alignments were supplanted to the region through imperial expansion from a previous and continuing historical process. We argue this tension invariably guides scholarship to reflect Euro-western interpretations and approaches within research *about* Papua New Guineans.

Mar (2016) points out the imperial legacy of defining and developing nation state borders in one instance within the Pacific region. She suggests the imperial order set up the ways to talk about the Pacific and her subjects. These ways developed fragmented threads of connection determined by colonial thought migrants and the economic and intellectual value they saw within the Pacific:

"With new imperial borders acting as containment lines, Pacific worlds shrank during the formal colonial era and the expansiveness of trans-Pacific trade and movement was replaced with sanctioned contraction and isolation." (Mar, 2016, p. 40)

Here the notion of colonial borders goes beyond simple jurisdictional assumptions of border development, to also include the retraction and containment of Pacific ways of knowing along such borders and adopted by Pacific peoples. Notwithstanding the advantageous attributes to Oceania such ways provided to people and islands, such advantages were ultimately sanctioned by a colonial order. This order legitimated conceptual webs of meaning along a network of colonial nation states. In effect reducing the impact of established alternatives within the existing understanding of Pacific life worlds.

Hence the claims in scholarship we do make tend to be misunderstood and or be seen as misaligned or pushing beyond the borders of meaning we are required to follow. This research tension of aligning the misalignments we think about draws us to think sociality loses its analytical power for us as PNG researchers engaging with PNG peoples. The challenge for us as researchers and Papua New Guineans, is to navigate this tension. How these tensions manifest, is in the ways we maintain integrity to research and peoples through and across the relational processes we share as Papua New Guineans.

Identifying Emerging Relationships and the Everyday

Reed-Danahay (1997) suggests sociality and social space as a fuzzy concept. Arguing perhaps a blurring of subjectivity as interpretive dialogue between author and other within a dialogic turn (Brettell, 1997). In this process of claiming legitimacy of scholarship within the notion of a blurred inter-subjectivity, sociality intimates the guise of *selving* or determining who the anthropological self is in authorship and which self emerges in the process (Reed-Danahay, 1997, p. 3). For us, this assumption intimates the continuing existence of a hierarchy in scholarship and meaning surrounding the idea of sociality and which self is privileged. In turn, it also helps us to clarify the tension we hold in our research to suggest sociality centers upon a sifting process of anthropological selves and how such selected selves of interpretation appear in scholarship as the valued representative trope of meaning (Sökefeld, 1999).

Through the notion of *pasin* and *luksave* the emergence of relations and people within an interaction can develop despite not having any prior connection or interaction. The reference point necessarily relies on some form of *luksave* or moral awareness of understanding how to meet and engage with others as a transparent process of developing relations (Poser, 2013). The ethic of being a good person or having *luksave* in such instances is about observing each other, having a quiet, respectful demeanor and not being observed as loud or being too eager to question the other person as relations develop (Poser, 2013; Rooney, 2019). In this way *pasin* and *luksave* attempt to suggest the moral ground individuals traverse in establishing and maintaining good relations and how such observations between people allow for a process of transparency for people to reveal themselves through a sifting process of evaluating intentions.

In our forthcoming stories, intergenerational memories and connections to place guide the development of these emerging interactions. Mertens et al. (2013) and Phillips and Bunda (2018) talk about the notion of *grandparenting* connections and relationships between people and place. Here we suggest intergenerational memories of links between people help to scaffold new intergenerational connections whether through kin or non kin relations to support the endeavors of indigenous researchers and foster creative and emergent properties of knowing and being. Our endeavors to interact and develop relationships as researchers and Papua New Guineans also emerge to illustrate how the different families, places and knowledges within different places and spaces of interaction, entwine relationality in a multitude of PNG ways of knowing and being.

Indigenous Story as Methodology

The breadth of developing methods surrounding indigenous story as methodology highlights in one vein indigenous Story-work as an emerging decolonial process of attending to stories told by indigenous peoples and researchers (Archibald, 2008; Archibald et al., 2019; Denzin et al., 2008; Kovach et al., 2013). Phillips and Bunda (2018) intimate *story* is the word, suggesting a principled and storied approach into understanding indigenous collective ownership and authorship of meaning is about navigating the notion of story. In these instances, method attends to collective and individual assumptions that respect and are accountable to people, community and relations.

The relationship *pasin* and *luksave* create with indigenous scholarship surrounding *story*, is the principled and acknowledged relationality of knowing and being. By describing the ethical and or moral dimensions of the storying process, we illuminate the salience shared with *pasin* and luksave as principled assertions of how relationality is developed. In this sense storying can be observed to be the methodological process but how such a process manifests, rest on the assumptions of acknowledging the existence of *pasin* and *luksave* in social interactions.

