Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania

2025 Annual Meeting in Nadi, Fiji

Draft Program with Session Descriptions

Special Events

Wednesday

Registration and Book Exhibit
The ASAO registration desk will be open for everyone to register and receive their name tag when they arrive. There will also be a book exhibit featuring books and book flyers from presses that publish on Pacific topics. During the lunch breaks, book talks will be held in this area.

Board Meeting
ASAO Board and Officer meeting.

Session Organisers Meeting
Open to all session organisers for instructions and tips.

Sevusevu and Yaqona
This is open to all conference attendees and will be held at the hotel. Please note clothing protocols for women and men, and suggested items to bring as a show of reciprocity and respect to our hosts. (It would be ideal if everyone could contribute at least one item, please).

- Attire for women: sulu (pareo, lavalava) to ankle, sleeves covering shoulders (modest), no hats
- Attire for men: sulu (pareo, lavalava) below knees, sleeves covering shoulders (modest), no hats
- Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the sevusevu
- Gift suggestions: chocolates (from your home), books (in particular, any book/journal on Fiji), t-shirts (from your home), Material, earrings/other jewelry/fans(from your home), candy (from your home), YSA novels (perhaps free from local libraries), children's school supplies (pencils, colouring books, colour crayons, erasers, pens, felt pens, rulers), children's toys (balls, yoyo, playing cards, skipping rope), first aid kits, toothbrushes, toothpaste, tinned cans of foodstuffs/cooking oil/rice (procured locally)

ASAO Communications Meeting
This is for Board Members, Officers, and anyone else involved in ASAO information dissemination and member communication.

Opening Plenary and Welcome Party

All attendees are invited to attend the opening plenary for the official meeting opening and overview. Afterwards, there will be a cash bar. Please join us!

Thursday

Registration and Book Exhibit
The ASAO registration desk will be open for everyone to register and receive their name tag when they arrive. There will also be a book exhibit featuring books and book flyers from presses that publish on Pacific topics. During the lunch breaks, book talks will be held in this area.

PISA Awardee Luncheon
This is a private lunch for PISA award recipients and ASAO Honorary Fellows and Board members.

Book Talks Forum
During the lunch break, we will feature brief talks by authors about their recent work. In this first book talk, we will hear from the following authors about their forthcoming or recent books:

Florence Mury and Renault Meltz: Un Deuxième contact? Histoire et mémoires du CEP

Philip Mcarthur: Dialogues with a Trickster: On the Margins of Myth and Ethnography in the Marshall Islands

Katherine Aigner: Museo Etnologico - Musei Vaticani - Oceania and Island Southeast Asia

Newcomers Welcome
Newcomers, come and identify yourselves :). Oldtimers, come along and introduce yourself to someone you don't know!

GRIKPIC Session: Community Reciprocity Initiative
This informal session is organized by the ASAO committee which oversees the "Grant to Return Indigenous Knowledge to Pacific Islands Communities" (GRIKPIC). The main goal is to inspire and encourage ASAO members to engage in research projects that prioritize the needs and aspirations of Oceanian communities. This session will allow ASAO members to shape the future of GRIKPIC.

The GRIKPIC program, which aims to build partnerships between ASAO members and the communities in Oceania, has the potential to create and carry out projects that genuinely benefit those communities. This could include returning Indigenous knowledge or materials or co-creating new documentation, knowledge, and insights aligning with community goals. Your participation in this session is a step towards realizing this potential.

The session aims to spark interest and build momentum around revitalizing the GRIKPIC program. It offers a unique opportunity for ASAO members to connect, share resources, and explore potential collaborations. By doing so, we can lay the

foundation for future sessions and initiatives driven by community needs within ASAO. Please contact Tēvita O. Ka'ili at tevita.kaili@byuh.edu for more information.

Friday
Registration and Book Exhibit
The ASAO registration desk will be open for everyone to register and receive their name tag when they arrive. There will also be a book exhibit featuring books and book flyers from presses that publish on Pacific topics. During the lunch breaks, book talks will be held in this area.

Book Talks Forum
During the lunch break, we will feature brief talks by authors about their recent work. In this second book talk, we will hear from the following authors about their recent books:

Edward Narain/Tarryn Phillips: Sugar

Nicholas Halter: Suva Stories

Distinguished Lecture and Reception
We are honoured that our distinguished lecture this year will be delivered by Paige West and John Aini. Afterward, there will be a reception with drinks and food. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Saturday
Registration and Book Exhibit
The ASAO registration desk will be open for everyone to register and receive their name tag when they arrive. There will also be a book exhibit featuring books and book flyers from presses that publish on Pacific topics. During the lunch breaks, book talks will be held in this area. Please note, registration will close early on Saturday.

Tatau
This is an official thank you from ASAO to our local hosts. It will take place in the vanua and is limited to Board/Officers and GRIKPIC members.

Sessions

Archiving, Preserving and Sharing Ethnographic Information for the Future Symposium Session
Convenors: Josh Bell (BellJA@si.edu) and Bill Donner (donner@kutztown.edu)

We are building upon our past ASAO sessions and will have a symposium session in the 2025 ASAO session in Fiji. We are grateful to the 25 people who attended our

working session in 2024. Recognizing the colonial origins and post- and decolonial possibilities of archives, our symposium will consider the following themes: (1) the responsibilities of ethnographers, archivists and museums to the host/Indigenous communities where the material originated, (2) archives as process, (3) the complex process of archiving and engagement with communities of origin over time as the understanding of these materials shift, (4) the precarity and partial nature of archival and ethnographic materials, (5) the different methods by which field materials are cared for and made accessible to the public, and (6) the ethical obligations of researchers and archives to make materials accessible in a way that is respectful to the Indigenous communities involved. Collectively papers reflect on materials documenting communities from across the Pacific islands. Doing so we examine archival materials and processes at the UCSD's Tuzin Archive for Melanesian Anthropology, the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History and National Anthropological Archives, PARADISEC, and other resources.

We also want to address the practicalities of how ASAO members and other ethnographers can archive, preserve, and share their ethnographic information. This includes building a collection of resources of archival materials and also resources for helping ethnographers to think about preserving their materials from the beginning to the end of their careers. We hope to provide members with guidelines and resources about how to think through the legacy of their work, and how to build projects that develop community collaborative sharing protocols from their inception. These guidelines and resources might be done through a Google doc. We encourage suggestions for this session and also others to join our group.

We look forward to further collaboration with scholars from across the Pacific at the ASAO meeting in Fiji.

Participants/Papers

The Rotuman Website as Archive by Alan Howard

Re-connecting Archival Materials from the South Sea Expedition (1899-1900) with Oceania Source Communities by Jacqueline Hazen and Joshua Bell

"What IS Archiving?": From community to anthropologist to archivist and back by Cristela Garcia-Spitz and Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi

The Human Element in Repatriation Via Digital Media by Richard Moyle

Archiving and preservation in the age of digital sharing by Nick Thieberger, Steven Gagau and Amanda Harris (Paradisiac)

Preservation and Publication: Reflections on Ethnography's End-games by Geoffrey White

From Analogue Ethnography to Digital Heritage: Changing issues in Ethnographic Research and Representation by William W. Donner, Kutztown University

Framing Archival Materials for the Future: An Uncommon Dialog by Debbora Battaglia and Joshua Bell

Pacific Pigs and Their People
Informal Session
Convenors: Roger Lohmann (rogerlohmann@trentu.ca) and Karen Greig (karen.greig@otago.ac.nz)

Pigs, circular boars' tusks, and pig tooth necklaces are often documented in ethnographic accounts of Pacific social exchange networks. People variously use porcine products for food, adornment, bridewealth and other exchanges, and status indicators. Human–pig relationships are culturally diverse and often deeply consequential for both people and pigs.

This session is an invitation to consider any aspect of the relationships and interactions between pigs and people that have occurred in this region, from their introduction several thousand years ago to the present. Inspired by the recent session on Pacific dogs and their humans, we encourage accounts and analyses of material, behavioural, and attitudinal relationship indicators exhibited by both people and pigs. Since pigs are fellow sentient life forms rather than mere objects or symbols for the humans who interact with them, we especially welcome explorations beyond emic and anthropocentric perspectives that include pigs as social and ecological associates in particular cultural contexts.

Continuing participants should submit draft papers to the organisers by **January 2, 2025** for pre-circulation to the group. New participants are welcome and are invited to submit a title and abstract for pre-circulation to the group by the same date.

Participants/Papers

Pork Stew: Shifting Parameters of Hominid/Porcine Interactions in Enewetak/Ujelang Communities by Laurence Marshall Carucci, Ph.D. (Montana State University)

While not perhaps as central to everyday existence as pigs in some locales the New Guinea Highlands, pigs in the Marshall Islands have certainly had their moments of cultural fixation, for a time bordering on fetishization. Piik, referencing both pigs on the hoof and pork, pig prepared as an edible, are mutable objects smothered with human energies, a mark of their importance in everyday life. Piik qua food is the highest ranked of land foods, and their consumption is largely reserved for first birthday's parties (keemem) and other celebratory events. As is often true of highly valued objects, those humans with many pigs are presumed to be of high rank since the valence of pig value is taken as a measure of their owners' social position. Therefore, pigs are critical interactive beings in Marshall Islander communities. In both life and in their sacrificial death, they lend substance and sustenance to the livelihood and well-being to all of the occupants of any land parcel and of every village. This paper tracks the contours of pighood among hominid members of Enewetak/Ujelang communities, from life on those two Marshall Islands' outlying atolls to transformations among Ocean View Marshallese pigs and their owners on the Big Island of Hawai'i.

The pig management continua of New Guinea: a unique window into the meaning, or *meanings* of domestication by Loukas Koungoulos (University of Western Australia)

The nature and progression of animal domestication is one of the primary areas of interest of anthrozoology and zooarchaeology. Traditionally, this has been envisaged as a fixed event in which wild animals are transformed into a domestic variety through anthropogenic alienation from their relatives, ending in a binary wild-domestic split. Recent discourse is however moving beyond this reductive concept, recognising the wide variety of arrangements which actually exist between people and “domestic” animals - as pertains to the *degree* and *duration* of human deliberation, management and influence on their subsistence and reproduction. The human-pig relationship in New Guinea offers a unique perspective on this complexity. Pigs arrived there as domesticates after 3500 years ago and are far and away the most important domestic animal, but also have since naturalised to form permanent and near-ubiquitous feral or “wild” populations. Remarkably, in many New Guinean settings human-managed pigs exist in a social, ecological and genetic continuum with wild pigs, as there are continuous opportunities for the two to breed, often encouraged by people. The degree of human agency in enacting “domestication” varies according to the abundance of wild pigs, with people exerting less effort to manage pigs in the lowlands where wild stock is abundant, and vice versa in the Highlands. Nevertheless, the fact that these arrangements concern the same animals calls into question a fundamental premise of traditional domestication theory: that wild and domestic animals are separated by a human-perpetuated isolation of their breeding populations. In this paper, I explore the variety of human-pig domestic relations in New Guinea as characterized by their management and resultant breeding structures, in light of emergent perspectives on the nature of domestication, and their implications for the domestication narrative as a whole.

A Deep History of Pacific Pigs by Richard Scaglion (University of Pittsburgh)

The close relationship between pigs and people in Southeast Asia has been long and varied, and a great diversity of wild, feral, and introduced forms of suids has arisen there. In contrast, it is generally agreed that domestic pigs (*Sus scrofa*) were first transported to the Pacific Islands through a series of long-distance ocean voyages ultimately linked to the Neolithic expansion of Austronesian-speaking peoples. The descendants of these founding pigs belong to a rare mtDNA group referred to as the “Pacific Clade,” and the people who transported them share certain cultural patterns. Can common forms of pig husbandry also be discerned? How has pig husbandry in the Pacific changed through time, and what new patterns have developed? For example, due to the relatively recent introduction of the sweet potato into the New Guinea Highlands, large, dense human and pig populations arose, based largely on sweet potato cultivation. This paper explores what can be learned through a deep dive into the prehistory and culture history of this commensal animal in the Pacific Islands.

Pigs in Space: Porcine–Hominine Proxemics in a Papua New Guinea Interspecies Culture by Roger Ivar Lohmann (Trent University)

Spatial constraints in multispecies communities do not only affect husbanded animals, but husbanding humans as well. For example, cultural rules of

porcine–personal proxemics are mutually defining. I document culturally distinctive spatial relationships of pigs and people in a multispecies community in Papua New Guinea based on ethnographic fieldwork at Duranmin in 1991, 1994–95, 2005, and 2007. Pigs are among the nonhuman denizens of Asabano hamlets in rain-forested mountains. Here both pigs and humans make part of their subsistence livings by foraging in the surrounding countryside and eating the produce of slash-and-burn gardens. Rather than fencing off domestic pigs, Asabano people fence off their gardens to prevent depredations of free-ranging pigs. People castrate male village piglets, so sows must forage for wild reproduction partners, too. Piglets are hand-fed sweet potatoes in human houses at night and are set loose each morning. They are in this way enculturated to return to hamlets each evening for treats. For Asabano humans, this makes their eventual slaughter or capture for exchange easier. Asabano porcine-hominine interspecies culture is distinctive from those current elsewhere. Neighbouring Telefolmin people blind some of their pigs to prevent them from wandering too far, but Asabano pigs do not undergo this practice. Unlike Asabano pig-human communities, European farmers have typically fenced in or even tightly constrained the pigs in their communities rather than their croplands.

