Barbara Poco (00:00):

The feast, a conversation that I've personally have been looking forward to very much. I want to begin by acknowledging that we're meeting on Ghana land and to acknowledge the traditional and ongoing relationship of the garner people with this land. And also to welcome in particular, the garner people who are here and the indigenous people who are here and to acknowledge the Witcher and the other indigenous leaders who are with us, which just said, I try to be everywhere at the moment and the media wanted to be everywhere. And we're just glad you're here for this session.

Barbara Poco (00:42):

[Inaudible]

Barbara Poco (00:43):

My name is Barbara Poco. And my job today is just to get us underway and then a conversation will be unfolding between Wilmer and Sarah. I'm I'm expecting that their conversation will go for half an hour ish, and then you'll have your chance to, to ask questions. I'm going to introduce them and then ask to just ask a couple of questions to set them off. Not that they need a lot of help, I'm sure. But I want to first introduce Wilma who some of you will have heard this morning in what I think was a very powerful session about the current issues around indigenous questions around the world, including in Australia, Wilma was for 10 years, the principal fi chief of the Cherokee nation in the U S and the documents that I have say that she is an expert in governance. I've, I've read most of Wilmer's biography, and that's a serious understatement about the practical work that Wilmer's contributed in building her community of Cherokee in many, many different ways in the form of very practical initiatives, around health clinics and employment creation, and many other initiatives and issues that have been around children and, and health issues. She has been recognized in America. It's always surprised to us in us as Australians, that there are so many good Americans who recognize progressive other Americans and that

Barbara Poco (02:10):

The president, the

Barbara Poco (02:11):

Presidential medal of honor is, is, as Phillip said this morning, a very important marker of, of Wilma's standing in her own community. She's been inducted into many halls of fame, the women's hall of fame the minority business hall of fame, the Oklahoma women's hall of fame, and many, many, many of those. And she has 18 honorary doctorates, Dr. Dr. D [inaudible], You know, it goes on and on, but for those of you who will want to know more about Wilma, I can recommend her biography. and also I haven't read it, but Sarah has every day as a good day, her 2004 book

Barbara Poco (03:03):

Beautifully, beautifully modeled by Sarah.

Sarah Maddison (03:07):

I wasn't going to be an academic. I was going to be a hand model. We can compete with those comedians.

Barbara Poco (03:19):

Wilma's last conversation like this was in may, and it was with Gloria, Gloria Steinem and Alice Walker. And so we have big Mike for mark to start off with after I've introduced Sarah, is that you've been a leader for a long time in an indigenous community. And I'd just like your reflections on what makes a good indigenous leader, what you think a leader needs in the kind of environment you've been leading into flourish. What have been the things that have been critical for you as a leader? Okay. And Sarah, Sarah is an academic, but much more than an academic she's at the university of new south Wales, a feminist and activist, and a very powerful writer on many, many questions. I'm particularly fond of her collaboration with Clive Hamilton silencing dissent, which I recommend to folks. Cool.

Barbara Poco (04:19):

She also wrote with Sean scammer activist wisdom, but I'm particularly looking forward to her next book, which is pursuing the issue of which is, seems to be a theme in your thinking about the creative political tension in the differences amongst participants in a movement, in a social movement and how those creative tensions can be mobilized and worked to, to move a Mo movement forward. Sarah said to me, after this morning session with a little bit of frustration in her voice, in a way we, we heard from a panel about those issues. We know so much about where we're at from, from the white scientist who had such a strong set of statements about the issues around indigenous, the situation for indigenous people across the spectrum. International, we know so much about the problem. We just haven't got the guts to do what needs to be done. So my question for Sarah is why haven't we got the guts and what will it take to get it?