Pasin and *luksave* also devolve the hierarchy of knowing that indigenous story attends to in developing a scholarly presence. Passingan (2013) makes mention that for the Papua New Guinean contexts the notion of *native* as opposed to *indigenous* holds merit while also acknowledging that each shares a collective and relational presence of being known and acknowledged. In this way not privileging one term over the other regarding identifiability but respecting the presence of each in scholarship. In this way the notion of *pasin* and *luksave* suggests an accountability to alternatives within the literature whereby black and indigenous scholars wish to identify with appropriate terminology as part of an emancipatory processes of becoming known in their own way (Rigney, 1999).

Pasin and *luksave* also acknowledge a principled approach to interactions akin to what Hukula (2019, p. 169) suggests as ("constitutive [of] a *gutpela man* or *meri*") ("good man" or "good woman"). Here the nature of engagement between people are enactive of a conscious witness and testimony to good relations and good interactions as opposed to relationships where grievances escalate between people and community. Reconstituted as an assumption of methodology, *pasin* and *luksave* are enactive of an ethical assumption surrounding how research examines and engages with Papua New Guinean peoples and communities for the sake of maintaining respectful and accountable engagements with people and relations.

Indigenous story as methodology also acknowledges this approach to scholarship (Archibald, 2008; Archibald et al., 2019; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Phillips & Bunda, 2018). Respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility within indigenous story accounts for the different ways stories are nutritive to the overall shared qualities of a relational process and the development of knowing (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). By intimating the assumptions of meaning attended to through *pasin* and *luksave* and indigenous story as methodology, the salience of method to the context of the Papua New Guinean everyday can be attended to respectfully whereby method becomes accountable to participants in ethically supportive ways.

In the following three stories, data is presented in a story form. Each of the stories illuminate the different ways research assumptions and the particular everyday experiences shared by participants engage in a collective space of identifiable meaning. The stories highlight how the assumptions foster interaction before the first meeting, during the first meeting but also the accountability beyond initial face to face research conversations.

Kin-Kin but different—Robin's Story[2]. The local market is a hive of activity, smell and color. In some corners you have pastries and coffee, in others the strong smell of tropical fruit and local produce. In one corner a small but boisterous cluster of Papua New Guinean aunties selling everything from bilums (woven bag) to buai (betel nut).

On this particular morning I entered the market looking for Aunty Clare.[3] Like any PNG community outside of PNG, everyone usually knows of everyone else. This generally means you will never and can never walk through without stopping to talk to the aunties. This usually manifests naturally as aunties at a number of stalls look over, raising their eyebrows and waving in a "yu kam" motion of the hand. You learn to respond to this gesture at a very young age in PNG. You are then greeted with a quintessential "aunty" or "ah son how are you"? Followed by the usual questions about parents, family and relatives, as the aunties love to stay in the loop. However subtle this in itself is a cultural transaction of respect. Aunties not from your province or close to the family usually just wave and smile, whereas aunties from, in my case Manus or close to the family, I must acknowledge as a sign of respect.

Through the PNG community I was aware that Aunty Clare was in town from Cooktown selling her buai. However, as I asked each of the aunties none knew of an aunty Clare. Confused, I sat down behind another aunt's stall. Aunty Margret is family, my younger sister married into her family. "Son, yu? How are you, orait ah? Nah yu painim husat"? I explained I was looking for an aunty Clare from Cooktown. Another confused look, she did not know of Aunty Clare either, but she did turn to the stall beside her and said "em ya, ask aunty over there she is from Cooktown." I did not know Aunty Clare and as I leant over and asked if she knew Aunty Clare, I got a very surprised look. An assumption of maintaining respectful relationality between speakers is to articulate the inverse of connection between speakers. In this instance Aunty Clare articulated to me: "Aunty come sit here, I am Clare, but everyone knows me as Mabel." In that moment she instantly knew I was of Manus heritage and proceeded to ask who my mother and other family were. I knew her by her village name because she was from Manus and that was the only name my mum knew her by. Without knowing who I really was yet a connection had been made as a result of knowing her village name.

Once aunty realized who my mum and family were, there was an immediate familial connection and a close friendship which I was now bounded into being the son of someone who had gone to school at the same time as Aunty Clare's elder sister. While this relationship may have only taken a few minutes, time in this equation is irrelevant, it was my belonging to family and place that presented a passageway and transformed me from stranger to kin. Without any further question Aunty assured me that if I was ever up in Cooktown that I must stay at her house, and "yes research, interviews, anything just call me aunty, my sister and niece are up looking after the house for me, go and see them."

Aunty Clare and her husband had been sick for a while now and regularly had to make trips to Cairns hospital for medical checks and surgery. Through her family back in PNG she had organized her own "care plan" by brining family members down to look after them and the house while they were away for treatment in Cairns. Her elder sister now retired had flown down from Port Moresby and her youngest daughter had left her job and children to come down from Manus to care for them and the house.