Will Any Old Pig Do? People, pigs and the emergence of Pacific social exchange systems by Karen Greig (University of Otago Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka)

Domesticated animals, especially pigs, are central to social exchange networks in many societies across the tropical Western Pacific. Recognising the importance of exchange in these social systems, archaeologists have long been interested in understating their development and change over time. The immediate origins of some of the well-known nineteenth century networks have received archaeological attention, including the *hiri*, *kula*, Siassi, and Madang networks. At a deeper time depth, archaeological research has focussed on reconstructing exchange networks by tracing the sources and distribution of inanimate objects, such as stone tools, pottery and shell valuables. Despite their ethnographically documented importance, a consideration of the place of pigs is often missing in these studies. This is not due to a lack of interest, but rather to the challenging nature of studying animal bones from tropical Pacific archaeological sites. Developments in biomolecular methods alongside conventional archaeological approaches provide new avenues for the study of interactions and relationships between pigs and people in the past. This may enable the investigation of pigs as animate components of exchange systems, as well as an exploration of the associated cultural and ecological relationships. This paper discusses some preliminary biomolecular data from archaeological pigs in Papua New Guinea and how it may be applied to these questions.

Our Sea of Militarized Islands: Mapping Militarization and Sovereignty Intersections
Working session
Convenors: Claudia Ledderucci (claudia.ledderucci@unito.it) and Marc Tabani (marc.tabani@pacific-credo.fr)

The Pacific region is today more than ever being politicized and considered a transnational space deemed highly strategic for Western nations' security politics

(Na‘puti, Frain 2023). Indeed, a strong and complementary link between colonialism and militarization nurtures contemporary geopolitics: some of these Pacific islands were colonized because of their strategic position, and military bases were implanted on native land with no restrictions to military operations, given their intrinsic political subordination. Historically, military power was shown through military bases and their presence as defense outposts, not least in the Pacific region. Today, their role and goals changed and bases have become *baseworlds*, a chain of worldly dislocated outposts, that not only protect borders but irradiate national values in metropolitan territories and overseas dependencies, while at the same time ensuring the State’s hegemony (Davis 2015). Contemporary geopolitics is made up of the interpenetration of economic and power networks and knitted relations with sovereign and non-sovereign nations and territories (Davis 2020, 2015; Shigematsu, Camacho 2010), and each of these *baseworlds* is linked to the particular and local history of the place that hosts them. The contemporary situation of many Pacific islands, comprising the political ambiguities and fuzziness of dependencies, trusteeships, protectorates, mandates, and unincorporated territories as well as territorial ambiguity and legal categories of belonging that produce quasi-membership, are defining features of such entities through which non-sovereign practices are reinstated every day (Stoler 2016) and intersect with enduring processes of militarization. To what extent are such processes intertwined, and/or hindering, influencing, or empowering Pacific Islanders’ lives?

This informal session aims to explore possible research interests and emerging research revolving around the manifold militarization processes that are happening or have happened throughout Oceania. The session aims at discussing everyday engagements with these particular processes and mapping the contemporary and past military presence and army functions throughout Oceania, as well as their intersections with sovereignties and sovereignty practices.
Contributions would ideally explore (but are not limited to):

- territorial and environmental outcomes of militarization processes (displacement, dispossession, exploitation, pollution, etc);
- individual and intersubjective outcomes of militarization processes (acculturation, discrimination, enforcement, empowerment, militarized intimacies, etc);
- geopolitical and sovereignty intersections (changing of national/local laws, shifting alliances, militaristic intersections, etc).

Participants/Papers

Militarized Pasts and Presents: A genealogical approach to political struggles in Mā’ohi Nui/French Polynesia by Claudia Ledderucci is (Research Fellow at the University of Turin)

This paper presents an ethnographic exploration of militarization and colonial legacies in French Polynesia, where both the remnants of past military occupations and the ongoing military presence profoundly shape local politics, cultural identities, and the futures of Mā’ohi youth. Through vivid snapshots from my fieldwork, I highlight how military exercises, symbolic commemorations, and everyday

encounters reveal complex negotiations over sovereignty, identity, and self-determination.

By tracing the long-standing negotiations over governmental competencies between French and Polynesian authorities, this paper unravels how military presence and the non-sovereign status of Polynesian women and men have evolved, reflecting broader context of French history, international fluctuations, and geopolitical strategies. This analysis moves beyond a dualistic view of historical events as mere continuities or breaks, focusing instead on the recurring power structures that, following Ann Stoler's concept of «colonial histories of the present » (2016:7), illustrate the persistent colonial configurations in today's Franco-Polynesian relations. The paper historicizes the shifting relationship between military presence and sovereignty claims, assessing how militarization has shaped sovereignty not as a way out of the colonial situation but rather as a reorganization of power asymmetries between French and Polynesian entities. To what extent does military presence hinder or foster the emancipation of this overseas territory?

The ethnographic vignettes presented reveal how historical militarization, rooted in the French nuclear testing era, intersects with contemporary military exercises and geopolitical strategies in Oceania. Together, these moments underscore the enduring colonial dynamics and the intricate ways in which young Mā'ohi navigate these legacies in pursuit of autonomy and a sustainable future in their homeland.

Reference:

Stoler, A. L., 2016. Duress. Imperial Durabilities in our Times, Duke University Press, Durham

Biosketch:

Claudia Ledderucci is a Research Fellow at the University of Turin. She holds a PhD in Social and Political Change from the University of Florence and the University of Turin. Her scholarship focuses on the intersectional field of political anthropology, political science, and critical militarization studies with particular attention to territories that still experience formal or informal colonial situations. Her doctoral research focused on the process of militarization and contemporary military presence in French Polynesia, particularly on the creation of new political subjectivities, the array of intricate ambivalences created by the ongoing coloniality and on how the less perceptible effects of governmental policies settled into people's social ecologies.

Two or three things about representations of war and military matters in Vanuatu by Marc Tabani (Senior research fellow in anthropology, CNRS-CREDO)

The aim of my paper is to explore memories of war or violent conflicts and representations or fantasies of military matters in the island country of Vanuatu. In the light of its contemporary history, from the coming of the first Europeans to present time, taking an interest in how war can be portrayed and the curiosity when not sympathy people have in military matters could contrast with the touristic reputation of "friendly islands", peaceful communities, ranking high in the Happy Planet Index. Although the Republic of Vanuatu has never officially been involved in a war, it does have an armed force, the Vanuatu Mobile Force, made up of some

three hundred men and women. Even though some significant armed violent actions occurred shortly after independence, depicted as a simple and brief rebellion, which was mocked by international media as a “coconut war”.

It is also significant to note that this country, previously known as the New Hebrides, under the governance of a Franco-British condominium, fully embraced modernity during the Second World War. The establishment of two naval air bases on the islands of Efate and Santo at the outset of the battle of the Coral Sea laid the foundations for urbanization in Port-Vila and Luganville. In addition, for the thousands of Melanesians who either participated in the construction of these bases or witnessed the process first-hand, the three-year-long American military occupation represented a heightened awareness of the complexities of globalization in a context of world history.

Thus, from my first fieldwork in the 1990s, I was immediately struck by warmonger considerations, if not fascination, that many of my informants had for martial resolution of modern conflicts. Through a few historical examples in this archipelago and also from my own observations, I will seek to highlight how in a nation-state that has never known war since its creation a war imaginary is still present, as well as a frequently perceptible valorization of the armed forces and military authority.

Biosketch:

Marc Tabani is an anthropologist, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and the director of the Centre de Recherche et de Documentation sur l’Océanie (CREDO) in Marseille. He has conducted his research in Vanuatu and especially in the island of Tanna since 1993. His main topics have been politics of identity and tradition, cultural change, cultural ideologies, indigenous movements, millenarianism, Islam in Vanuatu. Marc Tabani has published several articles in French and English and three volumes as single author.

French Polynesia on the New Silk Roads: what geostrategic challenges for France in the Indo-Pacific? by Aurélie Bayen-Poisson

The political vision of the geographical concept of the Indo-Pacific, launched in 2007 by Japan, propose a broader approach to the region than that of Asia-Pacific. It is also a larger notion in terms of its content and its subject: security, protection of the environment, economic activities and strategic interests. Representing 60% of the world's population, region encompasses seven French overseas territories, namely French Polynesia and New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, Réunion and Mayotte, and finally Clipperton and the Southern and Antarctic Lands. The articulation of dimensions Indo-Pacific and overseas reinforced the historical link existing between the France and its overseas territories. However, its contours remain to be consolidated, or even redefined according to the presence of China and the United States in the region. France share with its major partners as India, Australia or Japan, a common vision of maintaining this area free, open and inclusive.

However, the extension of the New Silk Roads route to the South Pacific has been considered as a historic opportunity for the leaders overseas to establish a privileged relationship with China and benefit of an economic growth with pharaonic projects proposed by Chinese investors. The case of the project of the biggest aquaculture

farm in the world on Hao Atoll is interesting because it has raised doubts about China's government long-term motivations, given the strategic and military potential of the island. In response to suspicions weighed on a possible dual use of these infrastructures for military purposes by the Chinese government, French President Emmanuel Macron announced on July 27, 2021 the creation of a new adapted French military service regiment (RSMA) on the island. This new contingent would ensure a military presence on the island of Hao while responding to the needs for assistance in professional integration and training of the population. By reaffirming that priority would be given to overseas communities, President Macron reaffirmed his desire to eclipse its Chinese competitor by offering a reliable partnership policy on socio-economic and cultural domains and health and defensive help.

That's why since the election of the new pro-independence government this year, study the new role of France and reveal China's geostrategic motivations in Polynesia should be imposed on all partners in the Indo-Pacific.

Reference:

Bayen-Poisson, A. (2022). Les défis géostratégiques de la France face à la Chine : l'exemple de la zone indopacifique. Mondes et cultures, LXXXI (1-2-3-4) p. 515- 522. fichier-4229-8864-3313-.pdf

Bayen-Poisson, A. (2022). La Polynésie française sur les Nouvelles Routes de la Soie. Revue Défense Nationale, Mai 2022 (n°850) p. 115-120. 10.3917/rdna.850.0115. fichier-4229-8112-2955-.pdf

Bayen-Poisson, A. et DE RAULIN A. (2020). Les PTOM entre l'Europe, la Chine et le Pacifique. Dans Les relations entre l'Union européenne, les pays ACP et les PTOM, la fin d'un cycle (p. 256). L'Harmattan.

Bayen-Poisson, A. (2017). Politique de séduction de la Chine : un nouveau Cargo Cult pour la Polynésie française. Dans WARDI, S. AL, REGNAULT J-M. et SABOURET J- F.(Dirs.) L'Océanie convoitée Histoire, géopolitique et sociétés (p. 636). CNRS Editions.

Biosketch:

Aurélie Bayen-Poisson is a teacher-researcher in Human and Social Sciences at the 2S2T Laboratory at UCO Papeete (French Polynesia). As a specialist of contemporary China, she is also associate researcher at the Center for Studies on China, Korea and Japan at the School of
Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS). She works on international relations between China and Oceania.

Toxic Topographies: Mapping Marshallese Musical Refusals of Nuclear Noise by
Jessica A. Schwartz, Associate Professor of Musicology, UCLA (schwartz@humnet.ucla.edu)

This paper focuses on Marshallese musical expressions of nuclear waste and the politics of Indigenous performance. I focus on how two Marshallese Indigenous communities, the Bikinians and Rongelapese, who have been displaced and disenfranchised by US nuclear weapons testing (1946-58) and subject to radiological

experimentation, instrumentalize timbral dimensions of embodied nuclear toxicity, such as acoustical nosiness and silences, in songs to amplify the consequences of extant nuclear waste in their lives (their 'generational' bodies) in connection to their irradiated lands. Tracing how Indigenous songs in the broader transpacific Marshallese diaspora reveal the consequential breadth of radioactive fallout ignored by U.S. militarism, I suggest we think about such Marshallese musical protest in terms of the struggle to voice transcorporeal consequences of toxic topographies, which includes the political fallout as well as the material fallout from U.S. nuclear militarism. In doing so, I offer a sonic history of US nuclear colonialism by way of 19th century American missionization (which the US government strategically used to form moral alliances with Marshallese and justify the use of their homelands as “proving grounds”) that traces the denigration of customary chants and song structures as the systematic denigration of Indigenous social structures. I share how Marshallese singers respond to political developments that continue to silence them (and deny their Indigenous realizations of ‘harmony’) by politicizing musical form, in what I call “radiation songs,” with marked harmonic disintegration that underscore lyrics about struggles with health, US governmental transparency, and cultural fragmentation. I then share how Marshallese youth have picked up these songs in the diaspora to contend with various forms of foundational toxicities (e.g. radiogenic illness-based comorbidities, diabetes, depression) that map onto other contemporary crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and demand a treatment of health as individual and collective and acute and historical. Marshallese political performances enable singers to revisit Indigenous techniques of such embodied timbral connection as means of amplifying these health-based connections in ways that afford intergenerational communication of values and detail the strength of cultural connection amidst intimate portraits of global problems promulgated by U.S. militaristic occupation and forcible removal.