Barbara Poco (05:20):

I'm just going to sit back and let the conversation flow. So

Sarah Maddison (05:28):

My ideas about leadership mostly come from my own experience and also from serving for a while on the, on the board of the leadership academy at the university of Maryland college park. And also just the incredible opportunity I've had to meet some world-class leaders and just observe them. And they're, you know, they're, everybody has different ideas about what are the best attributes of leadership. But I think that that one of the most important attributes is that people who are in leadership positions should view themselves as a facilitator and that they should be able to build teams and build teams of people that have a very diverse set of views. I think it's very important whether you're building a health clinic or whether you're thinking about national security issues to have people who don't all think alike, and particularly they have people who think differently than the person in a leadership role.

Sarah Maddison (06:40):

So I think, I think the way people view themselves as important. And so, so being a facilitator of a team and having the ability to build a team, I think is a great attribute. And I think women are better at that. I don't think that women are at least women of my generation were not acculturated to make unilateral decisions and charge ahead. And so we see things in a more interconnected way and, and, and so it's very easy for us to, to build teams. The other attribute that I think is a very important attribute is of leadership is compassion. And I don't think that compassion as a component of leadership is just important when you're involved in, in helping kinds of organizations and institutions, but in every institution and whether you're a corporate leader or running universe that I think compassion is very, very important.

Sarah Maddison (07:38):

And obviously passion is important. People who are passionate about their work view, challenges and barriers as just that as a challenge, and they'll figure out a way to get over, around or under a barrier instead of of using a barrier as a reason to give up people with a lot of passion never, ever, ever give up. I think that having good ethics and not having not having, I guess, having a seamlessness between your personal life and your professional life and not compartmentalizing part of parts of your life. And, and, and, and I, and I guess that the way I can explain that best in, in my own situation, when I was first elected, I like to have a glass of wine with dinner. And when I was first elected, I decided that during the entire term, that term or terms that I served as the elected leader of my people, that I would never drink alcohol, because I thought that if someone saw me having a glass of wine or a young person, they might misinterpret that in some way.

Sarah Maddison (08:52):

That was my decision to, to make sure that neither in public, nor in private for the entire 12 years, I was an office. I never had any kind of alcohol. And even when people went off to party after a big convention or something like that, I always remembered that I represented the people and that, that I, and that I needed to conduct myself appropriately. So I think ethics conducting yourself in a inappropriate way is very important. And there are lots of other attributes, creativity, innovation that are important. And I also think that focus is important. The biggest mistake I've seen leaders make, whether they're running a parent committee or leading a nation, is the fact that they try to do too many things. And the small things become as important as the large things. And so if they could focus on a set of goals and then remain focused on those goals, no matter what's going on, I think that's a really important attribute of leadership.

Sarah Maddison (09:51):

And finally, for me, what, what has made the, probably the most difference in my, in my work, whatever I've done besides having always never accomplished anything without a team is the fact that I'm a positive person that went that I always, I always try to see the possibilities and try to see, try to look at the future with hope and try to I'm the person when everybody says, oh, we can't do that. We tried that before. And it didn't work. I'm always the person who says, yeah, I bet we haven't done that. Or, yeah, but this is a different group or yeah. But, and I think that by and large people who don't want to be around or, or be involved in a team of, with someone who's facilitating the team, that always is the cup half empty. I think people want to see someone who can articulate a clear and hopeful vision for the future, and also help them figure out how to, to to make that vision become a reality. So of all the things I think being, being positive and being forward thinking is, is very, very important. I've been to countless meetings where people just go through a litany of every problem since the beginning of mankind with no ideas for solutions, then they all leave and we're just all depressed. So, so I think being positive is a very important attribute of leadership.

Sarah Maddison (11:18):

No, I, I agree with that wholeheartedly and I've made it part of my personal philosophy in my, my job in particular to, to never go forward with a problem, but to always go forward with with a solution, which can be, take a little bit longer, but you're much more likely to see a result from the powers that be, if you can offer them a way forward. When to come back to your question, Bob, about term, why we're not prepared to do it. I mean, I was so struck that this morning, but you know what has worked in, in your nation, what has turned your people around? Karen, [inaudible] articulated that from a scientific

perspective of what she's been able to go and measure in indigenous communities. We know all the answers, we know how to make this better, but we don't.

