



Australian  
Association  
for Pacific  
Studies



# AAPS Newsletter

April 2023

TO HELL  
WITH  
DROWNING

AAPS 2023 ANU

# President's Report

I am very encouraged at all the signs I see of the development of Pacific Studies, which is growing and developing across Australia. We also celebrate our links with others working in Pacific Studies across Oceania, many of whom are joining us in our upcoming conference.

In 2022 we had a wonderful Epeli Hau'ofa Memorial Lecture delivered by Professor Jioji Ravulo, which was attended by those present in person and hundreds more online. Professor Jioji spoke on 'Decoloniality, Desistance, Resistance, & Reclamation: striving for social justice and inclusive societies.' The postgraduate workshop that preceded it showed once again how much exciting work is being done in our field, with every participant sharing a compelling project. I was especially heartened by the awareness of ethical practice in research demonstrated by participants.

The Pacific has risen in the consciousness of many larger powers as worldwide tensions rise. This has resulted in the increasing presence of representatives of British, American and Australian governments in diplomatic and other missions. The hope is that appropriate consultation will result in sustainable and useful projects in Oceania, rather than just strategic positioning.

The 2022-23 cyclone season has, so far, been less severe than in previous years, with the notable exception of Gabrielle, that brought severe damage to the Aotearoa, including at least 11 deaths and widespread damage. There was also damage in New Caledonia and Vanuatu. Climate catastrophe, and the growing threat of storm systems, remain the biggest threats to life in the region. Strength to those working to combat it.

Thanks to all retiring members of the Executive and welcome to those who are stepping into new roles. The whole organisation is grateful for your efforts. Extraordinary thanks to Katerina Teaiwa, Talei Mangioni, Rebecca Monson, Lisa Hilli, who have been organising what looks to be an exceptional conference. It's such a lot of work, and we all appreciate it.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Canberra and encourage all members in your research projects. This will be my last report as President. It's been a really exciting time to be in this field; as the field grows (which it is doing), its most significant contributions are coming from an ever-increasing number of Pacific Islander scholars. The field is in excellent hands!

***Mandy Treagus***



# Postgraduate Representative Report

Postgraduates have had a busy couple of years since the 'Decolonisation and the Trans-Pacific' postgraduate/ECR symposium in Melbourne in 2021. In 2022, the Epeli Hau'ofa memorial lecture and postgraduate/ECR workshop in Adelaide were done by Prof. Jioji Ravulo. This postgraduate/ECR workshop was well attended in a hybrid format where students connected with one another and received great insights from Prof. Ravulo on their research. There is a growing postgraduate/ECR research community in Pacific Studies in Australia and beyond as demonstrated by the great postgraduate-focused newsletter last year (thanks to Emma Kluge!). We are looking forward to the upcoming To Hell With Drowning AAPS biennial conference in April 2023. The postgraduate workshop has 30 registered participants from across Australia and the Pacific. This year, they will be joined by some Pacific Studies and Indigenous Studies giants including: Prof. Em. Terence Wesley-Smith, Dr. April K. Henderson, Prof. Alice Te Punga Somerville, Prof. Katerina Teaiwa, Maureen Penjueli and Assoc. Prof. Natalie Harkin. The workshop will discuss the importance of reciprocity in research, publishing tips and self and community care in the academy. We look forward to the friendships, connections and outputs that will emerge from this workshop. We also look forward to hopefully having another postgraduate representative coming on board for 2023-2025.

**Romitesh Kant & Talei Mangioni**



## Community Connections

Two projects continued to develop community connections in 2022. The Australian Dictionary of Biography's (ADB) Oceania Working Party's South Sea Islander Biography workshop at the Australian National University (organised by Katerina Teaiwa, Nicholas Hoare and Talei Mangioni) connected students, academics, community organisations and institutions to engage with the growing interest in South Sea Islander history and issues. Dr Melinda Mann, Imelda Miller and Kim Kruger workshopped the current literature, protocols and issues of writing biographies for the dictionary and in communities. The workshop forged new connections between Melbourne, Rockhampton and Brisbane South Sea Islander communities and importantly, positioned South Sea Islander people and stories in relationship to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their lands.