Biosketch:

Jessica A. Schwartz is an associate professor of musicology at the Herb Alpert School of Music at the University of California-Los Angeles. Schwartz’s work focuses on critical, creative, and poetic dissent from an interrogation of sonic histories and musical representations of imperial and military violence, as explored in Radiation Sounds: Marshallese Music and Nuclear Silences (Duke 2021), American Quarterly, and Women & Music, as well as DIY/punk musicality/philosophy/education in Punk Pedagogies: Music, Culture and Learning and the journal Punk & Post-Punk. Schwartz is the Academic Advisor to and co-founder of the Marshallese Educational Initiative (501c3), co-hosts the Punkast Series (a podcast series), and plays noise/experimental guitar.

Where East and West Meet by Raihaamana Tevahitua, PhD Candidate, Department of Pacific Affairs - Australian National University, +61 449018076, raihaamana.tevahitua@anu.edu.au

In order to establish the agenda, Pacific Island countries have initiated discussions on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, fossil fuels and plastic. Nevertheless, no action has been taken thus far to impede the ongoing militarisation of the region. The postponement may be attributed to the dual use of the military instrument in a disaster-prone region, as well as the socio-economic benefits associated with its

establishment. However, the contemporary geopolitical acceleration (Gomart, 2024) of our era, characterised by an accumulation of warning signs, renders the outbreak of another World War more plausible. While the future of humanity is inextricably linked to the level of accommodation between countries at the pinnacle of the geostrategic apex (Allison, 2017), a peace narrative is emerging in the Pacific Islands. This presentation will propose a way to operationalise Fiji's 'Ocean of Peace' concept through the organisation and ritualisation of a talanoa meeting under the auspices of the Pacific Islands Forum, before the spiral takes unmanageable proportions. In the event of a Sino-American war, the vast Pacific will be 'squeezed'. The precious agency of Pacific islands will be put on diet, further loosing teeth. The wheels of globalisation will derail, driving inflation to the sky. National survival will inevitably shadow any other pressing priority, including economic progress and climate action. Against the backdrop of the existential threat that defines our century, the Oceanic diplomacy (Fry and Tarte, 2015) will demonstrate its rhetorical power (Wallis et al., 2023). The presentation will introduce a framework based on four guiding questions: Where should this pacifying initiative be held? Who could agree to participate in this undertaking? How can mutual understanding between competing parties be facilitated? And what are the attainable outcomes? Aware of the magnitude of the challenges, this humble paper hopes to initiate a proactive step that will equip the region with a tool aspiring to channel geostrategic forces.

Biosketch:

Raihaamana Tevahitua is from the island of Tahiti, French Polynesia/Mā'ohi Nui. He resided in Sweden, Morocco and Spain for a number of years. He has professional experience in market research for black pearl and monoï oil, as well as in the tourism sector for both winter and tropical destinations. He holds a Master's degree in geopolitics from IRIS Sup' Paris and another in public law from Université d'Auvergne. He is currently completing his inaugural year of doctoral studies at the Department of Pacific Affairs, Australian National University, where he is researching on the para-diplomacy of the French Pacific territories in the contemporary strategic context. His research interests include Pacific and World affairs, island development, climate and environmental issues, technological advances, multifaceted security and strategic competition. He is driven by a lifelong mission to promote the interests of the people of Oceania in the face of contemporary geopolitical competition through the medium of academia and public service.

Hao, A Post-nuclear Atoll? Considering what remains as well as those who remain
by Florence Mury and Renaud Meltz

From 1963 to the end of the 1990s, Hao was the forward base of the "Centre d'Expérimentation du Pacifique" (CEP) for the nuclear tests conducted by France in French Polynesia. In this paper, we wish to examine the discrepancies that exist between, on the one hand, a scansion of time in which the beginning of the 2000s marks the end of the CEP, and, on the other hand, an organization of space and landscapes that still remains partly dependent on this period when the atoll was highly militarized.

Among the most visible legacies of the CEP in Hao are the buildings of the former army "living zone", still in place and even reinvested, inhabited by the owners of this land. In the scientific field, the non-destruction of such buildings has been integrated

into a post-nuclear analysis grid identifying a survival, a stigma associated with the notion of “nuclear nostalgia”. Here, we propose to explore another avenue: that of territorial reappropriation based less on maintaining the stigma, or reversing it in some way, than on asserting a continuity in land control. After a period when this control over land was called into question by poorly remunerative lease contracts signed with the army, the principle of returning the land and retroceding the buildings (provided for in the leases from the outset) would today be a priority for the inhabitants of Hao, a way of asserting a form of agency over land, and also a way of dealing with the legacies of the CEP.

Conversely, the renewal of landscapes and the reorganization of the settlement is not always a sign that the page of the CEP is being turned. While the establishment of the CEP led to a concentration of populations in Otepa (the village on Hao's main motu), with circulation outside this area being strictly controlled (especially towards the south), in recent years families have been leaving this area. Land located in the south and close to the former “Vautour” slab is becoming attractive, despite the presence of identified pollutants in the soil (PCBs, heavy metals), sometimes indicated by warning signs. The former large landholdings of the army are also being reallocated, this time by the public authorities. This is the case, for example, of the former camp of the 5th foreign regiment, where the Adapted Military Service Regiment (RSMA in French) will soon move in. After the failure, for geopolitical reasons, of a large-scale aquaculture farm project developed by a Chinese company, the RSMA will offer young recruits training in tourism. This project will provide the link between militarization and the development of tourism that CEP decision-makers have been hoping for since 1963.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to question the primacy of the visible, and the relevance of a landscape approach as a way of measuring the transition experienced by the population in Hao since the end of nuclear tests. We will consider the possibility that the continuities and survivals of the CEP are paradoxically to be found in the reconversions carried out, reproducing the militarization, exoticization of landscapes and denial of pollution, rather than in the reinvestment of old buildings inherited from this period.

Biosketch:

After a PhD in geography, Florence Mury has been a CNRS post-doctoral fellow at the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme du Pacifique (Tahiti) since 2023. She co-pilots the SOSI “Observatoire des héritages du Centre d'Expérimentation du Pacifique (CEP)” on the legacies of nuclear tests in French Polynesia. Her current publications focus on mobilities and memory asymmetries linked to the CEP.

Membre senior de l’IUF, DR au CNRS, Renaud Meltz est responsable du SOSI « Observatoire des héritages du CEP ». Il a co-dirigé le dossier « Les essais nucléaires français : enjeux internationaux et transnationaux » de Relations internationales, n° 19, août 2023 et co-écrit plusieurs articles sur la question dans The Journal of Pacific History. Sur Hao, il a publié avec Teva Meyer, « Hao, de la bombe française au poisson chinois », Revue historique des armées, Revue d’histoire militaire, n°299, 2020, p. 11-26 et, sur le gouvernement du risque, "Associer et dissimuler. Les essais nucléaires aériens en Polynésie française : un “deuxième contact” entre secret et mensonge », RHMC, n° 72, 2023/3, p. 88 à 116. Il a également publié avec A. Vrignon Des bombes en Polynésie. Les essais

nucléaires français dans le Pacifique, Vendémiaire, 2022 et prépare avec ce dernier et B. Furst la publication aux éditions de la MSH-P d'un collectif : Un Deuxième contact ? Histoire et mémoires du Centre d'expérimentation du Pacifique.

Military Colonialism and Resistance among Ujelang and Enewetak people, Marshall Islands by Laurence Marshall Carucci, Ph.D.

Military colonialism and strategies of resistance long have been a core component of existence on Ujelang and Enewetak Atolls, two outliers of Rālik/Ratak (Marshall Islands) in the central western Pacific. Even prior to the era of European exploration, Enewetak people, living on a distant outlier of the Rālik (sunset/westward) Chain of Rālik/Ratak, resisted at least two military incursions, one from Ratak and one from Ralik. Initial encounters with Europeans began incidentally, as early European explorers like Saavedra sought supplies of food and water on these small atolls as they crossed the Pacific. With considerable strategic advantage, local residents developed an array of strategies to deal with the infrequent newcomers, from hiding out in the bush, to invoking the assistance of potent local non-corporeal ancestors (spirit beings), to direct military assault on the outsiders, be they 'Marshall Islanders' or Europeans.

This manuscript explores the full extent of these encounters, from the earliest pre-European strategies, to the much more expansive pre-World War II defensive buildup of Enewetak by Japanese military forces, to Allied/American expansion of Enewetak as a staging and trans- shipment ground for the final sixteen months of the war. But VJ day did not mark the end of the war for Enewetak/Ujelang community members. Rather, community members see the entire era of U. S. atomic and thermonuclear testing as a perpetuation of the war, with the use of Enewetak and Bikini as 'places of practice' for battles that followed, moving from place to place around the globe: from Korea, to Vietnam, to Afganistan.

Biosketch:

Laurence Marshall Carucci is LeWers and Science DisLnguished Professor Emeritus at Montana State University and a long-standing ASAO member and participant. He has more than 45 years of research experience in the Marshall Islands with 27 research visits and nearly eight years living and working face-to-face with local residents, both in the Marshall Islands and in other locations where Marshall Islanders have moved. He has worked most closely with members of the Enewetak/Ujelang community, one of four atoll groups that suffered most significantly from

U. S. nuclear testing. Prior to those tests, however, Enewetak served as a military base for Japanese and American forces, foregrounding the transition to nuclear test base. These historical experiences provide ample insight into militarization practices in one part of the Pacific.

The historical intricacies of sovereignty. Vaitupu and Kioa between colonial pasts and ecological futures by Nicola Manghi (CREDO/EHESS) nicola.manghi@ehess.fr

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Tuvalu suddenly found itself on the front lines of World War II. While the Japanese occupied Kiribati, then known as the Gilbert Islands and part of the larger Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony along with Tuvalu, the Americans seized three Tuvaluan islands – Funafuti, Nanumea, and Nukufetau – to establish three airfield and a naval base (McQuarrie 1994). The atoll of Vaitupu remained physically untouched by the war. However, many of its inhabitants were employed by the Americans, working on islands such as Funafuti, Canton, Palmyra, or Christmas Island. After the war, these Vaitupuans pooled a portion of their earnings into a collective fund with the intention of using it to construct a hospital or school on their home island. On the advice of Donald Gilbert Kennedy, a school teacher and colonial administrator who had spent over a decade living in Vaitupu, and who was then involved in the relocation of the Banabans, they made the decision to utilize the fund to purchase an island that was soon to be auctioned in Fiji: Kioa. Vaitupuans purchased Kioa in June 1946 (Lifuka 1978), and subsequent groups of settlers began moving to the island the following year, gradually forming a community that today amounts to approximately 400 people.

Many years later, global warming and the threat it casts over Tuvalu's future have come to change the significance of Vaitupuan ownership of Kioa. Initially purchased as an economic asset to foster the development of Vaitupu, Kioa is now viewed as a potential refuge for the relocation of Vaitupuans, or even all Tuvaluans, in the event of forced displacement due to rising sea levels. A hilly island of volcanic origin covering a surface of 18 sq km, Kioa's geomorphology is fundamentally different from that of Tuvalu, sparing it from the fate that awaits the latter. As such, Kioa provides a historical example of community relocation in the Pacific that may help plan future arrangements for environmentally-displaced people (McAdam 2014).

Piercing through the sovereign jurisdictions of the two nation-states, Vaitupu and Kioa constitute a political space that exists beyond the boundaries of Westphalian geographies – what I suggest to call a "latent archipelago". Despite its ambiguous legal status, this political space serves as a unique laboratory for examining complex issues related to sovereignty, displacement, and self-determination. This paper delves into the histories of military occupation and self- determination that intersect in the vicissitudes that led Vaitupuans to acquire an island in a foreign country and that will concur to shaping ecopolitical futures.

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Biosketch:

Nicola Manghi is a postdoctoral researcher at CREDO/EHESS in Marseille and a research associate at the Anthropology Programme of the University of Waikato in Kirikiriroa/Hamilton. His research focuses on Tuvalu and its political challenges in the

context of the global climate crisis. Parallel to his ethnographic investigations, he has published on the theoretical debate on political ecology within the social sciences, with a particular emphasis on the works of Isabelle Stengers and Bruno Latour.