Sarah Maddison (12:14):

And I think there are, there are I think two parts to that one is that as non-indigenous people, we are not prepared to be uncomfortable. So with our place on this land we live most of our days, we got to work, we got to school, we sleep in our beds. We don't, we don't think about what it really means to have our place in this land. And for me, part of that journey towards being uncomfortable with that it, it's easier if you go to to remote communities. It's easier if you go to the far north of Australia to communities that are living a more traditional lifestyle to say, well, this is Aboriginal land. You can, you can see it. You can also distance yourself from it. You can say, well, that's, that's Aboriginal land there. I can see those people living their traditional life.

Sarah Maddison (13:14):

That doesn't really affect me to bring that understanding back to your urban dwelling and to say, my house is built on Aboriginal land. My workplace is built on Aboriginal land. My children go to school on Aboriginal land. I am complicit in profiting from this theft of that land from Aboriginal people to really understand that in a deep and personal way is very discomforting. If it's not discomforting, you're not really getting it. And I think that certainly our politicians are not prepared to be discomforted in that way, because this means really acknowledging the wrongs of our history. It means I was thinking this afternoon about about colonization as this this elephant that has, you know, trampled over this beautiful landscape about has trampled over indigenous communities. It's probably a stupid, dumb based. It's not hasn't necessarily been malicious in all of its manifestations.

Sarah Maddison (14:24):

It has just charged across this country causing untold damage and harm. And now we've let that elephant become the elephant in the room. When we talk about what's hurting communities in the Northern territory or elsewhere, it is still that damage caused by that rampaging across this countryside. That is what's wrong. That is what's causing that psychic pain in indigenous communities that we see manifest in so many ways. And to confront that means undoing aspects of that, that history making things right, dealing with unfinished business. And to me, these conversations around policy solutions around interventions, around throwing money at a problem, there is no policy fix for indigenous Australia. There is no neat package that will work. It is a far more fundamental rethinking that we need to do as a nation. And that's why we, we don't have the guts to do that yet.

Sarah Maddison (15:34):

Hmm. What's hard for me, I think, and thinking about this new proposed intervention and what you just talked about is it's hard for me to understand my, why people don't understand. It's so simple. It works all over the world. If you want a solution to any problem in the world, you sit down and you figure out in partnership with people, what the problem is and what the solution is, and you get them to, to be involved in it. And you bring whatever resources you have to the table. You move forward for a long, long period of time. And so in our country, that's how we've been able to start to, to, to move the social enough indicators in a positive way, is that finally through it is part of a formal governmental policy that tribes are given much more self-determination and self-governance, and can take charge of, and begin to resolve some of their own problems.

Sarah Maddison (16:40):

But, but I think you're right. I think that they I think that in this country and most countries of the world, I don't think that indigenous people are really in the consciousness of people. And so they don't, or they think of them more as people from the past or people that are somehow separate from them. And they're kind of over there. And until everybody sees that we're all connected and that it's in everybody's best interest to try to solve the problems. We're not going to move forward when indigenous people, anywhere in the world do better, everybody does better. And the lives of indigenous people don't play themselves out and some kind of vacuum. And they're the lives of indigenous people in this country are, and their history and their future is tied to all of Australia.

Sarah Maddison (17:37):

Absolutely. And I think there's a great desire on the part of probably most non-indigenous people, but definitely on the part of our politicians to, to deny that, that reality. And to think that if the rest of the nation is prosperous, we can ignore this other human tragedy. And, you know, I don't want to only focus on indigenous disadvantage because that's not the whole story of indigenous people in Australia by, by any means. But it is certainly true that until we make things right we are diminished as a nation and the fact that so many Australians are prepared to live with with that deeply, deeply saddens me. And I suppose one of the things that struck me in reading this book was the similarities, the commonalities in these struggles between indigenous people in Australia and, and native nations in the United States and indigenous peoples all over the world who have suffered the effects of colonization and who are still struggling for, for all the same things.