The exhibition Sydney Road Blaks, navigated intertwined Aboriginal and South Sea Islander histories. AAPS members Kim Kruger and Lisa Hilli worked with Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander artists to create contemporary responses to a South Sea Islander local history. Collectively the artists' responses contemplated the Country the men traversed, who they were, the ways in which they were treated and how this reflects Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander experiences today. The project coincided with the renaming of the local LGA from 'Moreland', a name connecting the place to the transatlantic slave trade, to Merri-bek, Wurundjeri for rocky country, in a highlighting the global and local networks of empire that colonised Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islanders. Audiences remarked on experiencing these historical and contemporary relationships for the first time, especially in relation to Sydney Road, Brunswick as well as south east 'Australia' more broadly.

In the spirit of Tracey Banivanua-Mar's scholarship, and AAPS' grounding on Aboriginal lands, it is important to continue strengthening connections between AAPS and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and scholarship.

This will be my last term as community connector as other commitments arise. I look forward to remaining a passionate member of AAPS!

**Kim Kruger**



# PhD Completions

*Tahitian Author Celestine Hitirua Vaite's Multilingual Writing: A Literary Tifaifai from the 'Inside Out'*



**Dr. Manuia Heinrich Sue** was named to the Dean's List for her dissertation, Tahitian Author Celestine Hitirua Vaite's *Multilingual Writing: A Literary Tifaifai from the 'Inside Out'*. Manuia's research explores a series of novels published by Vaite in English between 2000 and 2006, with a particular focus on their fusion of multiple languages, including English, French, Tahitian, and the Tahitian-French vernacular. In Manuia's words, "Vaite's multilingualism" is not only "an active medium of diasporic and Indigenous identity assertion" but also "brings down invisible barriers forged by waves of colonization across the Pacific."

In 2022, Manuia's thesis was selected for inclusion on the Dean's list, which is reserved for theses that are judged to be of exceptional quality in every aspect of the candidate's work, including the originality and significance of the research, and the quality of expression and overall presentation.

[https://openaccess.wgtn.ac.nz/articles/thesis/TAHITIAN\\_AUTHOR\\_C\\_LESTINE\\_HITIURA\\_VAITE\\_S\\_MULTILINGUAL\\_WRITING\\_A\\_LITERARY\\_T\\_FAIFA\\_I\\_FROM\\_THE\\_INSIDE\\_OUT\\_/20416287/1](https://openaccess.wgtn.ac.nz/articles/thesis/TAHITIAN_AUTHOR_C_LESTINE_HITIURA_VAITE_S_MULTILINGUAL_WRITING_A_LITERARY_T_FAIFA_I_FROM_THE_INSIDE_OUT_/20416287/1)

*Coconut Oil Reflects: A Comparative Commodity Ethnography in Two Sites*



**Dr. Nate Rigler's** dissertation, *Coconut Oil Reflects: A Comparative Commodity Ethnography in Two Sites*, "examines the meanings coconut oil conveys to its consumers and explores what these meanings reveal about the different political and sociocultural contexts in which these consumers live." Nate's work forms a key part of supervisor April K. Henderson's Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund project, "Kernels of Hope: Following Coconut Commodities from the Pacific to the West."

[https://openaccess.wgtn.ac.nz/articles/thesis/COCONUT\\_OIL\\_REFLECTS\\_A\\_COMPARATIVE\\_COMMODITY\\_ETHNOGRAPHY\\_IN\\_TWO\\_SITES/21101881/1](https://openaccess.wgtn.ac.nz/articles/thesis/COCONUT_OIL_REFLECTS_A_COMPARATIVE_COMMODITY_ETHNOGRAPHY_IN_TWO_SITES/21101881/1)

# Announcements and News



## ***Wanda Ieremia has received the prestigious Visiting Fellowship at the University of Cambridge!***

Wanda Ieremia-Allan has received the Pacific Islander Visiting Fellowship at University of Cambridge. Ieremia-Allan "will spend six weeks at Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge, conducting archival research for her doctorate on O Le Sulu Samoa and its role in capturing the perspectives of the Pacific over time." Her visit will involve work with Cambridge archives seeking out papers and literature relating to O Le Sulu Samoa, a missionary newspaper that has been active for 184 years. Read more here:

[https://www.otago.ac.nz/otagobulletin/postgraduate/otago0242850.html?](https://www.otago.ac.nz/otagobulletin/postgraduate/otago0242850.html?fbclid=IwAR23Jmvx5IJ2om7ZGhYAoyoGXPEe3iJNy_NFNfKSnckTQcz4qpeTjb0gls)

[fbclid=IwAR23Jmvx5IJ2om7ZGhYAoyoGXPEe3iJNy\\_NFNfKSnckTQcz4qpeTjb0gls](https://www.otago.ac.nz/otagobulletin/postgraduate/otago0242850.html?fbclid=IwAR23Jmvx5IJ2om7ZGhYAoyoGXPEe3iJNy_NFNfKSnckTQcz4qpeTjb0gls)

## ***Congratulations to T. Melanie Puka Bean on her new teaching position at the University of Utah!***

T. Melanie Puka Bean becomes faculty at University of Utah! Tagimamao Melanie Puka Bean (Melanie) has "genealogical ties to Atafu and Fakaofu (Tokelau), Sāleimoa and Faleasiu (Sāmoa) and is New Zealand-born. Melanie is a PhD candidate in Geography at Louisiana State University. Her research, funded by Fulbright New Zealand, the Wenner Gren Foundation and, the Society of Woman Geographers, is a comparative study that maps in the broadest sense, the ways that Tagata Tokelau (indigenous people of Tokelau) in the Wellington region of Aotearoa New Zealand, and Oahu, Hawai'i connect to each other as part of the diaspora, and to Tokelau as a place."

## ***The Colour of Country at Rockhampton Art Museum, curated by Melinda Mann***

The Colour of Country at Rockhampton Art Museum curated by Melinda Mann took place from 15 October 2022 – 15 January 2023. The exhibition illuminated "the relationships between land and water scapes and Indigenous people" and was "curated to represent the inspirations behind the movements and milestones across Australian political and

legal history, namely the Gurindji Strike and the Wik and Mabo decisions". Well done Dr. Mann on the successful exhibition! For more details of the exhibition, please see here: <https://www.rmoa.com.au/Collection-Exhibitions/Past/2023/Collection-Focus-The-Colour-of-Country>

## ***Everyday life in an Imperial Archipelago***



Make sure you visit the "Everyday Life in an Imperial Archipelago" website project by Cinta M. Kaipat (Refaluwasch-Chamorro attorney and community advocate) and Isa Arriola (Chamorro Assistant Professor of Sociology/Anthropology). The website about the Northern Marianas was launched in an islands storytelling event including a poetry reading by Māori writer Hinemoana Baker in Berlin, Germany, on 02.09.2022, where the "Affect and Colonialism Lab" that is coordinating their project fellowship is based. Kaipat passed away this February 2023, and their joint project is continued by Arriola: "we explored Cinta's creative legacy to CENTER our connections to place, especially through her storytelling. These connections weave our islands together archipelagically (...) and by highlighting Cinta's creative outlets and stories, we attempt to uplift the everyday ways that we make meaning in our lives as Indigenous Peoples." An essay on this is forthcoming in the Okinawan Journal of Island Studies: Special Issue on Island Activisms by Karin Louise Hermes. For more details about the project. <https://www.everydayarchipelago.com/>

***New Pasifika radio show: PX Whanau with Sonja Hammer!***

We are PX Whanau, the diverse voices of queer Pasifika. We are a collective of community who inform and connect with, and advocate for, our community through the means of radio broadcasting and streaming and podcasting. The great thing about PX Whanau on this platform is it allows us to facilitate radio production training for members, as well as functioning as a link to our community throughout the Moana. We want to focus on our diverse queer diaspora community providing the space for talanoa for shared stories and representation. If you would like to engage with the community or find out more about the collective please contact us through our email: [pxwhanauradio855@gmail.com](mailto:pxwhanauradio855@gmail.com). You can also stream current episodes by following the link: <https://www.3cr.org.au/pxwhanauradio>