Nuclear Testing and Militarization (United States, United Kingdom, France): Imperial Presences and Oceanian Sovereignties (1946-1996) by Renaud Meltz, Professor of contemporary history IUF, CNRS Research Director (MSH-P), (renaud.meltz@cnrs.fr) and Manatea Taiarui, Université de la Polynésie française (MSH-P), certified teacher of history and geography, PhD candidate funded by French Ministry of the Armed Forces in contemporary history (manateataiarui@gmail.com)

Between 1946 and 1996, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France conducted nuclear tests in Oceania (Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Johnston Atoll, Australia, French Polynesia). The nuclearization and militarization of the region shaped Oceanian history in the latter half of the 20th century and beyond. These three powers followed a common imperial pattern: selection of isolated and sparsely populated sites through a “selection of the irradiated”, asymmetrical relationships with local populations, projection of military power into “pioneer frontiers”, mobilization of local workers, concealment of health and environmental impacts from the tests, and suppression of opposition. Scholars such as Robert A. Jacobs (2013, 2022), Becky Alexis-Martin (2019), and many other researchers emphasize the mimetic behavior of these three powers as they exert nuclear imperialism and colonialism (H. M. Barker, 2004; C. R. Hill, 2018; A. Maurer, 2019). However, this comprehensive approach can be further refined, nuanced, and debated by considering France in greater depth. Thanks to declassified archives in 2021, it is now possible to trace in more detail the role of French Polynesia in this history. While France did follow this imperial model by militarizing French Polynesia, there are notable distinctions in its approach during tests at the Centre d’expérimentation du Pacifique (CEP): France structured its own “imperial system” (testing campaigns, relations with the territory, integration of local elites, manipulation of public opinion, “Frenchification” of Polynesians, an overt nuclearization coupled with concealment of the risks, and covert operations) as compared to the U.S. and British precedents. This perspective challenges the notion of a single form of nuclear imperialism: instead, we speak of multiple imperialisms. France positioned itself as a sovereign power in the Pacific, despite anti-nuclear protests and the emergence of Polynesian nationalism, thus amplifying the colonial character of its “imperial system”. The “global imperialism” approach tends to place the three powers on an equal footing, overlooking anti-nuclear actions and the agency of local populations in their own environments. Nuancing this approach emphasizes the critique of France’s argument that it “did no worse” than the Americans and the British.

In the face of this imperial pattern – both common and specific – meant to strengthen their presence, these three powers also encounter, in theory, a similar multiscalar resistance pattern among Oceanians, extensively studied by researchers (K. Harvey, 2016; S. Quito, 2018; A. Maurer, 2019, 2024; E. Lacovski, 2023; N. Maclellan, 2024). These forms of resistance signal the emergence of an anti-nuclear identity, initially unstructured and unintentional, but resolutely transnational, gradually converging around the idea of a regionalism shaped by opposition to nuclear testing. However, once again, the analytical framework shifts when we nuance the globalized scale of

these resistances: anti-nuclear movements evolve, stagnate, shift, converge, or diverge depending on actors (Indigenous, mixed-race, and settler descendants), methods, possibilities of action, time and space, and imperial contexts. Anti-nuclear resistance takes shape, leading to the emergence of plural identities, sovereignties, and solidarities that go beyond “regionalism” or a “global South” (which includes White New Zealand and White Australia).

This tension between a common framework and specific imperial characteristics thus structures both military presences and the emergence of Oceanian sovereignties, forming the backbone of this discussion.

Chrono-thematically, this presentation offers a comparative analytical framework on the history of nuclear imperialisms in Oceania and their resistance movements, shedding light on both a common yet unplanned pattern and the specificities of each interconnected phenomenon, whether imperial or oppositional. Firstly, it examines (I) the imperial framework of the powers aiming to acquire nuclear weapons. Then (II), the implementation of nuclear tests, conditioned by the massive militarization of territories and a reaffirmation of imperial presences, impacts local societies and their environment. Finally, (III), these imperial assertions lead to resistance and the gradual emergence of anti-nuclear identities and “plural sovereignties” around a unique, transnational struggle that transcends state boundaries, compelling these powers to reconsider their imperial ambitions.

Biosketch:

A senior member of the IUF and Research Director at the CNRS, Renaud Meltz heads the SOSI “Observatoire des héritages du CEP”. He co-edited the special issue “Les essais nucléaires français : enjeux internationaux et transnationaux” in Relations internationales, no. 19, August 2023, and has published articles on the subject in both English (“Imperial Resurgence: How Polynesia was Picked as the Site for the French Centre for Pacific Tests (CEP),” with S. Mary and A. Vrignon, The Journal of Pacific History, vol. 58, no. 2, September 2023) and in French (“Associer et dissimuler. Les essais nucléaires français en Polynésie française, un “deuxième contact” entre secret et mensonges”, RHMC, no. 72, 2023/3, pp. 88-116). He also co-authored with A. Vrignon Des bombes en Polynésie. Les essais nucléaires français dans le Pacifique (Vendémiaire, 2022) and is preparing, with the same co-author and B. Furst, a collective volume to be published by the Éditions de la MSH-P, Un Deuxième contact? Histoire et mémoires du Centre d’expérimentation du Pacifique.

Manatea Taiarui is a certified teacher of history and geography and a PhD candidate funded by the French Ministry of the Armed Forces in contemporary history. Since 2022, he preparing a dissertation at the Université de la Polynésie française on the Centre d’expérimentation du Pacifique and French nuclear testing in French Polynesia, approached through global and transnational history. A Junior Auditor of the Institut des hautes études de défense nationale (IHEDN) since 2024, he has been a member of two international nuclear research networks in 2022 and 2023: the 2022-2023 cohort of the Réseau Nucléaire et Stratégie-Nouvelle Génération (Fondation pour la recherche stratégique/Institut français des relations internationales) and the 2023 cohort of the Nuclear Proliferation International History Project’s Nuclear History Boot Camp (Woodrow Wilson Center/Università degli Studi

Roma Tre). He has authored several scholarly articles on the history of the French military and nuclear testing.

Teaching Te Moananui-ā-Kiwa/Kea
Working Session
Convenors: Lisa Uperesa uperesa@asianam.ucla.edu (Asian American Studies, UCLA) and Alexander Mawyer mawyer@hawaii.edu (CPIS, UH Mānoa)

In the wake of powerful currents around equity, justice, and futurity in Indigenous and Oceanian contexts, how are we now teaching Pacific worlds? How do we engage them from different disciplinary and epistemological locations within and beyond the university? What elements are now shaping how and what we teach? How does our approach to knowledges in and about the Oceania and the Pacific reflect, for example: disciplinary boundaries, frameworks, and marginalizations; connection to people and place; location within the university or beyond; and/or student populations and priorities? What kinds of teaching innovations are we engaged in? How are we connecting the leading edges and transformations in our teaching to ongoing work to advance decolonizing, Indigenizing and culturally and community sensitive and responsive moves in research? The 2024 informal session raised the issues of ethics of care, recognizing the diversity of Oceanian voices, bringing Pacific Studies into secondary and primary education, engaging embodied Pacific Studies, community-specific focus in contrast and complement to region-wide lenses and approaches, transformative curricula and pedagogical moves, and the everyday politics of institutions, among other threads. For this working session we invite people to think with us about any and all of these topics or to bring others. Participants will circulate short papers in late January in advance of the meeting.

Participants

Emalani Case, Patricia Fifita, April Henderson, Julia Mage'au Gray, Marcia Leenen-Young, Lana Lopesi, Rolando Espanto, Jess Marinaccio, Kali Fermantez, Jerusha Magalei, Tammy Tabe, Tēvita Kaʻili, Alex Mawyer

Abstracts

Emalani Case Senior Lecturer in Pacific Studies, Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland
Envisioning Oceania: Pedagogies of Futurity

This paper will respond to the question posed by session organisers, "What elements are now shaping how and what we teach?" Thinking about past, recent, and ongoing events (e.g. the fires in Lahaina, the genocide in Palestine, the ongoing militarisation of the Pacific, extreme weather events, and the impacts of climate change), I will reflect on the need to respond to/teach to the realities of our worlds while also finding ways to ensure students are not completely overwhelmed by them. To do so, I will speak to the importance of "envisioning", or as Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains, the necessary imagining that asks us to "dream a new dream and set a new vision" (*Decolonising Methodologies,* p. 152). These visions, as she reminds us,

can “make our spirits soar and give us hope” (p. 152-53). Reflecting on assessments and activities incorporated into my teaching practice, I will propose that we encourage envisioning as a political practice of Pacific and Indigenous futurities. In providing space for our students to dream new dreams, “Envisioning Oceania” will argue for a radical sense of hope in the future that we provide space for engaging with and building in our classrooms.

Rolando Espanto Independent Scholar
A’ohe pau ka ‘ike i ka halau ho’okahi–All knowledge is not taught in one school. The interweaving of Pacific Island Studies with other disciplinary studies.

As Pacific Islanders try to move or have moved forward into this post-colonial stage, many are still faced with the struggles and dismantling the ideologies and methods from the imperial powers. The late and renowned Pacific scholar Dr. Teresia Teaiwa in her essay, “Scholarship from A Lazy Native” attested to the notion of decolonization and colonization, describing that, “We have been written about, talked about, photographed, medically dissected, biologically and anthropologically classified, and our bones have been displayed in museums” (Teaiwa 1995, 59-60). Hence, Pacific Islands Studies allows Pacific Islanders and Non-Pacific Islands to encompass the following: a) Sense of Belonging, b) Sense of Responsibility, and c) Sense of Aloha. With these traits, there is a delicate balance between Pasifika and Western epistemologies that makes Pacific Islands Studies unique.

Kali Fermantez Associate Professor of Hawaiian and Pacific Studies, BYU-Hawai‘i
Tevita Ka‘ili Professor Anthropology and Cultural Sustainability, BYU-Hawai‘i
Jerusha Magalei Assistant Professor of Education, BYU-Hawai‘i

This paper explores the shared educational philosophies embedded in the Hawaiian, Māori, and Tongan concepts of a‘o and ako, terms that signify the interconnectedness of teaching and learning. Rooted in linguistic and cultural continuity across Moananui (Pacific Ocean) societies, a‘o and ako reflect a dual process where teaching is learning, and learning is teaching. The paper highlights the transformative philosophy underpinning these terms, challenging hierarchical models of education by advocating for mutuality and reciprocity between teacher and student roles. Through a focus on practical methods like talanoa—a conversational and critical dialogic approach—this presentation illustrates how these philosophies foster inclusivity and interconnectedness in education. Drawing connections to Pacific Studies pedagogy, and the broader implications for global education, the presentation emphasizes the importance of integrating Indigenous frameworks like a‘o and ako into diverse learning contexts to nurture harmonious and supportive educational communities. We are fully aware of the Polynesian-centrism of these concepts (a‘o, ako, talanoa), but we are advocating for the inclusion of Indigenous Moananui concepts, even though it might not apply to all parts of our vast Oceanic region.

Patricia Fifita Assistant Professor of Oregon State University

Weaving Critical Pacific Islands Studies Pedagogy and Decolonial Social Justice Work at Oregon State University

This paper illustrates the challenges and possibilities of weaving critical Pacific Islands Studies pedagogy and decolonial social justice work in a neoliberal academic environment. Specifically, I describe the experiences of creating an inaugural Pacific Islands Studies course at Oregon State University, a historically white institution located in a semi-rural largely white community. This paper explores the critical relationship between student activism, faculty engagement, and the various forms of mobilization and institutional change that has led to the development and implementation of Pacific Studies courses toward building a Minor concentration in Oceanic Ethnic Studies simultaneously with Indigenous Studies. The development of this inagural course and its use of critical pedagogy centering Pacific knowledge, frameworks, literature and histories has effectively created space and greater inclusivity for Indigenous Pacific Islander students at Oregon State University and ultimately expands possibilities for honoring different ways of knowing and centering subjagated knowledges within the academy.

Julia Mage'au Gray Professional Teaching Fellow in Pacific Studies, Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland

Through my work at Pacific Studies, University of Auckland, teaching the three stages of Pacific Embodied Practices PAC 110, 210 and 310, I utilise Pacific cultural practices framed from a Western perspective as dance and music. I would love to talk about visual language, inclusive of body language, as an integral part of cultural knowledge systems. Often, verbal language holds a place of importance (as it should) as part of reestablishing culture and a way of being. However, as children, much of our learning starts physically and is centred around our visual language, which in turn supports the learning of our verbal languages.