Before I left Aunty gave me plastic bag full of buai and explained once I get up to Cooktown to call into the house straight away with this plastic bag, they will know she sent me. "Aunty when you go up, you must stay with us ah!?" Within the research field I had made a critical link which facilitated a chance to embed myself in the home of one of the research participants. This link was forged not as a result of my ability to build rapport or because of good qualitative interview practices but because of a familial and social connection that had been made in the previous generation. This happens regularly in many cultural contexts and particularly in the PNG no matter which part of PNG you come from.

Michael[4] and I return to the market a day later to inform Aunty Clare that we were about to leave for Cooktown. As we approach her stall aunty looks at Michael and as she tilts her head engages in the quintessential PNG question, "Aunty, yu, where are you from"? Michael leans in to say hello "ah Daru, Western Province aunty." The usual light interrogation begins—Where? Which family? What village? Who is your mum? Every young and old person in PNG experiences this at some point in their life. The line of questions that almost force you to legitimize your connection to identity, place and land.

For those that grew up in the village there is a strong sense of ownership and confidence in answering these light "interrogation" questions. The lived experience of being surrounded by culture and place galvanizes this confidence. They know the families, the different relations, the ties and the protocols. For those like Michael and I, PNG born with a very strong connection to culture but living most of our lives in Australia there is a mixed reaction between ownership and unease. What if I misunderstood what I was told when I was younger? Can I remember all the families connected to mine? Can I remember other significant family names? Am I pronouncing this right? Should I know this aunty or her family?

Aunty continues to explain that Uncle Albert her husband "is Daru too." As Michael reaches into the depths of his mind, he recognizes the name "ah yes must be related to uncle . . . . Fred." "Yes, they are . . . I'll have to ask mum to just double check."

As we leave the market squinting still trying to arrange all the pieces of families and ties, we realize that somewhere there in the entangled milieu through the Manus married to Daru line that there is a kin connection. "So, all this time we have been calling each other brother in actual fact somewhere there along the lines we are wantoks!" Then as we drop back into our anthropology research mode we reflect and express "Well actually, technically we should refer to ourselves as kin."

Kin Beyond Family—Michael's Story

Describing the space that Robin and I share has evolved over several years of social connection between his family and mine as we both completed our undergraduate degrees. When Robin graduated, we celebrated his achievement together and when I graduated the following year, we all came together again to celebrate mine. Throughout our degree programs I would find myself helping out with gardening or renovations for Robin's mother (my Aunty) and his father (my Uncle) at the Kuranda house, moving rubbish or rocks or generally looking after the house itself. But also, I and the rest of the boys/brothers would be invited up to the "bush" house for barbeques and social gatherings on many occasions. We have all lived in the bush house for short periods of time and shared in family achievements and Christmas, Easter and holiday festivities.

While living and growing up together during our degree programs Robin and I have never expressed anything other than brotherhood and shared family relations we have come to know. In late 2016 Robin and I participated in an ongoing University research project which saw us travel to Cooktown to interview PNG families for the networks of care they maintain with PNG from the North Queensland region. The project aimed to identify how PNG communities not only in North Queensland but also back "home" in cared for their elderly across large spatial distances. Robin and I departed together confident we would be able to carry out the interviews with families in the Cooktown region. Robin and I were already buoyed by the fact the Freddy who grew up in Cooktown still had his Mother and Father living there together with one of his other siblings. Freddy was a fellow undergraduate from University one of our other PNG brothers. We were invited to stay with Aunty (Freddy's mum) while there and she was happy also to assist us in connecting with other local PNG community members.

Arriving in Cooktown, after Robin and I checked into our respective hotel, we visited Henry's mum and passed on greetings and Story of our travels and what we were both doing at university. At the time, Henry was away in Canada, so we caught up together on his movements and experiences as Robin and I had spoken to him together over Skype the prior week. Aunty also shared her experiences of helping out newcomers to the PNG community in Cooktown. She regularly connected to the younger wave of PNG community members as compared to her arrival in Cooktown in the late to early 1980's—decades before some of the newcomers. Aunty also shared the tensions

over the years of living and negotiating relationships in the PNG community of Cooktown and how at times it was a strain.

For Robin and I this being our first professional work project to engage in, the desire to move through the community as "academics" in the University vehicle felt attractive. The fieldwork opportunity gave us time to reflect on our prior respective undergraduate degree experiences and how we saw and where we found ourselves in Cooktown as "researchers." I was midway into my PhD at The University of Cambridge and had just completed my own fieldwork Robin was to begin his doctorate at the start of the following year. This research experience for both of us saw a shared pursuit of academic scholarship in a different way at this stage of our lives. One of the family members we were going to interview was related to Robin through his mother's side from Manus, PNG. What then emerged was that the Aunty from Manus Robin was related to and intending to interview is also married to a kin relation of mine on my mother's side from Daru, PNG. The research engagement that Robin and I shared revealed a deeper kin relationship we had to each other through this particular union.