***Papuan Elders Project at Footscray Community Arts coming soon!***

Curated by Yasbelle Kerkow and Cyndi Makabory, the Papuan Elders Project is a series of intercultural, intergenerational and youth-led workshops public programming leading to the creation of an archival community-led exhibition at Footscray Community Arts, taking place from November 1st, 2023 – January 28th, 2024. The Papuan Elders Project will be the first time West Papuan Elder stories have been documented and exhibited in Australia. The exhibition will be installed as a Papuan home and will feature intergenerational interviews between Papuan Elder knowledge-holders and Young People. This exhibition is a groundbreaking opportunity to celebrate the art and cultures of an underrepresented community, developing closer relationships with one of Australia's nearest neighbours.

For further details of this emerging project, feel free to get in touch with Yasbelle and Cyndi via: [y.kerkow@gmail.com](mailto:y.kerkow@gmail.com)

## Events



***Paradise Camp at Powerhouse Museum in Sydney until December 2023***

“Paradise Camp by Yuki Kihara and curated by Natalie King, comprises a suite of twelve tableau photographs in saturated colour, situated against a vast wallpaper of a landscape decimated by the 2009 tsunami. Eleven of the works were shot on location in Sāmoa, from rural villages to churches, plantations and heritage sites, with a local cast and crew of over eighty people.

Kihara’s performative photography upcycles select paintings by post-impressionist French artist Paul Gauguin in a suite of images that repurpose his paintings created during his time in the Islands of Tahiti and the Marquesas between 1891 and 1903. Kihara problematises Gauguin’s outsized legacy by re-enacting his paintings back in the Pacific, paying careful attention to the details of his works. These re-enactments instill a Polynesian inflection to each photograph and are based on strong personal relationships with Kihara’s sitters, all of whom are part of the Fa’afafine and Fa’atama communities. Kihara works with these models to represent her own vision of paradise, redirecting the viewer to the concerns of contemporary Pacific Islanders and ‘returning the gaze’ in a profound gesture of empowerment.”

For further details, please visit: <https://www.maas.museum/event/paradise-camp-by-yuki-kihara>