Sarah Maddison (18:52):

The aspirations are so common, their struggles are for sovereignty, therefore land, therefore language, they for culture there for self-determination and self-management and, and those aspirations are also the things that will make them well, as, as, as you know, as Kerry talked about this morning, most things are not just about if we think about some of the, some of the ways those things have been diminished in Australia in, in recent years from being described as a black armband view of history or a former federal minister, Amanda, Vanstone talking about traditional communities and remote communities, there's cultural museums. Like they, they're not things of our past theirs are not part of our only a part of our history there a part of our, our present. And they're absolutely a part of our, our future is that, that there must be recognition for, for these things, if we truly want Australia and Australia's indigenous people to be well and happy and whole again. And that's, that seems to be your experience in the same way. I suppose one question I have for you is whether you believe there would ever be an end to those struggles or whether these are just a permanent part of the modern world, a permanent part of where the decolonizing or post colonial times, I just have a permanent struggle for indigenous peoples.

Sarah Maddison (20:27):

I think it take regrettably it'll be a permanent struggle, but I also believe that whether indigenous people are in Japan or India, Guatemala, which they all, or Australia, or the U S that they'll never give up the, and that a hundred years from now, or 500 years from now, there'll still be indigenous people in the world who still are together and who still have maintained some of the, some of the old values and the sense of community that has sustained them since the beginning of, of time. And I think that, I think that most people, many people in the us are good people. I think that, and that's probably true here in Australia. I think that they just don't have information. They don't know that it's impossible to

understand the contemporary issues in indigenous communities, if you have no historical context or cultural context for thinking about them.

Sarah Maddison (21:37):

And so you just look at them as some horrible problem and that you don't want to have anything to do with it that, you know, well, that's so difficult that it will take years to solve, but you have no context for thinking about that. So I guess one of the ways I think that we can help is that we can produce more indigenous filmmakers, journalists, museum, curators, educators, historians, and people who can help help people, not only understand the contemporary lives of people, but, and have some that difficult conversations you're talking about, but also understand why, why the culture is important. And and why not just for indigenous people, but for the world.

Sarah Maddison (22:20):

I think that's true. I suppose part of my current frustration is my sense that it isn't, it is an individual responsibility that we have as the people who have done and continue to profit from indigenous dispossession. It is an individual responsibility to access the knowledge that is there. And, and it is vast. I mean, my, my thinking journey in this area, I guess, started in my very first job when I was about 20 years old and I was a drug and alcohol worker and Redfern community in Sydney with a very strong and large Aboriginal population community. And I was very naive and poorly educated. Middle-Class white girl. And I remember having this slap in the head realization one day that these kids I was working with were the children of people who had been taken away from their own families.

Sarah Maddison (23:27):

And this was before the bringing them home report. It was before the term stolen generation was a part of our, our everyday discourse. But I realized that these children were growing up in families where the parents had had no experience of, you know, normal family life. They have grown up in institutions. And so the challenges for them as parents were immense. And it, it highlighted for me how little I knew about the history of this country. And so I said about learning and I started reading some of the, the truth of the history of this country. And I, I had that typical white reaction or feeling absolutely paralyzed by this knowledge, by this, this guilt, this sense of awful complicity as a, as a, as a white person. And I didn't know what to do with that. I didn't have the skills to know where to go with that. And I was literally lying awake at night, feeling physically ill and just completely horrified by what I was reading. And I eventually went to speak to an older Aboriginal woman on you in the red Fern area. And I said to her, you know, this is how I'm feeling. I feel so guilty as a white person. And she put her arm around me and she said, don't be guilty dot, just be really, really angry.

