



**AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PACIFIC STUDIES**

**Annual General Meeting  
10 May 2013**

McDonald room in Menzies library, 12.00-5.00pm

Australian National University

**Guest Presentation followed by lunch (12:00 – 2:00pm).**

Dr. Keith Camacho (University of California, Los Angeles)

“Militarized Incarceration: The U.S. Military Tribunals of Guam, 1945-1949”

**Abstract:**

In the aftermath of World War II, colonial governments often solicited the assistance of military tribunals for two general reasons: to apprehend individuals accused of war crimes and to assert claims to borders, resources, and labor. The formerly Japanese-occupied areas of Micronesia, a region comprised of several Pacific Islander communities, were likewise subjected to this colonial brand of justice. That is to say, as the Japanese garrisons surrendered to the invading U.S. Armed Forces, questions regarding the nature of atrocities committed against Americans and others in Micronesia began to surface. What, for one, constituted war criminality? Testimony? Sovereignty? To address these issues, the U.S. Navy established the War Crimes Tribunals Program in Guam, a wartime Japanese colony and presently a U.S. territory, from 1945-1949. This talk examines the making of this American military tribunal and the ways in which it rendered Asians and Pacific Islanders as carceral and colonial subjects of modernity. The objective is to situate the tribunal not as an exceptional frame of justice, but as a normative assertion of U.S. conquest, punishment, and racism in the Pacific.