April Henderson Programme Director of Va'aomanū Pasifika and Senior Lecturer in Pacific Studies, Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington
Reframing The Pacific, Telling The Stories That Serve

From its inception in 2000, the third-year core course in Pacific Studies at Victoria University of Wellington has been titled "Framing the Pacific: Theorising Culture & Society." Focusing on the work that Pacific artists and activists do to shape our perception of a range of Pacific issues, the course coalesces strategies and analytics from throughout our undergraduate Pacific Studies curriculum and challenges students to think beyond received wisdom and "commonsense" notions about the region and its places and peoples. The language of frames and framing is just one generative metaphor for the ideological and representational structures we use to present and understand something. The language of storying and restorying is another way to understand such structures and their always-partial, subjective, and strategic nature. Ontologically, how we understand histories, issues, and circumstances grows from all the details we include or exclude from our frame of knowing—details such as what places, people, relationships, and time periods matter to the story we are trying to tell. What we include in our frame or story—whether by deliberate selection or by the default of *just not knowing*

otherwise—in turn determines the horizon of possible futures we can imagine. Our "Framing the Pacific" course, our programme as a whole, and arguably the broader project of critical Pacific Studies, is guided by the imperative of equipping our (predominantly but not exclusively Pacific) students with frames and stories that better serve this region and its peoples. In this informal presentation, I discuss several examples of how the language, imperatives, and strategies of reframing and restorying have guided teaching in our university classes, and, more recently, in our delivery of short courses to New Zealand public sector employees.

Marcia Leenen-Young Senior Lecturer in Pacific Studies, Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland

In conversations about Pacific ways of teaching and learning we have had lately at the University of Auckland there has been a push to *define* Pacific pedagogies and place them under the umbrella of relational teaching. While there is a central core of relational connection in Pacific pedagogies, this is a simplification of our ways of teaching and learning that encompass spirituality, ancestry, our environments etc. as ways we connect. There seems to be a push to 'qualify' Pacific ways of teaching and learning and provide 'how to' instructions for non-Pacific peoples. But is this possible? What *are* Pacific pedagogies – with considerations of different peoples, places, experiences, hierarchies, and generations? How do we collectively conceive of Pacific pedagogies in our university spaces – *can we or should we*? I am thinking this through and do not have an answer, but we are starting this conversation at UoA and am interested in different perspectives.

Lana Lopesi Associate Professor of Indigenous, Race, and Ethnic Studies, University of Oregon

Teaching Pacific studies as an Ethnic Studies and Native American and Indigenous Studies project centers an interdisciplinary and comparative approach to race, as a system of domination, which is intimately tied to issues of gender, class, sexuality, migration, indigeneity, and colonialism. This approach encourages students to think about power and justice through their study of Pacific peoples lived experiences and histories, while also locating Pacific studies in relation and coalition with other BIPOC groups. However, how does this relational and coalitional approach work when there is only one Pacific studies faculty within a university. Within this context, I am interested in how we can work in coalition with our non-Pacific studies colleagues in ways that don't further marginalize Pacific studies within the university, and how to best locate Pacific people within Ethnic Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies, and Pacific, Asian American Studies in ways that are beneficial to Pacific scholars and students. Thinking with Daniel Hernandez and 'Inoke Hafoka's conceptualization of the undercurrents, I am interested in relational and coalition approaches to teaching Pacific worlds, across campus and beyond.

Jess Marinaccio Assistant Professor, Asian Pacific Studies, CSU Dominguez Hills

This paper examines experiences from an Asian Pacific Studies Department to discuss whether it is possible to equitably house both Asia and the Pacific, Asian and Pacific Studies, and Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies under one academic program without eliding the theoretical and methodological directions of one in favor of the other. Diaz (2004), Hall (2015), and others have discussed distinctions between Pacific Islander and Asian American communities and Pacific/Pacific Islander and Asian/Asian American Studies. This paper adds to these discussions pedagogical observations of tensions between the fields, including observations of conflict between the theoretical focus of Pacific Studies on regional indigeneity and alternate foci in Asian Studies, bias in the acceptance of “Asian Pacific” titled courses that do not include Pacific content (or only minimal content), and tension in the misconception that Pacific Islander and Asian American communities in the US have much more in common with each other than Pacific Islander communities in the US and those in the Pacific and Asian American communities in the US and those in Asia. This paper calls for a greater re-orienting of Asian American Studies and Asian Pacific Studies programs in the US toward separate Asian/Asian American Studies and Pacific/Pacific Islander Studies departments, recognizing that many current programs are misleading in suggesting that graduating students receive an equally weighted education in Asian/Asian American Studies and Pacific/Pacific Islander Studies.

Alex Mawyer Associate Professor, Center for Pacific Islands Studies, University of Hawaii-Manoa

Each spring, over the last decade, I‘ve taught PACS 603: Researching Oceania and, over this whole period, of my most stable assignments, “TCP Classics” has generated some of the most vivid, memorable conversation. Students are asked to select three research articles from anywhere in the nearly 70 numbers of the journal, and unpack and reverse engineer the piece with a sort of fundamental question in mind, “what makes this an example of Pacific Studies, if it is?” Beyond their work to reflect on keywords, key concepts, articulations around the potential significance of the pieces, notable quotations, and developing senses of kinship and genealogical relations between articles and author, students also cannot seem to avoid reflecting on significant field changes over time, sense of shifting foundations and values, shifting practices and scholarly norms with our field space. Here, I hope to reflect on this ten-year rearview through the assignment “TCP Classics” on some of the stabilities and fluidities of our Pacific Studies space.

Lisa Uperesa, Associate Professor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies, UCLA

This paper reflects on the importance of key factors shaping how we teach the Pacific, wherever we are: disciplinary compulsions, geographic and historical forces, local accountabilities, changing student demographics, and values that anchor our work (there may be others). Having taught the Pacific on the U.S. east coast, in Hawaii, in Aotearoa; in elite and less elite private school, public universities, and national flagship institutions; in Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, Sociology, Pacific Studies, and Asian American Studies; and with predominantly white, multiethnic, multiracial, ‘local’, and Indigenous/Pacific students the way I teach the Pacific has

shifted over time and in response to different kinds of disciplinary requirements, student demographics, and local/regional realities. The second piece is maybe a way to reflect on this but grounded in the classroom context, using an assignment we did in our introductory Pacific Studies course oriented around taonga/measina. The project required students to research beyond class content to discuss Indigenous knowledges and practices tied to their selected taonga, how it has changed over time and space, and how it might feature in contemporary discussions or debates. The taonga or measina provided a tangible anchor for students to engage critically with Indigenous knowledges, histories, and futures but foundationally anchored in Pacific communities' perspectives, concerns, and experiences. It seems to have been successful for Pacific and non-Pacific heritage students in providing different entries into learning about Te Moananuiakiwa but I'd like to think a bit more deeply about this.

Pacific Youth Leadership
Working Session
Convenors: Helen Lee (H.Lee@LATROBE.EDU.AU) and Aidan Craney (A.Craney@latrobe.edu.au)

A growing number of young people from across the Pacific and the diaspora are taking on leadership roles, from small grassroots groups to large, pan-Pacific organisations. These young leaders are increasingly having their voices heard in their own nations and through global platforms such as the UN. They are speaking out about a wide range of issues affecting the Pacific region including climate change, food security, deep sea mining, West Papuan independence, nuclear legacies and much more. This working session welcomes contributions on all aspects of Pacific youth leadership and aims to generate conversation about how forms of leadership are being developed and demonstrated, as well as the obstacles and challenges young people encounter on the path to leadership. We hope to discuss questions such as:

- What does 'leadership' mean to Pacific young people?
- How do ideas of 'tradition' and 'culture' figure in youth leaders' perspectives of how to be a leader?
- What is supporting or inhibiting the development of leadership potential in Pacific youth?
- What are the connections, alliances and tensions between youth leaders in the islands and in the diaspora?
- What strategies are young leaders employing to build community support and drive social change?

Museums and Repatriation
Working Session
Convenor: Tarisi Vunidilo, California State University (tvunidi@calstatela.edu)

Over centuries, cultural objects and human remains from various cultures in the colonized world including Oceania have been collected by amateur and professional collectors (explorers, traders, anthropologists, colonial officials, casual travelers, etc.)

and many are stored in international museums. Pacific islands artifacts and imageries have had a strong appeal to the popular imagination of the West over the years. However, in recent years the question of ownership and intellectual property rights has emerged as many indigenous groups around the world call for the repatriation of their cultural objects, funerary materials and human remains taken away with or without their ancestors' consent, as a way of reasserting their cultural rights and in rediscovery of their roots and identity.

Repatriation refers to the return of artifacts and human remains to their culture or country of origin regardless of the circumstances under which they were first removed. As once-colonized countries and peoples gain greater autonomy and strength, they are increasingly demanding the return of cultural property. Museums are concerned with acquiring artifacts and human remains for their collections, ethnographic & scientific research and ensuring their future preservation. Repatriation may appear to conflict with the founding principles of museums, however many anthropologists recognize the rights of indigenous people over their cultural heritage.

This session aims to critically examine the issue of ownership and cultural property rights relating to the appropriation of Pacific cultural artifacts and human remains now housed in international metropolitan museums. Invited speakers are requested to explore the historical, sociological and legal aspects of cultural ownership and how they apply to Pacific cultural objects and human remains within their jurisdictions. They are encouraged to explore the socio-legal and cultural implications of repatriation to their museums, collections and communities.

Indigenous Pacific Languages
Working Session
Convenors: Pefi Kingi (2018pefikingi@gmail.com), Suzanna Tiapula and Bernie Goulding

According to UNESCO "half of the 6,000 plus spoken languages today will disappear by the end of the century," if the world fails to take action to preserve endangered languages. The situation in the Pacific region is of particular concern, where more than one hundred native languages are vulnerable or endangered. Indigenous Pacific communities have complex systems of knowledge and communication that require support to protect, preserve, retain and maintain their languages, customs and values which have endured to date. Indigenous languages add to the rich tapestry of global cultural and linguistic diversity. We shall be contributing to the objectives outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (UNESCO 2019). Pacific languages are pivotal in human rights protection, good governance, peace building, reconciliation, sustainable development and all other areas of our livelihood. We support the International Decade of Indigenous Languages and endorse the promotion of Pacific Languages in the following key areas: [1] increasing understanding, reconciliation and international cooperation; [2] creation of favorable conditions for knowledge sharing/and dissemination of good practices with regards to indigenous languages; [3] integration of indigenous languages into standard setting; [4] empowerment through capacity building; and [5] growth and

development through elaboration of new knowledge. Mahalo, Fa'afetai, Ma'alo to our activists and leaders of Pacific languages who offer abstracts and drafts for this Informal Session. We will continue to navigate paths for each of our communities as we explore a future with a vibrant cultural and linguistically diverse region and we welcome the generation of leaders who will guide us to that future.

Middlemen and Brokers in Oceania Revisited
Working Session
Convenors: Dr John Cox (john.cox1@unimelb.edu.au) and A/Prof Monica Minnegal (mmam@unimelb.edu.au)

In 1983, William Rodman and Dorothy Counts published the edited collection *Middlemen and Brokers in Oceania* (ASAO Monograph, Ann Arbor: U of Michigan Press). The volume brings together invaluable insights from the late colonial period in Oceania and represents a serious engagement with the anthropological theory of its day. Forty years on, there is a resurgence of interest in brokers and brokerage in anthropology and other social science disciplines (e.g. James 2011; Lindquist 2015; de Jong 2018; de Jong et al. 2023; Decobert 2021; Diprose 2023; Goodhand and Walton 2023), although with little attention to Pacific societies to date (Minnegal and Dwyer 2022). In this session, we seek to continue a conversation on the legacy of Middlemen and Brokers in Oceania in the light of more recent developments in the anthropology of development and other fields that focus on brokers and brokerage. We hope that some of the original contributors to the Rodman and Counts volume may be able to join this session and reflect on the original Brokers and Middlemen session.

Labour Mobility and the Reconfiguration of Pacific Worlds
Informal Session
Convenors: Victoria Stead (victoria.stead@deakin.edu.au) and Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor

New patterns and intensities of temporary labour mobility are transforming transnational relations of care, kinship and community within the Pacific. Migration and work have often been significant factors in Pacific people's pursuit of *ola manuia* (Samoan) or *mo'ui 'oku* (Tongan)—literally, 'a good and happy life' (Faleolo 2019, Ihara & Vakalahi 2011)—and Pacific studies scholars have long drawn attention to the creativity and agency through which Pacific peoples have pursued and sustained relationships in transnational contexts (Alexeyeff 2008; Ka'ili 2017; Lee 2004; Liliomaiava-Doktor 2009; Nishitani 2020), but these are taking on new valences amid late capitalist economics and new structures of governance and (post)colonial control. In Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, for example, the push to situate the Pacific as a key site and source of agricultural labour is yielding new forms of connections between Pacific Islander temporary migrant workers and diaspora communities, as the latter are increasing being called upon to support workers' wellbeing and to remedy the gaps and harms resulting from the intersections of precarious labour relations and coercive migration regimes. Communities across the Pacific, meanwhile, navigate the reconfiguring of relationships, and shifting

constraints and possibilities of both new and longer-running patterns of labour mobility.