Barbara Poco (24:53):

And she's

Sarah Maddison (24:56):

Right. You know, there's no point sitting around feeling guilty as a white person, but we do have to take responsibility. There is, you know, I think we are blessed in Australia as I'm sure you are with this extraordinary range of indigenous scholars, Tracy Bunda, who was on the panel this morning has got a chapter in this amazing new collection of, of of work by indigenous scholars. Every chapter in this book edited by Eileen Martin Robinson called sovereign subjects is written by an indigenous scholar from around Australia. The standard of their scholarship is you know, beyond excellent. It's extraordinary and

challenging work, but it is discomforting for non-indigenous people to read it. And it's about the, I think the knowledge is, is there. And I think it's about taking responsibility as individuals to, to go out and find it because the other thing I hear from Aboriginal people all the time is we're tired. We don't have the energy to educate you, white fellows. You know, you, you do the learning, you go and get the knowledge, then come and talk to us and, you know, fair,

Sarah Maddison (26:05):

Cool. Well, I, I disagree a little bit because I think that, I think that it is the individual responsibility of, of non-indigenous people to learn about indigenous people, but also think it's the responsibility of indigenous people to educate people around them. And I think that it I've found quite a number of teachers who would be quite willing to teach more about the history of native people in the U S if they had their curriculum. And so we need to step up and help them develop the curriculum. And I think that I think that all of us have some, you know, some responsibility to you know, to, to also educate the public. And, but we start from a, from a great deficit. If you think about it from an indigenous perspective, we know all over the world, indigenous kids go to school and they learn about the larger societies government about they attend their churches.

Sarah Maddison (27:11):

They participate in the popular culture. They read their literature, they know everything about them, but the larger society, no matter where it is in the world, doesn't learn about indigenous people. So they started an enormous deficit. So I think that, I think that both have our responses to the larger responsibility, I think was what the non-indigenous people, because they control the institution. But I also think that indigenous people have a responsibility to not throw their hands up and say, I give up, but to, to spend some time trying to educate people as well. So I have a question for you. What made you interested in social justice issues? Was there like a watershed moment or,

Sarah Maddison (28:00):

Or yeah, there was my father was also an academic and I had the experience as a, as a child of being taken on sabbatical trips with him, which I hated. I was just, I just loved traveling as a child. I was homesick all the time, but in retrospect, I'm extremely grateful because I, I saw some things that changed my way of thinking about the world. And in particular, we were in Manila in the Philippines when I was 10. And I saw this extraordinary poverty children living on garbage dumps. This was during the Marcos regime. So those garbage dumps had had mass high whitewashed walls built around them. So it's not to offend the arms of the wealthy and those same whitewashed walls were also built around the compounds where all the ex-pats lived and they were th th th the stark difference between the, the wealth and the poverty and visiting to two particular small incidences during that trip.

Sarah Maddison (29:14):

One was visiting a French expat family and having the child [inaudible] show me around their house and saying, this is the maid's room. And I said, it's a cupboard. There's no, there's no mattress on the bed. And she said, it's just the main, and the other experience was being in a a car or some sort of texting, I think, and having this child with a blind child or that, you know, quite obvious. I problem banging on the door of the window of this car begging for money and things like that as a child make you think there is something extremely wrong in this world that this, that this, this wealth and this poverty can, can co-exist. And I just have not been able to lie straight with them since that time with that knowledge, without feeling that I'm making some contribution.

Sarah Maddison (30:13):

And I was also curious about some people who talking about folks being uncomfortable, some people are not really comfortable describing themselves as a feminist, and you seem quite comfortable describing yourself as a feminist. And could you talk about that a little bit? Could I talk about that a little bit?