The experience left us wondering what field work meant because the whole experience went from being part of an academic scholarly pursuit to simply providing an opportunity for family to connect and build relationships again. This experience helped us continue to learn about the multitude of meaningful relationships that existed within and beyond the undergraduate relationship Robin and I had originally fostered, extending as "researchers" in the field. Further, the research agenda fostered a meaningful and productive research engagement with community that would otherwise not have been accomplished had Robin and I not been part of the research team. What I also saw was is that how the large spaces and relationships that entangle our families as part of the wider PNG communities living in North Queensland; also embodied our (robin and I) researcher lived experience. The networks of care Robin and I belong to are fostered and maintained in ways that extend beyond close family connections. We invariably tend to think of these connections as primary sources of cultural value.

Making Connections and Engaging "Kinship" Pasin blo Luksave Helen's[5] Story

I was first introduced to Uncle Barry at the end of 2014, by another PNG Uncle Dom. Uncle Dom from New Ireland (PNG) and his Australian wife, Aunty Kate were introduced to me through other PNG connections, and as it happened, we lived in the same area. We always interacted with each other socially, and as a PNG "daughter/granddaughter," I would check in with them to see if I could assist around their home. Both are retired and have on-going medical hardship. I eventually extended an invitation to them to share their story of planning and care as older members of the PNG community. While they were considering this, they also suggested that I get in touch with Uncle Barry. I already knew Uncle Barry as he had attended a community meeting (organized by the Planning

for Later Life Project, Nov 2014). At that meeting, Uncle Barry had been very vocal about the need for a community center to specifically cater for members of the PNG community in Cairns. This was a point very important to him, one which he would repeatedly articulate over the course of our numerous interactions.

Early on in my meetings with Uncle Barry I had asked about his family connections, a typical thing to do amongst PNG people as a means of relating to, acknowledging and placing people i.e. good "pasin" in showing "luksave" for the connections that might exist. I have a very close personal friend akin to a sister to me. Having shared our formative years together, I know her immediate family quite well. I would consider her parents as though they were my own, and therefore the interactions I have with them are similar to the way I interact with my own. Likewise, as a "sister" any relations of hers that I meet or have met, I would also consider these extensions of my relationship to her and her family, therefore they are my "relations."

Why is this relevant? Well, it turns out Uncle Barry is my friends paternal Uncle! Making that connection provided a space to acknowledge and recognize the frame of interaction Uncle Barry and I would then use in our interactions. He was not simply a "PNG Uncle" from the community in Cairns, but he was more closely related through my friendship with his niece. Therefore, I am bound to relate to him as I would with any other older male kin who I could call uncle, father, and grandfather. Indeed, my relating to him as "Uncle" deepened (and continues to deepen), reaffirms, forms and reforms our connection with each encounter transforming our connection from simply an extension of kinship networks, to solidify our relationship more like that of close kin or family.

When we sat down for our conversations and storying, I would be welcomed into his home where food was already prepared specifically so we would share a meal together. The sharing of food for PNG people (as with many other groups of people) is an important tangible form of mutual acknowledgment and recognition. Uncle would often say "this is one of our daughters; she is from University; she is doing research" when introducing me to his own family and other acquaintances who he actively tried to recruit for the project. In like manner, I would bring something for us to share during our meetings in reciprocal acknowledgment and recognition.

Analysis of Storying Method

The assumptions of storying as a method highlight that when researchers begin the process of determining analysis and write up, what constitutes the expression of constructing knowledge can be broad. Indeed in identifying some tenets of Storywork approaches; the guide of respectful, collective and accountable principles are a requisite aspect of developing Storywork (Archibald, 2008; Phillips & Bunda, 2018). Our research context would extend to suggest mutuality, relationality and kinship are also important in not only the initial engagement and interaction but guide the accountability to analysis and write up of data.

Using the examples drawn on in our research, kin terms such as *Aunty* or *Uncle* were used in practice to acknowledge a relationship between researchers and participants while undertaking field research. In this way by being explicit in our writing or storying of such terms we described how mutuality emerges. Indeed, the notion of mutual recognition suggests that a person's action is constructed in the understanding that a reciprocal action will be afforded in return (Honneth & Anderson, 1995; Honneth & Farrell, 1997; Honneth & Joas, 1988). Utilizing such honorifics is a mode of *pasin* in social interaction between younger researchers and older participants. It indicates respectful engagement between the two, while setting an unspoken precedence for the type of social interaction as a way of *luksave*. The mutual recognition of engaging such kin terms enabled an important connection between researcher and participant. Furthermore, it enabled a (writing) mode to explore the extent of connection between research and participant which meant that other people were made known in the expression and accountability toward an emerging interaction. The existence of peoples in context and interaction further solidifies the initial point at which mutual recognition is achieved.