# Recent Publications

- Rebecca Monson, *Gender, Property and Politics in the Pacific: Who Speaks for Land?* (Cambridge University Press, 2023). <https://www.cambridge.org/au/academic/subjects/law/socio-legal-studies/gender-property-and-politics-pacific-who-speaks-land?format=HB&isbn=9781108844802>
- Camellia Webb-Gannon, 'Sovereignty and the limits of Indigenous rights in West Papua', *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 131:3 (2022): 235–260. <https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.131.3.235-260>
- Camellia Webb-Gannon, '#Papuanlivesmatter: how a narrative of racism has elevated West Papua's decolonisation movement', *The International Journal of Human Rights* (2022), DOI: 10.1080/13642987.2022.2057959.
- Julia Morris, *Asylum and Extraction in the Republic of Nauru*, (Cornell University Press, 2023).
- I-Chang Kuo, 'Kamapim gutpela man: Papua New Guinean and Chinese refinery workers' changing understandings of becoming a good man', *Oceania*, 93(1): 2–22.
- Victoria Stead, 'Feeling the (post)colonial: Affective encounters and enduring regimes of territorialization along the Kokoda Track', *American Ethnologist* (2023).
- Victoria Stead, 'Temporariness made interminable: Pacific Islander farmworkers in Australia, and the enduring crises of global agricultural production', *Journal of Agrarian Change* (2022). [doi.org/10.1111/joac.12524](https://doi.org/10.1111/joac.12524)
- Victoria Stead, Lorayma Taula, and Mellisa Silaga, 'Making Place in a Place that Doesn't Recognise You: Racialised Labour and Intergenerational Belonging in an Australian Horticultural Region', *The Journal of Rural Studies* 94: 454–461 (2022).
- Chris Unwin, *Building and Remembering: An Archaeology of Place-Making on Papua New Guinea's South Coast* (University of Hawaii Press, 2022).
- Chris Unwin, 'Rethinking agency in hiri exchange relationships on Papua New Guinea's south coast: Oral traditions and archaeology', *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 69 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaa.2022.101484>
- Makiko Nishitani, Martina Boese and Helen Lee, 'The production of precariousness and the racialization of Pacific Islanders in an Australian horticultural region', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2023.2179462>
- Makiko Nishitani and Helen Lee, 'Fruit Picking and Farmwork as Racialised Stigma: The Children of Pacific Migrant Workers in Rural Australia', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* (2022). DOI: 10.1080/07256868.2023.2136631.
- Bonnie Etherington, 'Reckoning with the Oceanic Territoriality of "Uncle SPAM": Processed Meats and Resurgent Seeds in Craig Santos Perez's Poetics of the Militarized Sea,' *NAIS: Journal of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association* 9.2 (2022): 38–65.
- Bonnie Etherington, "'I think I believe in civil rights': Re-Remembering Trans-Indigenous Political Activism in Pauline Vaeluaga Smith's Dawn Raid," *Studies in the Novel* 54.3 (2022): 293–311.
- Bonnie Etherington, 'One Salt Water: The Storied Work of Trans-Indigenous Decolonial Imagining with West Papua,' *The Contemporary Pacific* 34.1 (2022): 1–29.
- Terence Wesley Smith and Greg Fry, 'Sea of Western Flags in Oceania?' *DevPolicy Blog* (2023) [https://devpolicy.org/sea-of-western-flags-in-oceania-20230306/?fbclid=IwAR3ax0\\_xFdiAS-fZqw3Jj4I3c96B4YWfStiOr-Rdm6AIDEwh-Lzu9lNaFxA](https://devpolicy.org/sea-of-western-flags-in-oceania-20230306/?fbclid=IwAR3ax0_xFdiAS-fZqw3Jj4I3c96B4YWfStiOr-Rdm6AIDEwh-Lzu9lNaFxA)
- T. R. Na'puti and S.C. Frain, 'Indigenous environmental perspectives: Challenging the oceanic security state,' *Security Dialogue*, (2023). (OA) <https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106221139765>
- Tiara R. Na'puti 'An island community under the grip of overseas military interests' in *Storytelling from the Frontlines: Forefronting the voices of communities most affected by militarism and the climate crisis*, 8–9, 24–27, Quaker Council on European Affairs 2023 report, <https://www.qcea.org/peace/storytelling-from-the-frontlines/>
- "UCI Podcast: Global Indigeneity" May 24, 2022. Tiara Na'puti discusses her work with indigenous populations in the Pacific Islands. <https://news.uci.edu/2022/05/24/uci-podcast-global-indigeneity/>
- H. McNeill and M. Marmo, 'Past-Present Differential Inclusion: Australia's Targeted Deportation of Pacific Islanders 1901–2020,' *International Journal of Crime Justice and Social Democracy* 12:1 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcsd.2743>
- J. Bennett, "I Sengsong San Diego- The Formation of a Chamoru Diasporic Community" *Pacific Arts: The Journal of the Pacific Arts Association*. 22:1 (2022): 114–129. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5070/PC22156844>.
- H. Greensill, M. Taito, J. Pasisi, J.L. Bennett, M. Dean, M. Monise, "Tupuna Wahine, Saina, Tupuna Vaine, Matua Fifine, Ma'piag Hãni: Grandmothers in the Archives," *Public History Review Journal* (2022). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5130/phrj.v29i0.8225>.
- Pacific Early Career Researchers Collective: Jean M. Uasike Allen, Jesi Lujan Bennett, Zaramasina L. Clark, Kirita-Rose Escott, David Taufui Mikato Fa'avae, Jasmine Lulani Kaulamatoa, Rachael Kaulamatoa, Taniela Lolohea, Melemafi Porter, Veisia Pulu, Sylvia Tapuke, Yvonne Ualesi, Solema Elspeth Withers & Victoria Helen Woolner. "Relational and collective excellence: unfolding the potential of Pacific early career researchers." *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, (2022). EPub. DOI: 10.1080/03036758.2022.2093228.

# Thanks to the 2021-2023 executive!



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