Sarah Maddison (30:37):

Yeah. I'm more than comfortable describing myself as a, as a feminist. I'm a very proud feminist, I suppose that's another area of extreme inequality around the world where I think if we, if we don't make that right, you know, what, who are we, what are we about if we cannot afford men and women equal opportunities in life, if we continue to allow gender to in any way, determine people's life chances and, and opportunities, it just is a no brainer to me. So I've, I've given a good part of my adult life to, towards towards those goals. I mean, I suppose a part of my earlier challenges as a feminist was making sense of how other areas of discrimination fit within that, which is not an, you know, that's been a big part of sort of second wave feminist introspection, I suppose.

Sarah Maddison (31:38):

And I've, I've come some way in that, that understanding. I suppose I've also come to a point where I think I don't care whether other people identify as feminist or not particularly young women, this whole, I'm not a feminist, but phenomenon don't care if what you're doing is feminist. I really don't care how young women label them themselves. And I think there are all sorts of reasons why, why young women don't, but that leads me to ask you another question, which is this book every day is a good day as reflections by contemporary indigenous women in particular, you've sought out an extraordinary group of indigenous women that you've invited to the gathering that you, you, you described in those conversations. Do you see as particular role for indigenous women in, in those struggles for indigenous justice and how would you, how would you describe that role?

Sarah Maddison (32:41):

I think first of all, I think that one of the stereotypes about indigenous women is that they're live in male dominated very very chauvinistically societies and, and some do, but in many, many cases, they're, they it's quite the opposite. Women have a very, very strong world, and I've always had a strong role in their communities and the government in the community and the family and maintaining the culture. And one of the questions I ask, every single woman that I interviewed from 18, very diverse tribal communities, and really different lifestyles ranging from artists to a physician was, do you believe that there was a point in time in your tribe's history in which there was balance and equity between men and women and every single person said yes. And so, and, and they, and they felt very strongly that the world would never be imbalanced again, unless we have the strong voices of women, the strong voices of men, and and virtually every aspect of society.

Sarah Maddison (33:54):

And I remember hearing among our people that we've always had, women have always had a very strong role and in our communities and when Cherokee people began to meet with the early American colonists to talk about treaties and other issues, we always had women with our delegation and the colonial representatives, never had women with their delegation. So our chief asked repeatedly at almost every meeting, where are your women? And I think it's a good question for us to ask today and to keep asking that until, till everybody can say, they're everywhere they want to be. Women are in

every, every sector of society, but I can't remember who said this, but a poet made a poet once said that women hold up the sky. And I think that that's true, not just in indigenous communities, but I think that's true throughout the world. And, and I think it's always been true,

Sarah Maddison (34:57):

Which brings me to another question, which is and I'm actually just going to read a very short couple of lines from your, from your book, because it, it it does fire follow on from that and leads to my other question. The question I'm asked most frequently is why I remain such a positive person after surviving various serious health issues. The answer is simple. I am Cherokee and I'm a woman. No one knows better than I that every day is, I'm sorry, it's going to make me cry every day is indeed a good day. How can I be anything? But when I come from a tenacious, resilient people who keep moving forward with an eye toward the future, even after enduring unspeakable hardship and that's all I want to read from that, but my question is about that resilience, because I see that as a an extraordinary marker of Australian indigenous people in the interviewing that I've been doing for the last couple of years. These are people who have been lied to who have been betrayed, who have, you know, done deals with government that have just not been honored and who are prepared over and over again, to get up to re-engage to, to take the struggle forward with this extraordinary resilience, the sort of optimism that, that you spoke about earlier, and this, this belief, I guess that every day is a good day, right? Where does that resilience?

Sarah Maddison (36:31):

I think, I think part of it comes from the fact that many of, many of the tribal groups still have ceremonies and and then the ceremonies, or particularly in our tribe amongst ceremonial people, there's a great emphasis placed on having the way, the best way to describe it as having a good clear mind to, to not go around with negative, hateful, revengeful thoughts in your mind. And so that's, so that's not just part of who I am as an individual. I think that those values come from our culture and from our, from our, our thoughts. I think that I think that we would be paralyzed if we, if we if we concentrated all the time on everything that's happened to us historically. And if we look at our problems in their totality and we could not move forward, so we have to think of a way to keep our vision fixed on the future.