Hukula (2017) describes the notions of kinship and relatedness and as such exemplify the concepts of *pasin* and *luksave*. In our research, the transnational experience of PNG people living in Australia, engaging as researchers and participants is *akin* to the experience of trans-local PNG people. As people embed themselves in new spaces and places, whether rural to urban, or PNG to Australia, they operate in these fixed spaces with an underlying imperative to create "kin-like relations" (p. 159). The purpose of which is to "inform ideas of relatedness" which shape social action within kin-like relations. Gow (1995) and Hukula (2017) suggest, kinship and relatedness are not bound in genealogical connectedness, rather they are built from connecting factors such as, same place, space and "home"—in the transnational experience of PNG people abroad in Australia, home is PNG, in the broader sense. The implicitness of connection is further solidified when kin-like relations are recognized; social interactions occur, and further connections and relatedness are acknowledged and built upon.

The Provenance of Place and Story

Developing the provenance of and to place through the three stories, describes and extends on the different ways *pasin* and *luksave* ensure respectful relations and people emerge within the research process. The spatial assumptions of storying involves localizing meaningful connections between story teller and story listener, enabling relationality to emerge between a teller and listener (Backhaus, 2019). Hence place expresses a layered understanding of connections between people and place which encapsulates an understanding of relationality through identity, interaction and community (Tuck & McKenzie, 2014).

Emergence of relations and people within place attends to the assumptions of *pasin* as a way of knowing and being emplaced. *Luksave* operates as a way of acknowledging principled relationality exists. *Luksave* emerges as people do as an enactive process of acknowledging place within the respective interactions described. Indeed, Michael and Robin's story highlight the importance of engaging, building, establishing and maintaining relationships as part of the research process, but also as an accountable and transparent intention toward being Papua New Guinean and the localities acknowledged where meaningful and respectful relations emerge.

Storying the provenance of place through our own reflection on engagement in research practice, hence moves the outcomes such as formation of kin relationship; to a focus on the very nature of instigating storying within our everyday. Consequently, storying emplaces engagement and enactment of a form of relationality existing among PNG people in the everyday communities shared. Relationality then is about acknowledging *gudpla pasin blo luksave* [good form of acknowledgment/accountability]. Engaging and enacting this awareness in the research process subsequently guides the researcher and participant in particular action, behavior, language and speech.

Extending on these assumptions, emplacing meaningful relationality through *gudpla pasin bilong luksave* also acknowledges the intent of place making. Place matters for peoples who acknowledge forms of disconnection whether through migration, displacement or intergenerational history. Michael's story was written in England, as a doctoral candidate while attending to the PNG research project in Australia. Concurrently he was engaged in conversations with other Papua New Guineans writing this paper based in Papua New Guinea and Australia. In Helen's story there was never an expectation that research exchanges were framed by an articulated or prearranged environment of data collection. Indeed, Robin's accountability to Manus Island was fostered within Australia and the localities where Manusian's emplace and enact relationality.

These instances highlight a mutual understanding of *pasin* between peoples allowing interactions to be solidified in the process of storying. In this way, sharing of information and news emerged not only between Michael, Helen and Robin but also in the case of Helen and Uncle Barry in whatever environment interaction occurred or for that matter Robin and Aunty Clare. Further *pasin blo luksave* distinguishes a form of seeing and knowing, however it is not simply seeing and knowing, it defines ways of being relational. The assumption frames the way in which people enter into interactions with one another across places and through relationships to enact meaningful place making interactions.

Permeability of Research Boundaries

We introduced *pasin* and *luksave* as active forms of conceptual engagement in the research process unique to the PNG experience. We felt this enabled a form of methodological fluidity

to the ways we were contextualizing our research and the everyday lived experiences we acknowledged. In considering this notion of fluidity, method as permeable layers, guided us to think through the boundaries or tensions we were tasked to negotiate as both researchers and Papua New Guineans. By considering the permeability of different layers in method, we identified unique and novel ways to ensure rigor in our research method while ensuring such rigor accounted for the respect and responsibility toward people, place, community and relations our research project endeavored to illustrate.

Further, the proclivity to maintain a "known" subset of social interactions (e.g. Bottero, 2009) while attending to the everyday of lived experience reveal the challenges of rendering the everyday. In Michael's story he felt the limitations of the insider/outsider process. Patricia Hill Collins (1986, 2000) and others intimate the tension of the *outsider-within*—whereby the notion reveals the challenges in this instance of not marginality of indigeneity or nativenes but marginality within the research process to define what and how relations are constituted. Michael was pushed to rethink how and why the everyday is reconstituted within the research process and to question what was being empowered and for whom. He saw that the relational qualities were contiguous within a sense of permeability and fluidity beyond the traditional dichotomies that tend to frame and bracket kin relationships or relational qualities of interaction (e.g. Bottero, 2009; Mosko, 2013).