In this Working Session, we invite contributions that reflect on the intersections of labour, mobility, and the making of 'Pacific Islands worlds' (Clifford and Kamehiro 2022). We welcome and encourage attention to diverse forms, sites, temporalities and trajectories of Pacific labour mobility, including informal as well as well as more institutionally formalised pathways. The questions we hope to explore together include, but need not be limited to:

- How is labour mobility transforming transnational world-making and sociality in the contemporary Pacific (and beyond)?
- How do workers, their families and communities conceptualise and pursue wellbeing in the context of mobile working lives?
- What histories are invoked in contemporary configurations of labour, mobility and rootedness?
- What kinds of futures are being sought, promised, and foreclosed through labour mobility?

Conspiracy Thinking in the Pacific
Working Session
Convenors: Michael French Smith tauramat@gmail.com and Roger Lohmann rogerlohmann@trentu.ca

There is a substantial literature on conspiracy thinking in the Euro-American world. conspiracy thinking in Oceania has not received the same attention, but not because it is absent. Melanesian cargo millenarianism, for instance, often holds that Europeans conspire to keep to themselves the secret of effortless, limitless wealth. Conspiracy thinking is probably found everywhere, because it rests in part on the strength of a pan-human proclivity for understanding the world in terms of agency and intention, which may foster exaggerated perceptions of patterns and meanings in events. This proclivity is stronger and more elaborately institutionalized in some contexts than in others, but it is common in societies with long secular traditions as well as where people do not question the reality of what some anthropologists call the "enchanted world." Although identifying common features and common roots across cultures is important, so is identifying and analysing differences. The papers in this session address: a place without conspiracy theories; conspiracy thinking, sorcery accusations, and violence; conspiracy thinking, scams, and hoaxes; conspiracy thinking and fear of "cannibal witches"; the scholarly literature defining conspiracy thinking; and, conspiracy thinking and millenarianism.

We welcome new participants. If you want to make a presentation, please contact Michael French Smith at tauramat@gmail.com. You may submit a paper to be read *in absentia* but we will not support online participation.

Participants/Papers

Managing Sorcery Accusations: Doubt and 'Conspiracy Thinking' in Madang by Rachel Apone

In Papua New Guinea villages, at what point and under what circumstances does ‘conspiracy thinking,’ the broader human tendency to understand misfortune as the result of malevolent actions of others, result in harm? My paper will begin to address this question by looking at how communities in coastal Madang are talking about unexpected deaths and mitigating the potentially harmful and violent outcomes of sorcery accusations. Using a few different cases from my 2023-2024 fieldwork, I will show that the tendency to suspect and blame other people for causing unexpected deaths only becomes problematic when community members become certain that a single suspect must be responsible. Certainty can lead to violence and other problematic outcomes, whereas doubt and uncertainty—suspecting many different people but never settling on a single suspect— leaves room for social action and maintaining positive (if tense) relationships. By looking at how communities manage sorcery accusations, my paper will address how local models of doubt and certainty might influence our understanding of ‘conspiracy thinking’ in the Pacific. My paper will also consider how the “opacity of other minds” doctrine might influence our approach to conspiracy thinking.

Conspiracy Theories: Polynesia vs. Melanesia by Rick Feinberg

My ethnographic research has focused on Polynesian communities in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Although my interlocutors share an assumption that things happen for a reason, that “reason” lies primarily with spirits, gods, or God rather than human conspirators. They recognize an element of human intention in chains of causation, and accusations of malfeasance are common. However, such suspicions tend to focus on individuals rather than claims that life is manipulated by a grand but secret cabal. They do not envision a hidden formula for material success, and no one has suggested to me the existence of a cargo secret. In classic Melanesian “Big Man” systems, success results from industrious activity, political calculation, and manipulation of resources. By contrast, Polynesian chiefdoms are based on a relatively stable hierarchy that is largely determined by genealogy. Perhaps, I suggest, there is a connection between the contrast in socio-political systems and their religious underpinning: i.e., Melanesians’ frequent preoccupation with sorcery and witchcraft, vs. Polynesians’ concern with mana, an impersonal force. And, perhaps, Melanesian concern about witchcraft is connected to a proclivity for conspiracy theories. My paper will explore cases of rumor and suspicion in my Polynesian field sites and how they differ from conspiracy beliefs that underly Melanesian “cargo cults.”

What can we learn from conspiracy thinking scholarship to address sorcery accusation related violence in Papua New Guinea today? by Miranda Forsyth and Philip Gibbs

It is common across many parts of Melanesia to attribute causation for death, sickness, and other misfortune to the agency of individuals believed to have used supernatural powers. In many places these beliefs lead to accusations being levelled against individuals and, particularly in Papua New Guinea, to violence, torture, and death. The problem is increasingly being acknowledged in PNG under the terminology of sorcery accusation related violence (SARV), and at a United Nations level as harmful practices related to accusations of witchcraft and associated ritual attack. There are several similarities between the beliefs that underlie SARV

and conspiracy thinking as it is expressed in the Global North, such as the focus on human agency as causal for harmful events, and lack of concrete evidence. However, there are also important differences, such as the fact that the beliefs in sorcery are shared across the population rather than by a sub-group. This paper will explore some of these similarities and differences with a view to understanding the extent to which strategies and approaches developed to prevent harm arising from conspiracy thinking can be of use in addressing SARV.

Conspiracy Theory and Its Familiars by Michael Goldsmith

Michael French Smith's position statement for this session encourages a broad view of the range of conspiracy and conspiracy-adjacent ideas under the rubric of 'conspiracism.' I take this term to mean a range of phenomena – rumours, scams and confidence tricks, hoaxes, panics, messianic flare-ups, the Mandela effect (collective false memories), and so on – that display what Wittgenstein called "family resemblance," by which he meant "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing." I acknowledge Rick Feinberg's interesting conjecture that Polynesia features the absence of conspiracy theories and that this requires as much explanation as their presence in Melanesian societies. I agree with that axiom in principle, but I think Smith's broader view of 'conspiracism' complicates Feinberg's thesis. Like Feinberg, I have no concrete ethnographic examples of full-blown conspiracy theory from my Tuvalu research. If as I argue, however, 'conspiracism' includes scams and hoaxes then I can point to at least one major historical Polynesian case study that fits the bill. I refer to the 'Sidney Gross affair' that embroiled the newly independent state of Tuvalu in a financial crisis in the late 1970s. In some ways, scams and conspiracy thinking mirror each other. Conspiracy thinking highlights a view of the world in which unorthodox sources of information are seen as more trustworthy than those deriving from orthodox 'science' and expertise controlled by ruling elites. By contrast, scams depend on the premise that there is no 'conspiracy' behind the disinformation. To put it another way, conspiracy theory trades on suspicion of certain narratives in favour of others that 'the authorities' question. Scams trade on the willingness to believe disinformation. Conspiracy theory represents unwarranted vindication while scam thinking represents unwarranted hope. Each requires a willingness or propensity to suspend disbelief, but from opposite angles.

Cannibal Witch Conspiracy Theory: Misinformation about the Cause of Death that Motivated Killings by Roger Ivar Lohman

Conspiracy thinking is the human tendency to attribute important events one disapproves of to the volitional action of hidden nefarious actors in cahoots. It is a close cousin to supernaturalism or religious thinking, which traces anything to spiritual volition. The volitional beings of conspiracy theories are typically human, and they may or may not be numinous. Both religious and conspiracy theories are attractive despite being far-fetched. Applying them allows people to engage socially not just with fellow believers, but also with physical processes and outcomes that are not actually social in nature. Therefore, efforts to prevent and mitigate the spread of conspiracy theories in any culture face similar challenges as secularization endeavours. Conspiracy thinking and supernaturalism converge in attributions of

coordinated malevolent magic as the root cause of death. Magical explanations of death and misfortune are a mainstay of foundational ethnography concerning beliefs and practices labelled witchcraft and sorcery. In many traditional communities such beliefs are explicit, sincere, powerful, virtually universal, and tenacious. They lead to suspicion of heinous intentions and deeds by neighbours. They can incite homicides of those accused. When I lived among the Asabano people of Papua New Guinea in the 1990s and 2000s people attributed deaths to other people nefariously wielding magical powers. These “cannibal witches” (*sanemawno*) supposedly cooperated to stalk, ensnare, shoot, disembowel, and revive their victims long enough for them to return home, become ill, die, and be consumed by their “killers” after burial. Natural phenomena such as accidents, illness, and death were perceived as if they were attacks by supernaturally endowed conspirators. Before contact with the state in the 1960s, accused “cannibal witches” were executed. Such vigilante killings were the only actual homicides that resulted from “cannibal witchcraft” in the culture. These deaths would not have occurred without the motive of this conspiracy theory. Despite their horrendous consequences, this and other magical theories of death are striking and appealing because they assume and assert a volitional and social cause among familiar others for unfortunate events. It’s like living in an Agatha Christie novel: every death is a murder—a shocking betrayal of the mutualistic social contract. Except of course for those homicides that are deemed legitimate: like executions of condemned killers, even those convicted of impossible deeds.

Thinking about Conspiracy Thinking: A Literature Review by Michael French Smith

Conspiracy thinking (hereafter, CT) – sometimes called conspiracism – chronically assumes that secretive cabals are causing one’s own and the world’s problems. Scholarly literature specifically addressing CT – mostly in the Euro-American world – focuses on its social and psychological correlates. There is speculation on causal relationships, but with the caveat that correlations cannot determine if CT *predisposes* people to engaging with conspiracy theories or their advocates or *results* from such engagement. The same literature identifies pronounced proclivities for *agenticity* (agency attribution) and *patternicity* (perception of meaningful patterns) as the chief defining features of CT. Literature on religious and political movements often finds attributions of conspiracy in their ideologies and identifies strong agenticity and patternicity in participants’ perceptions (although not by these names). Some anthropological literature posits agenticity as a human universal with evolutionary roots, but ethnographic literature finds some cultural worlds much richer than others in assumptions of agency. It often appears that such assumptions *underlie* exaggerated pattern perception. This suggests refining ideas about the psychology and cultural psychology related to perceptions of conspiracy. The vast literature on secularization, including its frailty, suggests that comparative approaches to this issue include historical comparison.

Conspiracy Thinking in Action: The Paranoid Ethos in Manus, Papua New Guinea by Michael French Smith

The dramatic millenarian episodes that erupted within the early Paliau Movement (in the 1940s and 1950s) in what is now Manus Province, Papua New Guinea, illustrate the role of a culturally constituted predisposition to key elements of so-called conspiracy thinking in millenarian ideology and psychology. In 1973, Theodore

Schwartz posited that what he called a paranoid ethos (hereafter, PE) was a feature of indigenous Manus cultural psychology and the cultural milieux that in which episodes of Manus millenarianism arose, the ideology of which alleged a conspiracy of Whites against black New Guineans. A PE assumes that intentional forces shape events and chance plays little or no role in the world. Thus, patterns are meaningful, not random. In addition, suspicion abounds because danger – assumed to come from intentional forces – is assumed to be ubiquitous. Assuming intention behind events and adamant pattern seeking are central features of what many psychologists now call conspiracy thinking, conspiracism, or conspiratorial ideation. Considerable ethnography describes cultural orientations approximating a PE and suggests enabling conditions like those Schwartz identified in Manus. Descriptions of the millenarian frame of mind in a great variety of contexts recall the PE. Some also link it to conspiracism. Although Schwartz identified features of Manus life in the early colonial period that, he argued, sustained a PE, he also held that it is a universal human potential. Exaggerated fear of conspiracies is common throughout the world. For this reason, much of the relevant literature holds that conspiracy thinking is *not* pathological. Schwartz, however, argued that a PE spurred self-destructive behaviour that he defined as irrational in the Manus millenarian movements he observed. Wind Nation is the most prominent institutionalized successor to the Paliau Movement active today. Its ideology locates the current conditions of Manus people and others in the actions of evil supernatural entities in the mythological (to an outside observer) past. It does not, however, invoke any current human conspiracy. Further, the leaders of Wind Nation, although not all the followers, seem as focused on building long-term institutions as on preparing for an imminent millennium. Yet, its ideology rests on elements of both a paranoid ethos and so-called conspiracy thinking – broad assumptions of agency behind events and related pattern seeking.

Decolonising the Sea of Islands
Working Session
Convenors: Nuhisifa Seve-Williams, Independent (williams346@slingshot.co.nz); Tēvita O. Ka‘ili, Brigham Young University Hawai‘i (tevita.kaili@byuh.edu)

This session began as an informal session at the ASAO meeting in 2019 in Auckland New Zealand. At that time the intent of the session was to create a space to critically talanoa on the impact of the three divisions (on the people that lived within these boundaries) and the naming of the three cultural regions - Melanesia (black islands), Polynesia (many islands) and Micronesia (small islands).

The discussion in the first session focused on who had the power to name and the way that identities in some diaspora Pacific peoples populations were being shaped by affiliation to a cultural region.

The second session was held in 2020 in Kauai Hawaii where similar discussions were held.

Four years on and post pandemic there have been some noticeable changes – the term Moana is increasingly being used in New Zealand by Pacific peoples in place of

the word Pacific. While this is viewed by many Pacific peoples in New Zealand as positive it has also drawn critiques from others as the word Moana is specific to the islands within Polynesia.