Sarah Maddison (37:41):

And because I think part of the responsibility of all adults is to make a way for the children make a way for future generations. And we can't do that if we're angry and we can't do that, if we're therefore always in despair about the things that are going, going on around us. So I think that the resilience comes from generations of, of adversity and being able to, and, and, and knowing we can get up again and keep moving forward. And so, you know, it would be very hard for my generation of people to give up. When we look at what our ancestors went through and what what they endured, and yet they still kept our nation together, kept our people together, kept our family families together and helped us move forward. So I think the resilience comes from enduring and, and understand, and we can survive and move forward.

Sarah Maddison (38:39):

And our, our people are related to the Mohawk and they have a wonderful, wonderful saying that I love, they always tell their young people, they'll go around with a lot of anger and hatred in your heart. And don't, don't sit around wringing your hands about all the problems we have, let's get in and see what we

can do and, and move forward. And they said, so they're, they're they're little saying that I love so much is that it's hard to see the future with tears in your eyes. I just love that. And so I would add, it's hard to see the future with anger in your heart and tears in your eyes. So, so keeping a clear mind is a discipline. And and, and the medicine man and our, our tribe, who's very well-educated in Western education as well. But what he does when he starts to meet meeting is he always starts by saying, first, let us remove all negative thoughts from our minds so we can come together as one.

Sarah Maddison (39:41):

And what he's asking people to do is take the busy-ness out of your mind and take, take the, you know, whatever arguments you've had with somebody, or, or feeling of revenge or jealousy against somebody take that out of your head. And instead, let's focus right now on getting this problem solved what we're going to talk about today, or, or getting that task done, or we've been able to do that. I've been able to do that professionally, and I've been able to do that personally. And the, the the, I think the thing that's important for people to know is that I'm not unusual. There are lots of people like me. And one of the reasons that I wanted to do this book is to show that that in our country, I've had a lot of attention that there are a lot of indigenous women who worked a lot harder than I have, who had that same ability to keep moving forward, pick themselves up and, and and keep keep moving forward. So the resilience comes from, from our history, I think, Hmm,

Barbara Poco (40:42):

I'm going to come in there. Okay. I was recent. I'm going to come to you in a minute. The wheelchair, I think you might have something you, if you want to contribute, we'll offer you the opportunity. Others of you will have questions, but I was very reminded by, I heard the Del Alama speak a few weeks ago. I was talking about the Chinese in Tibet and the loss of their land and their all their sacred places. And very similar. You can't, he can't leave his people. He was saying with hate out of hatred, he has to lead out of another place.

Sarah Maddison (41:10):

Someone's asked to ask the Dalai Lama, do you hate the Chinese? And he said, no, I don't hate the Chinese. And, and, and, and if you, if someone wants said, if you, if you ha, if you have a lot of hate for someone you care on, Hey, it's like taking a knife and stabbing yourself. And, and I love that. So anyway,

Barbara Poco (41:32):

So is it, I don't want to enter this conversation. We have very limited time, but there's probably a couple of spots. If we want to start

Speaker 5 (41:44):

Mother, she had that feminist moral threatening go on the back of that, which is people, a community out of the sea. We have a, an election happening and the prominent, or at least the second time using that skateboard on the election. And he's decided that stop the indigenous people of [inaudible] and [inaudible], and he knows her going to take away that it's just having it be very uranium. And I'm just wondering about the possibility of them coming through this and how we help them.

Sarah Maddison (42:53):

No, I haven't met, I have met nobody here who likes him. I don't know how he keeps getting elected George Bush in America. Well, it's this, like, I don't know anybody who likes George Bush. He keeps getting elected. So I don't know,

Speaker 5 (43:12):

But it's got to be more than just not me.