Helpfully, associations within the notions of *pasin* and *luksave* guided how we attended to developing a standard and/or ethical assurance for interpersonal interactions as opposed to the way's previous scholarship intimated. In the three Stories enacting *pasin* and *luksave* involves exploring relationality to place as much as between persons. In Helen's story, as a means of situating herself to Uncle Barry, in their initial meeting, she asked who his family were, where he grew up, and where he had lived in PNG. All three Stories drew on place—*the marketplace*, *Manus Island*, *Cambridge*, *provincial localities in PNG*, *Kuranda*, *Cooktown* and *the bush house*. Developing the provenance of place in stories ensures the qualities of relation building for identifying, defining and developing connection; acknowledgment and accountability.

Gudpla pasin bilong luksave *and Gender (Acknowledging good pasin beyond gendered forms).* In Helen's story complex flows of relationality emerge to challenge the conceptual assumptions that define the boundaries of sociality and gendered perceptions of interaction. Contextually, Helen, as a female PNG researcher, highlights it is often hard to articulate (or be heard) and such research experiences invariably lead scholarship to argue these experiences typify forms of subordination or matters of deference based on notions of masculinity and inherent patriarchal power (Jolly et al., 2012). Rather, *gudpla pasin bilong luksave* highlights the importance of ensuring forms of agential capacity emerge within a sphere of interaction that would otherwise engender a space with assumptions of masculinity and or patriarchy. An agential cue to guide the intentionality within individual interactions lies within the premise of

acknowledging our interactions operate on the tenets of mutual respect, informality and *luksave*. In Helen's story her relating to Barry as an Uncle, places him in a particular position of deference to herself. Additionally, this parallels Robin's story describing an assumption of maintaining respectful relationality between himself and Aunty Clare.

In Helen's Story she acknowledges Uncle Barry's status as elder and as male, within their interactions and in the language and speech used in their conversation. Recognizing him as kin also effectively requires that she engages with him in a particular manner that is deemed respectful and appropriate. In return, he acknowledges Helen as "daughter" which recognizes reciprocal respect and engaged Uncle Barry to enact a particular manner of action and behavior in his language use and speech. Equally, Robin's story intimates the relational qualities of acknowledging "aunty" not only as a sign of deference between male and female participants but also as a devolving process of highlighting *gudpla pasin* (good ways of being) whereby regardless of male or female relationality of "aunty" respectfully connects people and relations.

Acknowledging good *pasin* beyond notions of gender speaks to an embedded sense of connectivity based within the initial development of personal relationships that engage a framework of interaction between "kin" (Neuendorf, in press). As exampled between Helen and Uncle Barry, each acknowledges "kin" but inherently understand *luksave* as an important mode of relationality between PNG researcher and PNG research participants. *Luksave* as such acknowledges a respectful, reciprocal transactability and translatability of conversation, and affords comfort and agency in storying.

Comfort itself encourages the contribution of candid narratives between participant and researcher. This meaningful expression further solidifies kinship through the professional roles that we inhabit but also the inherency of acknowledging the ways we identify as Papua New Guineans and the longer-term accountabilities toward people, relationships and communities we engage beyond the research experience. Indeed, in Robin and Michael's storying process, this was revealed in a similar fashion through those first meetings at the market and the different ways they both together with Aunties, negotiated and navigated "kinship" to also identify relationality between people and place. Further, Helen and Uncle Barry fostered through meals, conversation and the everyday engagement the ground on which research data and the everyday could be facilitated.

Pasin blo Luksave: *Acknowledging good intentions*. *Pasin blo luksave* enacts a formative and relational intentionality to acknowledge a measure of fulfilment and fair conduct within an exchange between persons in PNG. The notion of *pasin* and *luksave* are integral to and set within the social relationships that people adhere to and center themselves within daily life. Hukula (2019, p. 169) writes that "*in everyday talk an ideal person is someone who has pasin and luksave . . . someone who greets and acknowledges others as they go about their daily lives.*" *Pasin* represents a way of being, "*in which persons make claims to and reveal people and relations*" as part of a *"moral evaluation"* (Hukula, 2019, p. 169). *Pasin* and *luksave* are mutually inclusive, as Hukula acknowledges, to have one you must have the other as a functional intentionality of emerging recognition and acknowledgment of and between people.