In 2023 the talanoa focused on the impact of the divisions and naming of the three cultural regions: Melanesia, Polynesia, and Micronesia. Participants discussed regionalism, identity formation of the Pacific diaspora, and cultural boundaries, reflecting on the post-pandemic landscape and recent political developments.

Participants also reflected on Epeli Hauʻofa's concept of the *sea of islands* and the Pacific Islands Forum's adoption of the terms *large ocean states* and *blue Pacific continent*. A list of the names that are now commonly used were also discussed. These names included:

- Our Sea of Islands
- Oceania
- Wansolwara (One Ocean, One People)
- Pasifika
- Moana (Ocean)
- Moana Oceania
- Moana Nui (Great Ocean)
- Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (Great Ocean of Kiwa)
- Moananuiākea (Great Vast Ocean)
- Large Ocean States
- Blue Pacific Continent

The 2023 talanoa session also provided an opportunity for participants to engage in critical dialogue about the ongoing challenges posed by the divisions and naming of the cultural regions in the Pacific. The discussion emphasized the importance of examining regionalism, identity formation, and cultural boundaries, while promoting unity and a sense of shared identity among Pacific peoples.

Participants acknowledged the evolving landscape and recognized the need for continued dialogue and collaboration to address these complex issues. The 2025 session will continue with the talanoa.

Dialogics of Field Photography
Working Session
Convenor: David Lipset (lipse001@umn.edu)

Fieldwork, which is an empirical project, is also a multimodal experience, whose meanings cannot be synthesized in a monograph, a journal article, much less in a field diary or a personal library of field photos. Nevertheless, something adheres to photography that can capture its richness, or at least can depict its potential richness in a way that exceeds words and language. As such, of course, any viewing, or exegesis, of a field photo selected by the criterion of its ethnographic and subjective richness by the fieldworker who took it should not only provoke or inspire complicated and extended discourse, it should also provoke plural perspectives, rather than one. In the 2023 working session, each contributor selected one photo and offered a dialogical exegesis of it that included multiple voices without

designating a last word. We are welcoming new contributors to the 2025 session, which will continue as a working session. Please contact David Lipset (lipse001@umn.edu) for more information or to join the working group as soon as possible.

Bodies, Signs, and Languages on the Move across the Pacific
Working Session
Convenors: Kathleen C. Riley (kriley1125@gmail.com) and Miki Makihara (miki.makihara@gmail.com)

We are hoping this working session proposal will inspire conversations about transformations in the subjectivities and cultural and linguistic practices produced by and through emergent modes of communication across both local and global contexts of interaction. Researchers have studied changing languages and practices (e.g., endangerment of Indigenous languages and the emergence of syncretic varieties such as creole languages and code-switching speech styles) in the context of colonial domination and local resistance throughout the Pacific. Many other modes of communication – from body language to music and dance, tattooing to foodways, oral history to court testimony – have been affected not only by the age-old forms of suppression and codification, government policies and religious strictures, but also by the more recent expansion of genres and media (from radio and television to facebook and youtube) that have ever more strongly linked the lands and waters between Asia and the Americas to each other and beyond. Moreover, these semiotic shifts have both shaped and been shaped by changing subjectivities and imaginaries (whether expressed in terms of traditional social categories such as kin group and sexuality, race and age, or more intersectional and multiscalar forms of relationality) of those who have engaged in them. Many of these transformations have happened through in situ and virtual interactions as a consequence of migrations ensuing from climate change, economic and educational aspiration, and/or sociopolitical pressures. For this session, we invite investigations of the modalities and embodiments of affects and future world-making that traverse various scales of institutional and interactional sites of production. Affective and temporal projection of hope, for example, could be examined to analyze diasporic and Indigenous communities' language reclamation projects and the challenges they face in intergenerational experiences of the politics of tradition and community-building and sociocultural and linguistic change Also welcome would be explorations of semiotically constructed identities and relationships via dialogic practices that involve multisensorial and cross-species signs – not only linguistic and paralinguistic, but also electrochemical and spiritual. In short, we invite the participation of any and all (scholars and/or activists) interested in such entanglements of bodies, signs, and languages in the area known as Oceania.

Colonial Legacies, Bicultural Navigations, and Oceanian Creativity
Working Session
Convenors: Jordan Prokosch (dr.jprokosch@gmail.com); Rolando Espanto (respanto07@gmail.com)

In many cases, post-colonial theory has been superseded by more diffuse concepts of globalization and multiculturalism, but this perspective can obscure genuine,

specific, ongoing colonial relationships. Isolation is no longer the norm, and Oceanian peoples can have diverse, multicultural experiences. However, distant powers still govern many Oceanian lands, others have special relationships with their former colonizers, and even those that are entirely independent were irrecoverably changed by colonial policies, technologies, and ideas. Colonial segmentations, such as French vs. British territories, remain as substantial points of difference between Oceanian peoples. These divided colonial culture, language, policy, and infrastructure have a lasting impact on the culture.

As native residents or diaspora, a distinction that blurs with regular movement, modern Oceanians often find themselves navigating between their own culture and that of another, usually colonial power. They may work abroad, adopt another language, engage with colonial media, use new technologies, and internalize new ideas. These experiences become a normal part of life and the ongoing process of culture change.

Culture change is not culture loss. While exploitation, destruction, and loss are fundamental to colonialism, we wish to avoid narratives that depict Oceanian peoples only as passive victims undergoing inevitable forced assimilation. Oceanian people are thriving; their cultures remain vibrant and unique. Colonial adoptions can serve indigenous ideals: colonial experiences can inspire new authentic creations, and cultural contrasts can reaffirm distinct identities.

We welcome participants who wish to discuss the ongoing legacy of colonialism on Oceanian cultures and how Oceanian people navigate this legacy. We aim to focus on modern experiences and active, creative, transformative efforts.

Gender, Environment, and Social Change in West Papua
Working Session
Convenors: Jenny Munro (Jenny.munro@uq.edu.au), Yohana Baransano (annabr_smg@yahoo.com) and Timothy Daniels (Timothy.P.Daniels@hofstra.edu)

The forms of violence experienced by West Papuans are ever increasing. Amidst crisis and hardship, there is also everyday life, myriad untold stories, and creative forms of hope and persistence. West Papuan researchers, activists, and scholars also continue to create and share knowledge about diverse and dynamic social, environmental, and political conditions. Oftentimes this work is not known beyond West Papua due to political, linguistic, and financial barriers. This informal session invites participants to share research and perspectives on social and environmental aspects of West Papuan society, including West Papuan diasporas. We aim to attract a wide range of participants to advance shared interests and strengthen networks and collaborations. Taking advantage of this year's virtual online conference, we would like to especially encourage West Papuan participants and those who would like to work toward publishing their research soon. However, we also welcome those who are conceptualizing future research or just want to join the discussion. If you would like to participate please contact us with a short bio including your research interests (50-100 words) and for those who are currently researching West Papuan issues, a paper title or topic.

Mud
Informal Session
Barbara Andersen (B.Andersen1@massey.ac.nz) and Jamon Halvaksz (jamon.halvaksz@utsa.edu)

Mud is a provocation to consider the different ways that moist earth figures into discussions of climate change, urbanization, 'routes and roots,' health and disease, and land-people relationships. Mud sticks to the bodies of humans, plants, animals, buildings, tires, and shoes, lubricating and entrapping us as we travel, as we fall. We must clean it off or smear it on in different contexts. It can be alive with organisms—bacteria, hookworms, mosquito larvae—or made sterile by poisonous run-off. As a medium for cultural production, mud dances and grieves. It marks extreme weather events, sliding down mountains, befuddling roads, destroying homes and gardens. Mud is land in motion.

Papers in this session will examine the complexities of wet earth, and the work that it does as a surface, medium, and problem for communities in Oceania. How does thinking through mud bridge discussions of health, embodiment, environment, and infrastructure? As both "matter out of place" and a stage in a cycle or process, how can mud challenge semiotic and material relations? As landscapes become mudscapes, what happens to the ties between people and place?

Join us in treading through the material and social life of mud in Oceanic environments. We will not be presenting papers at this stage, but please send abstracts or ideas for discussion to the session organizers by August 1, 2024.

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2021 The Social Life of Sediment. Water History 13(1): 1–12.

Participants

Thorgeir Kolshus

Giulio Maria Panettiere

Narratives in Fibers: The Dynamics of Textile Arts across the Pacific Ocean
Informal Session
Convenors: Carolina Gallarini (c.gallarini@uea.ac.uk), University of East Anglia, Anna Paini (anna.paini@univr.it), Università di Verona

This informal session aims to gather research on textile arts across Oceania, bridging historical depth with modern perspectives. It is an open call for contributions that examine the myriad ways in which textiles have been integral to Pacific cultures, economies, aesthetic, and social structures.
Key areas of interest include the historical significance of textile trade, its economic impacts, the exploration of textiles as cultural symbols across various societies, their histories in worldwide museum collections, and their connections with identity reclaiming and transmission of social meanings. This initiative seeks to understand textiles as dynamic material within cultural heritages, extending beyond Tapa to include traded fabrics and garments, reflecting shifts in societal values, technological innovations, and global exchanges. The diverse array of topics can include the uses of textiles in ceremonial practices, their significance in storytelling or their cultural preservation in diverse institutions.

Additionally, it looks to uncover how textiles intersect with modern themes of environmental sustainability, innovation in the materiality, and their implications in contemporary art and fashion, encompassing research on a broader range of textile products, such as woven mats, and the creative and day-to-day uses of traded textiles and sewing techniques in dressmaking. Contributions that explore the acquisition of these materials through varied channels, including missions, military exchanges, or other forms of cross-cultural interactions, are welcomed.

This project aims to foster a multidisciplinary dialogue, welcoming contributions from anthropology, art history, economics, environmental studies, and beyond. Indeed, it presents an opportunity for artists, activists, practitioners, and enthusiasts to share insights, methodologies, and findings, promoting a collaborative exploration of textile arts across the Pacific Ocean. While the call for contributions casts a wide net to capture the diversity of textile arts' impact and significance, the ultimate goal is to distil these varied perspectives into a cohesive topic that will guide our formal work moving forward. Contributors are encouraged to submit abstracts to the panel organizers.

List of readings (in progress)

Addo, Ping-Ann, 2004, "We Pieced Together Cloth, We Pieced Together Culture: Reflections on Tongan Women's Textile-making in Oakland", *Textile Society of America Symposium*. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsaconf/469/

From Dissertation to Book: the tips & tricks for publishing the first book
Panel discussion/Workshop

Chair: Hōkūlani K. Aikau, Professor School of Indigenous Governance, UViC & Series Editor, Pacific Islands Monograph Series, University of Hawai'i Press

Panelists:
Paige West, Claire Tow Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University. Author of Conservation Is Our Government Now (Duke University Press, 2006); From Modern Production to Imagined Primitive (Duke University Press, 2012); Dispossession and the Environment (Columbia University Press, 2016).

Lisa Uperesa, Associate Professor, Asian American Studies, UCLA. Author of Gridiron Capital: How American Football Became a Samoan Game (Duke University Press, 2022)

Tevita Ka'ili, Professor of Anthropology & Cultural Sustainability, BYU-H. Author of Marking Indigeneity: The Tongan Art of Sociopolitical Relations (University of Arizona Press, 2017). Editor, Pacific Studies

Marama Muru-Lanning, Associate Professor of Anthropology and the Director of the James Henare Research Centre, The University of Auckland. Author of Tupuna Awa: People and Politics of the Waikato River (Auckland University Press, 2016).

JC Salyer, Associate Professor of Practice and Chair, Department of Human Rights, Barnard College; Staff Attorney, Arab-American Family Support Center. Author of Court of InJustice: Law without Recognition in U.S. Immigration (Stanford University Press, 2020).

Does this sound familiar? You have finally finished and defended the dissertation. Your committee recommends turning the dissertation into a book. You are excited by the feedback and want to implement their advice, but you are not sure where to start. You have your first academic position and need a publication plan for contract renewal, but you are not sure where to start. This panel features leading scholars in the field who have published books. They will share their publication journey highlighting the decisions they made on the way to publishing the first, and subsequent books. This workshop will also explain the difference between the dissertation and the book, offer practical steps for how to move from dissertation to book, how to establish a relationship with an editor and press, how to navigate the changing landscape of academic publishing, how to plan for the cost of publishing, open access, and how to think strategically about getting your work out in the world. Panelists will also offer insights into how to navigate the expectations for tenure and changes in book publishing in the past 20 years. What should early career researchers consider as they wade into these new waters?

Emerging Scholars Talanoa - 2025 Theme "Our Mana"
Informal Session
Convenors: Alexis Tucker Sade (atuckersade@miracosta.edu) and Koliniusi 'Keli' Ross-Mau (krossmau@miracosta.edu)

This session is held every year as a space for undergraduate, early graduate, and other emerging scholars to actively participate in the Annual Meeting. This ‘talanoa/tok stori’ style session embodies the spirit of Moana in a welcoming, open approach to scholarship. All forms of participation from research to poetry to song are encouraged. Our session in 2024 fostered inspiring conversations on gender roles and behavioral ideals across the Pacific and diaspora. Our 2025 in-person session will focus on the broad and inclusive theme of “Our Mana.” Participants are welcome to interpret this theme in any way that speaks to them.