Sarah Maddison (43:15):

Absolutely. I think one of the terrible things that John Howard has done to us in this country is he has conned us all into thinking that that change happens from the top. And it doesn't change happens from below, but, you know, he's, he's, he's ignored our activism in, in ways that no other government has, has done. The bridge walks in 2000, the anti Iraq war, mass mobilizations in 2003 and to have a government go is incredibly disempowering to a population. My own son, who's 15 now and, and my daughter, but they were both on the 2003 March. And you know, my son's quite a little activist lesbian. And you know, when the work choices legislation came in, he really debated whether he was going to be part of the high school protests about that, because he said, I was, you know, I I'm marched against Iraq and we still went to war. You know, there's no, it's very hard to then persuade this new generation that, that don't be looking at. You know, he's, he's never going to give you what you, you, you want, we have to demand it. I got a couple more courses.

Speaker 5 (44:56):

[Inaudible] You have a chance to sit down?

Sarah Maddison (44:59):

No, but I think I had had listened this morning to Tracy Bunda who made a very good point. And that is that the communities in this country, indigenous communities are very diverse. And that there's no one, you know, no one leader. So I've talked to some people and then, then my husband and I are going to talk to some elders as well. So we just listened to people, you know? Yeah. Yeah. I, I tend to be codependent with the world. I don't want to get too involved. Rob moved down here and start working or something.

Sarah Maddison (45:46):

It's also really important to acknowledge that there are a lot of indigenous people in Australia right now who are incredibly angry with Noel Pearson because they see him as complicit in this policy intervention in the Northern territory. That is not about listening to anyone except Knorr Pearson, who was one man who represents indigenous people in one part of the country and does not speak for all indigenous Australians.

Speaker 5 (46:16):

In saying that you feel I know that people who are working from unbelief to the important people about him

Sarah Maddison (46:37):

And he, he makes them feel relaxed and comfortable.

Speaker 5 (46:41):

I worried about how do we make the Aboriginal in time for this next election?

Sarah Maddison (47:03):

Can I start by just saying something about how it's strategy on this, which, I mean, he knows full well that at the moment in Australia's political culture, there are not votes in indigenous politics. And that's not why, Hey, from a political perspective, he launched the intervention. He, he he's launched the intervention because he saw an opportunity to get control of some land and because it wedged the labor party. So it's, it's, it's not that issue itself is is something that there's votes in, but it's in creating a dynamic between the two between him and, and Kevin Rudd that makes Rudd look weak and ineffective and makes John Howard look like a more powerful leader. So that's the, that's the dynamic politically in terms of the broader question, you're asking about how to make indigenous affairs Aboriginal politics put it back on the political agenda, I guess, is what you're, you're asking.

Sarah Maddison (48:02):

I think there are a lot of problems with the concept of reconciliation, but I think that the model during the decade of reconciliation, that was about grassroots conversations in in people's schools and communities in RSL clubs talking circles non-indigenous people taking responsibility for organizing those events often with the support of indigenous people who were generous enough to share their time by essentially a growing conversation that saw people educated and informed and did see a growing movement that, you know, this prime minister effectively chopped off at the knees, but it is certainly possible. It's possible to do that again. [inaudible]

Speaker 5 (49:02):

We have a number of other

Barbara Poco (49:03):

Questions, but I'm sorry, we're out of time. I've had the windup. So you will have another chance when we're speaking tomorrow again. And Tracy Vander is also speaking tomorrow. So these issues that are still going to be open, of course, not just tomorrow. I think we'll all have the opportunity in coming weeks, possibly to even do some things around this. So thank you so much for coming in, particularly

Sarah Maddison (49:29):

Come and see us. I'll tell you a funny story that the concierge at my hotel was really taken aback by my name. And so he asked me about the origin of my name, and I told him it was a nickname and I earned it.