Hukula's (2019) assumption of an ideal person and how such evaluations emerge, help us in part to suggest the *tok* (talk) or a speech act responds as a function of *pasin* and *luksave* as the evaluative process emerges. We suggest *tok* or talk is evident within the notion of testimony. Testimony itself defines a sense of principled communication between a speaker and an evaluation of the speakers' information by the listener. Similarly, the way a storyteller and story-listener come to understand the merit of their ways of being in relation not only to place but each other in the dialogue (Backhaus, 2019). The nature of testimony can be thought of as a way of identifying meaning communicated through the intentions of why such meanings are shared between speaker and listener (Lackey, 2006a).

Lackey (2006b, p. 13) suggests "testimony can serve as a source of belief or knowledge for others" in that the hearer considers the relevancy of information offered by the speaker. It is this relevancy that offers us a way to consider how greeting and acknowledging someone's testimony or *tok* and the way such testimony enters the evaluative process of *pasin* and *luksave*. In Uncle Barry's *tok* he intimates: *"this is one of our daughters; she is from University; she is doing research."* Equally, in Robin's story, Aunty's *tok* intimates to Robin: *"Aunty when you go up, you must stay with us ah!?"* Here we focus on the meaningfulness and emergent nature of knowing, and the ways such knowing is communicated and shared, to help extend on the assumptions of *pasin* and *luksave*. By defining what constitutes good intentions between speakers and listeners of testimony, our research can account for the *tok* or talk we write into our research as both principled and acknowledged through the evaluative research process we embed.

Conclusion

In light of these findings, *pasin* and *luksave* ought not to be seen as patronage but an expression of interpretive conceptualness that guides PNG researchers and relatable others. We need to think toward clearer aims of a succinct relationality that engages with our sense of being and the ways we ought to define our interactions. Social sciences and the methodologies we share space within this paper may find salience with the conceptualizations employed to define the other. Yet contextually, as PNG researchers we embody latent qualities of relationality through intergenerational connections that need to find an embedded reality within such disciplinary spaces. These are the storied threads that guide our negotiation with research in a more meaningful way of knowing and being to promote not only clearer scholarship but also ethical assurances toward the methods we do ultimately adopt in our research practice. Furthermore, we attended to some assumptions of

decolonization within this guise and question what such agendas mean for the Papua New Guinean and the Oceanic context more broadly if we maintain a mindset to deploy problematic assumptions within our research approaches.

ORCID iD

Vincent Backhaus 🔟 https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3376-8089

Notes

1. The use of we and our throughout this manuscript refers to the identified collective authorship of this paper together with the lived and shared experiences. This intention ensures we can enable and further the epistemic and methodological assumptions of pasin and luksave.
2. Pseudonym for authors name.
3. All names of research participants have been changed.
4. Pseudonym for authors name.
5. Pseudonym for authors name.

Reference

Archibald, J.-A. (2008). *Indigenous storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body, and spirit*. UBC Press.

Archibald, J.-A., Lee-Morgan, J., & De Santolo, J. (Eds.). (2019). *Decolonizing research*. Zed Books.

Backhaus, V. S. (2019). *Situating the countried existence of critical indigenous pedagogies & aboriginal and Torres strait islander student's ways of learning* [Thesis, University of Cambridge]. https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.35719

Bottero, W. (2009). Relationality and social interaction. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *60*(2), 399–420. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2009.01236.x

Brettell, C. B. (1997). Blurred genres and blended voices: Life history, biography, autobiography, and the auto/ethnography of women's lives. In D. Reed-Danahay (Ed.), *Auto/ethnography: Rewriting the self and the social* (pp. 223–246). Berg.

Brinkmann, S., Jacobsen, M. H., & Kristiansen, S. (2014). Historical overview of qualitative research in the social sciences. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 17–43). Oxford University Press. http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199811755-e-017

Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S., & Smith, L. T. (Eds.). (2008). *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. Sage.

Dogimab, M. A. (2009). *An examination of culture as a protective mechanism against gender based violence: A case study in Mt Bosavi, Papua New Guinea: A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy* (Development Studies), Massey University. [Thesis, Massey University]. https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/1064

Gow, P. (1995). Land, people and paper in western Amazonia. In E. Hirsch & M. O'Hanlon (Eds.), *The anthropology of landscape: Perspectives on place and space* (pp. 43–62). Clarendon Press.

Hau'ofa, E. (2008). *We are the ocean*. University of Hawai'i Press.

Hill Collins, P. (1986). Learning from the outsider within: The sociological significance of Black feminist thought. *Social Problems*, *33*(6), 19.

Hill Collins, P. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Honneth, A., & Anderson, J. (1995). *The struggle for recognition: The moral grammar of social conflicts*. Polity Press.

Honneth, A., & Farrell, J. (1997). Recognition and moral obligation. *Social Research*, *64*(1), 16–35. JSTOR.

Honneth, A., & Joas, H. (1988). *Social action and human nature*. Cambridge University Press.