Anthropology of Oceania Past, Present, Future
Informal Session
Convenors: Paige West, Barnard College and Columbia University; Marama Maru-Lanning, University of Auckland; Hokulani Aikau, University of Victoria; Lisa Uperesa, University of Auckland

Historically the social anthropology of Oceania was dominated by scholars from, and based in, non-Oceanic places. Growing out of European missions, colonial endeavors, and Oxbridge “expeditions” in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the discipline of anthropology came of age as a scholarly field of study on the backs of people and communities from Oceania in the mid 1900s. During the growth of this field anthropologists asked a range of questions about “culture” and they often did so with an eye to ethnological comparison across practice. As the late 1900s and early 2000s saw more scholars from Oceania move into the field of anthropology, the emergence of Pacific Island Studies (a more scholarly-capacious field of study than anthropology), the beginnings of regional calls to decolonize anthropological methodology, and shifts away from questions of culture and comparison to questions that centered historic and contemporary connections between peoples and communities in Oceania and national, regional, and global processes. The 2000s have also seen calls from a new generation of scholars (Oceanic scholars and politically engaged others) who are action-focused and seeking to find solutions to retain the places they were born and live. They are thinking about solutions to compounding climate change issues, raising sea level and pollution, housing and food shortages, food sovereignty, inadequate health provision, out of touch central leadership, and dispossessive laws. These scholars have little time for old fights and critiques and wish to use their time strategically, to work collaboratively, and to make change in the world. Alongside this, the question of what an ethical anthropological practice in Oceania looks like sits in the minds of many academically situated scholars and activists. Younger scholars often eschew the field because of its history and because they are tired of talk and want action. Older scholars often find frustration with, and take personally, critiques of the historic methods and topics of the field. This session asks what scholars who are actively conducting research, undertaking collaborative projects, and training students today see of value in the past and of value in on-going critiques of the field, and if, how, and why they continue to utilize the methods and theories from anthropology in their scholarship and in their activist work.

Please contact Paige West (cw2031@columbia.edu) if you wish to participate in the session.

'Breakdown in Hela and Enga'
Informal Session
Convenors: Alex Golub (golub@hawaii.edu) and Michael Main (mmain1@unimelb.edu.au)

The highlands of Papua New Guinea have long been recognized as a place where 'tribal fighting' occurs. Yet in the past three years Hela and Enga province have experienced uniquely terrible breakdowns in everyday life: intense conflict with powerful firearms, and the destruction and closure of roads, schools, airports, and other infrastructure, internal displacement of thousands of people, and increased sexual violence against women and girls. Despite — or perhaps *because* — of the intensity of this breakdown, Enga and Hela have not received as much attention from scholars as they have from journalists and activists.

This session asks: What is going on in Hela and Enga? Is the breakdown the same in both places, are different processes occurring in each province? Are generic concepts like 'tribal fighting' or 'warlordism' really adequate to understand conflicts in this area? How is this violence gendered and what is behind the increasing attacks on women and girls? What is the relationship between this violence and the resource developments in these provinces? What is the relationship between this violence and electoral politics? How are the police and military being deployed, and what effect are they having? Is this breakdown connected to a broader crisis in morality and social values?

We hope that quality scholarship will help at least a little in understanding this breakdown, and thus contributing in some small way to finding solutions to the problems which currently plague Hela and Enga. To this end, we invite anthropologists and scholars from other disciplines to join us in thinking through these important topics. We also invite anyone with in-depth knowledge of current events in Hela and Enga to share their description and analysis of the situation.

Data Sovereignty and Health Care in the Pacific
Informal Session
Organisers: Barbara Andersen (B.Andersen1@massey.ac.nz) Chelsea Wentworth (wentwo21@msu.edu)

The "datafication" of public health—the "conversion of qualitative aspects of life into quantified data" (Ruckenstein and Schüll 2017)—is changing how scientific knowledge about Pacific peoples' health and wellbeing is generated, commensurated, and translated into practice. The possibilities of "big data", algorithmic visualisation tools, and computational analysis are exciting for many health researchers. However, Pacific and other Indigenous scholars have raised alarms about the ethical and epistemological perils of detaching knowledge about health from its communities of origin. There are also concerns about how a reliance on specialized data analysis and management skills may increase the digital divide in the health and education sectors, cementing inequalities and making Pacific Island health systems even more dependent on often unequal relationships with aid donors, overseas partners, and foreign researchers. Further, the funding, collection, production, and dissemination of large public health data sets often results in erasure

of community as data at the island, district, or even country levels are assimilated to make statements about Pacific Islander health as a whole. This level of amalgamation muddies understanding of community level public health and hinders the abilities of communities to draw on these data to assess and address public health concerns on their own.

This informal session grew out of previous ASAO sessions on “Teaching and Learning Healthcare in the Pacific”. While we remain interested in health education and training, we are now seeking to bring together people whose research addresses the different ways that big data and new modes of digital and computational analysis may impact Pacific health systems and the sovereignty of Pacific communities.

We welcome all participants with an interest in health care in the Pacific. Possible topics for discussion may include:

- Big data collection in the Pacific – e.g. large online data sets, mobile phone tracking, population health databases – and commensuration
- Pacific data sovereignty, privacy, and protection of community knowledge
- Digital divides and their consequences for Pacific health systems
- Statistical reasoning and governance in public health
- Health and “datafied” lives—everyday engagements with health statistics, metrics, and digital surveillance.

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Collaborative Research: Knowledge, Impact, and Repair
Working Session
Convenors: Jessica Hardin (jahgss@rit.edu) and Jess Marinaccio (jmarinaccio@csudh.edu)

This working session aims to bring together scholars and practitioners engaged in "collaboration" widely defined – from research to writing to teaching and solidarity, to explore what collaboration means from a specifically Pacific perspectives. Anthropology has a particular standpoint from which to orient to collaboration as the ideal of the lone ethnographer continues to story the imaginations of anthropologists around the world. Indigenous scholars, however, have long critiqued this mode of doing research as extractive. Anthropologists - located differently across the Pacific and in North America - has variously responded to these critiques. For some, working collaboratively has become the new normal, for others it's always been the norm. However, "collaboration" is not a self-evident set of practices and carries with it distinct values and assumptions. Yet, in fields like health and development, collaboration is an expected part of the research and funding application process. This panel takes an anthropological approach to collaboration by asking, what do we mean when we invoke this term? With this in mind, the panel may explore questions like:

- How do methods and forms of collaboration articulate professional ethics and morals about "good" research?
- How does collaboration make for better "data"? What's the relationship between data and knowledge?
- How and why does collaborative research yield a sense that the research can be more impactful?
- What harms does the figure of lone ethnographer continue to engender? How might we maintain the benefits of deep ethnographic engagement, often

conducted alone or with family, without re-enacting historical research traumas? Is it possible?
- What assumptions among anthropologists would need to change to shift the value and prestige building around the figure of the lone ethnographer?
- What power differentials does collaboration seek to redress? What practices does this entail? What power differentials remain intact?
- How do collaborators manage their different orientations to research based on their particular standpoints?
- How does collaborative research take on distinct valences in the context of the Pacific's rendering of research as service?
- How do Pacific Research Methodologies provide distinct models for thinking about collaboration?
- What slippages and gaps exist between the Pacific Research Methodologies literatures and methodological and anthropological discussions about collaboration?
- How do our institutions routinize collaboration? What are the benefits and limits of these processes?
- How do national discourses about research and rights shape how collaboration is constructed and practiced?

Participants interested in sharing their knowledge and experiences of collaboration are welcome alongside those who are just beginning to imagine themselves in explicitly collaborative research relations. Those interested in the theories of relationality that undergird research as a practice and those interested in the nitty gritty of methodological explorations are equally welcome.

Moana Tāvāist Ontologies (formerly Moana/Pacific Ontological Turnings) Working Session
Conveners: Doug Dalton (daltondm@longwood.edu); Albert L. Refiti (albert.refiti@aut.ac.nz); Mike Poltorak (M.S.Poltorak@kent.ac.uk); Tevita O. Kaʻili (tevita.kaili@byuh.edu)

Update: The Moana Tāvāist Ontologies session will not be convening in Fiji in 2025 but plans to convene in 2026

Community Law-making in the Pacific Islands
Informal Session
Convenors: Miranda Forsyth (miranda.forsyth@anu.edu.au), Sinclair Dinnen, Ali Tuhanuku, (with Alex Golub)

Locally-initiated governance and regulatory experimentation is happening in many parts of the Pacific, typically in rural areas where the material presence of state is limited, but also in many urban settings. Such experimentation takes diverse forms, including the elaboration of detailed written 'community laws' and detailed committee structures and organisational charts. While usually having no official legal standing, these 'laws' draw on different sources of authority and legitimacy, typically a blend of kastom, church and state. Community law-making is often motivated by a desire to address local social order problems and forms of insecurity that existing mechanisms and approaches – whether state or non-state - appear unable or unwilling to

manage. Another motivation is the wish to foster better linkages with state and other external actors that can assist local leaders in addressing these problems Community laws cover a wide range of behaviours that speak to both patriarchal norms (prohibitions on women wearing trousers) and also human rights concerns (prohibitions on domestic violence). In many settings, these laws entail an endless process of discussion and development, serving discursive and performative functions, as much as actual regulatory power.

There is also a great deal of variation in the posture of the state in relation to community driven law and local order making. We are interested in exploring the positions taken by states at national and sub-national levels, and in setting these against historical patterns of colonial, church and post-colonial state embrace and rejection of kastom and local-level regulation. What tensions persist over time and what new ones are emerging in these contemporary governance experiments?

Given the renewed interest around core questions of social order formation in anthropology (Golub 2018; Golub & Handman 2024) and development studies (Albrecht & Kyed 2015), this panel will discuss the significance of this phenomenon for order-making in the contemporary Pacific – what it means, how it is made, by whom and for whom, and the ways it is contested by a range of social actors.

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Pacific Indigeneity and Gender and Sexuality
Informal Session
Convenors*: *Luka Bunnin, University of Oxford (amber.bunnin@sant.ox.ac.uk);
David Tu'ipulotu-Tu'inukuafe, University of Auckland
(DTuipulotu@aucklandmuseum.com)

Research about gender and sexuality in the Pacific often focuses on those who, in western paradigms, are considered cisgender and straight. Although this is an important area, there are multiple gaps in Pacific gender and sexuality research, including the prioritisation of Pacific "gender and sexuality-divergent" communities, including: leitī, fa'atama, intersex people, gay men, and bisexual women and further communities. In this session, we are defining gender and sexuality as a word that simultaneously references gender identity, bodily sex, and sexuality, especially noting the overlaps and distinctions between these axes of identity in Indigenous languages and paradigms. We also follow Henrickson's (2008) definition of religion and as "particular structured expressions of that meaning within existing or traditional institutions" and spirituality as "meaningfulness and the purpose of life, which may include beliefs in spiritual forces, god or gods"

These gaps have significant consequences, such as a lack of understanding about how all in Pacific communities and societies are affected by climate change, how gender and sexuality identities and ideological praxes interact, and how Pacific gender and sexuality-divergent communities use are and activism to further specific sociopolitical aims. In this session, we embrace the political dimensions of scholarship and the potential of research to support social change by responding to Pacific gender and sexuality-focused current events and activism. This session aims to discuss areas that are often ignored and/or misunderstood by non-Pacific and Pacific researchers alike. Our discussions will involve matters such as: leitī and religion; Pacific gender and sexuality divergence and climate coloniality; fa'atama genealogies and knowledge networks; Pacific queer data ethics; Pacific Indigenous disabled queer intersectionalities; Pacific gender and sexuality-divergent art, literature, and film; whether (and, if so, how) "queer" and "transgender" are suitable frameworks for understanding gender and sexuality in Pacific contexts; and MVPFAFF+ organising in Aotearoa New Zealand and the wider world.

Women's Bodies in Healthcare and Women's Health in Oceania
Informal Session
Convenor: Alexis Tucker Sade (atuckersade@miracosta.edu)

This continuing informal session will build upon the interest in specific topics identified in the session at the 2024 ASAO Annual Meeting. These include: (1) Construction, perception, and imagination of women's bodies in terms of healthy function, the cause of disease, and the course of treatment; (2) Women's bodily autonomy and rights to make healthcare decisions; (3) How bride price and other customary beliefs/practices contribute to behavior that harms or benefits women's health and health outcomes; (4) Talking about women's bodies and behavior in healthcare settings including how medical professionals are taught to talk, how they actually talk, and how everyday people in various settings talk about women's bodies. The session is open to including other related subtopics if you have something you think fits with the overall themes.