Hukula, F. (2015). *Blok laif: An ethnography of a Mosbi settlement* [Thesis, University of St Andrews]. https://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/handle/10023/11367

Hukula, F. (2017). Kinship and relatedness in urban Papua New Guinea. *Journal de La Société Des Océanistes*, *144–145*, 159–170. https://doi.org/10.4000/jso.7756

Hukula, F. (2019). Morality and a Mosbi market. *Oceania*, *89*(2), 168–181. https://doi.org/10.1002/ocea.5216

Ingold, T. (2012). Toward an ecology of materials. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *41*(1), 427–442. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-081309-145920

Jolly, M., Stewart, C., & Brewer, C. (2012). *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea*. Canberra, Australia: ANU ePress. https://doi.org/10.22459/EVPNG.07.2012

Kaiku, P. (2011). *Rethinking youth bulge theory and threat discourse in Melanesia: Listening in, and connecting with young people in Papua new guinea* [University of Hawaii]. http://hdl.handle.net/10125/24268

Kirkness, V. J., & Barnhardt, R. (1991). The Four R's—Respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 30(3), 1–15. JSTOR.

Koitsiwe, M. (2013). Prospects and challenges of becoming an indigenous researcher. In D. M. Mertens, F. Cram, & B. Chilisa (Eds.), *Indigenous pathways into social research: Voices of a new generation* (pp. 261–275). Left Coast Press.

Kovach, M., Carriere, J., Barrett, M. J., Montgomery, H., & Gillies, C. (2013). Stories of diverse identity locations in indigenous research. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 6(4), 487–509. https://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2013.6.4.487

Kula-Semos, M. (2009). *Seeking transformative partnerships: Schools, university and the practicum in Papua New Guinea* [PhD thesis, James Cook University]. https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/15463/

Lackey, J. (2006a). Knowing from testimony. *Philosophy Compass*, 1(5), 432–448. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-9991.2006.00035.x

Lackey, J. (2006b). The nature of testimony. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 87(2), 177–197. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0114.2006.00254.x

Long, N. J. (2015). Sociality in anthropology. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 854–860). Elsevier.

Long, N. J., & Moore, H. L. (Eds.). (2012). *Sociality: New directions*. Berghahn Books.

Mar, T. B. (2016). *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous globalisation and the ends of empire*. Cambridge University Press.

Mertens, D. M., Cram, F., & Chilisa, B. (2013). *Indigenous pathways into social research: Voices of a new generation*. Left Coast Press.

Meyer, M. A. (2013). The context within: My journey into research. In D. M. Mertens, C. Fiona, & B. Chilisa (Eds.), *Indigenous pathways into social research: Voices of a new generation* (pp. 249–260). Left Coast Press.

Mosko, M. S. (2013). Dividuals, individuals, or possessive individuals? Recent transformations of North Mekeo commoditization, personhood, and sociality. In F. Mccormack & K. Barclay (Eds.), *Research in economic anthropology* (Vol. 33, pp. 167–198). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S0190-1281(2013)0000033009

Neuendorf, N. (in press). Oceania.

Papacharissi, Z. (2015). We Have Always Been Social. *Social Media + Society*, 1(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305115581185

Passingan, S. (2013). A native Papua New Guinea researcher. In D. M. Mertens, F. Cram, & B. Chilisa (Eds.), *Indigenous pathways into social research* (pp. 353–366). Left Coast Press.

Phillips, L. G., & Bunda, T. (2018). *Research through, with and as storying*. Routledge. https://cam.ldls.org.uk/vdc_100053868247.0x000001

Poser, A. v. (2013). *Foodways and empathy: Relatedness in a Ramu river society*. Berghahn Books.

Reed-Danahay, D. (Ed.). (1997). *Auto/ethnography: Rewriting the self and the social*. Berg.

Rigney, L.-I. (1999). Internationalization of an indigenous anticolonial cultural critique of research methodologies: A guide to indigenist research methodology and its principles. *Wicazo Sa Review*, 14(2), 109–121.

Rooney, M. N. (2019). Sharing what can be sold: Women Haus Maket vendors in port Moresby's settlements. *Oceania*, 89(2), 154–167. https://doi.org/10.1002/ocea.5217

Sai, A. (2007). *Tamot: Masculinities in transition in Papua New Guinea* [PhD thesis, Victoria University]. http://www.vu.edu.au/research

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Zed books.

Sökefeld, M. (1999). Debating self, identity, and culture in anthropology. *Current Anthropology*, 40(4), 417–448. https://doi.org/10.1086/200042

Toren, C. (2012). Imagining the world that warrants our imagination: The revelation of ontogeny. *Cambridge Anthropology; Oxford*, 30(1), 64–79. http://dx.doi.org.elibrary.jcu.edu.au/10.3167/ca.2012.300107

Tuck, E., & McKenzie, M. (2014). *Place in research: Theory, methodology, and methods*. Routledge.