

Militarisation During War and Peace in Oceania

A Symposium of the Otago Pacific Research Cluster

with the support of the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, the Division of Humanities, the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Te Tumu, and the Pacific Islands Centre – all University of Otago.

Symposium Conveners: Associate Professor Jacqui Leckie (Anthropology & Archaeology) and Professor Judy Bennett (History & Art History).

Thursday 3 November

9am – 10.20 – Pacific welcome and morning tea at Pacific Islands Centre, 1 Leithbank, Dunedin.

Guest of Honour: Professor Vernon Squire

10.45 – 11.00 welcome to Te Tumu by Professor Paul Tapsell, Dean of Te Tumu (School of Maori, Indigenous and Pacific Studies)

11.00 – 12.00: keynote address by Teresia Teaiwa
Pacific Studies, Va'aomanū Pasifika, Victoria University of Wellington
Analysis beyond crisis: militarization, militarism and articulations in Oceania

Chair: Jacqui Leckie

12.00 – 1 pm – lunch break (lunch provided for invited guests)

Session 1 – Social legacies of militarisation in Oceania from the World Wars

Chair: Greg Rawlings

1.00 – 1.30 pm: John McLane

PhD candidate, Dept of History & Art History
University of Otago

One Disease, One People, Two Histories: The Samoas in 1918

1.30 – 2.00 pm: Judy Bennett

Department of History & Art History, University of Otago
Kiribati and the United States military: Lasting legacies

2.00 – 2.30 pm: Angela Wanhalla

Department of History & Art History, University of Otago
War, Race and Marriage in New Zealand and the Pacific, 1942-1947

2.30 – 3.00 pm: Phyllis Herda

Department of Anthropology, University of Auckland
Operation Bleacher: Gender Relations in Tonga During WWII

3.00 – 3.30 pm: Marsa Dodson

Department of History & Art History, University of Otago
Mixed Blessings: America's Friendly Occupation of the Cook Islands

3.30 – 4.00 – afternoon tea

Session 2 – Militarisation and Children of the Pacific War in Fiji

Chair: Ian Frazer

4.00 – 4.30 pm: Jacqui Leckie

Department of Anthropology & Archaeology
University of Otago

“Who am I? Where is my Father?” Militarisation and ‘Mixed Race’ children in Fiji from World War II

4.30 – 5.00 pm: Alumita Durutalo

Division of Politics and International Affairs, School of
Government, Development and International Affairs,
University of the South Pacific *Indigenous Fijian women and
Americans during World War II*

5.15 – 6.30 reception hosted by National Centre for Peace and
Conflict Studies, 117 Albany Street (for invited guests)

Friday 4 November

Session 3 – The Consequences of Militarism in Times of Peace

Chair: Jenny Bryant-Tokalau

8.45 – 9.15 am: Alumita Durutalo

Division of Politics and International Affairs, School of
Government, Development and International Affairs,
University of the South Pacific

*From Traditional Warriors to the Modern Army: The Role of
the Military in Fiji’s Politics*

9.15 – 9.45 am: Raijeli Nicole

Department of Internal Affairs, Christchurch

*Re-thinking and Re-framing Civil-Military Relations in Fiji - A
Strategy for Democratically Containing Fiji’s Military in
Politics*

9.45 – 10.15 am: Edwina Hughes
Coordinator, Peace Movement Aotearoa
The costs and consequences of militarism in times of peace

10.15 – 10.45 am Morning tea

Session 4
Case-studies of Militarisation in Contemporary Oceania

Chair: Heather Devere

10.45 – 11.15 am: Nicole George
Lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies
School of Political Science and International Studies
University of Queensland
Cold Comfort: Militarism and Resistance on Guam

11.15 – 11.45 am: Karen Brounéus
Lecturer, National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
University of Otago
Truth for Peace: Experiences of the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission

11.45 – 12.15 pm: Holly Guthrey
PhD Candidate, National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
University of Otago
Victim Healing after Conflict in the Solomon Islands

12.15 – 12.45 pm: Audrey Wong
MA candidate, National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
University of Otago
Gender-Based Violence and the Military in Timor-Leste

12.45 – 1 pm Closing remarks: Judy Bennett

Abstracts

Judith A. Bennett

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Kiribati and the United States military: Lasting legacies

As part of the Mothers' Darlings project I interviewed eight people from Kiribati with US fathers from World War Two. There were probably about 20-30 such children in all. With no exceptions all eight wanted help to find more about their fathers or their fathers' kin. In Kiribati, this study closely coincided with US forensic archaeologists seeking bones of US servicemen who died on at the battle Tarawa in November 1943. This raised issues of American responsibilities and concerns. How these American descendants viewed these relationships and responsibilities varied, but there was a certain convergence of underlying fears and suspicions of American intentions. On the American mainland others may perceive these small atolls as isolated and far from the metropole. Yet like most island inhabitants, these people watch their horizon for danger and opportunities as much as they presently look for signs of coastal erosion and rising waters. The geography of World War Two as well international politics were and remain important determinants of their perceptions of military powers such as the United States.

Dr Karen Brounéus

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Truth for Peace: Experiences of the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission

This paper will explore people's experiences of the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The promises and challenges of the process will be heard from three perspectives: TRC Commissioners, ex-combatants, and Solomon Island women and men.

Alumita Durutalo

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From Traditional Warriors to the Modern Army: The Role of the Military in Fiji's Politics

The rise and eclipse of powerful chiefdoms was part of Fiji's political landscape prior to colonization. Powerful chiefs in different *vanua* or geo-political boundaries commanded warriors who waged wars to extend political power and boundaries. In the early years of colonization, some traditional warriors in eastern Fiji were recruited as Native Constabularies under Sir Arthur Gordon's colonial government. The Native Constabularies were used to suppress anti-colonial sentiments by tribes in the inland of Viti Levu. While the focus of the traditional warriors' task was still very much repression, only this time around they were protected by the state. The modern political role of Fiji's traditional warriors, now in the form of military interventions in government, leaves a legacy in Fiji's contemporary history.

Nicole George

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Cold Comfort: Militarism and Resistance on Guam

The check-in hall of Guam's Hagatna airport is overlooked by a long line of photographic portraits depicting local troops killed in US army missions overseas. It is a sad procession of beautiful, hopeful young faces. It is also a reminder of the extent to which the US military presence on this Micronesian Island represents both risk and opportunity. Despite the fact that troops recruited from this region, continue to die in higher numbers, proportionately, than troops from the US mainland in the decade-long, US-led "War on Terror", a military career continues to be the chosen path for many young

Micronesians. Recruits often follow in family footsteps, and many have few illusions as to the risks they face. Yet in the face of limited alternative career opportunities, this choice is viewed, even by local opponents of militarism, as understandable and honourable.

This paper examines public debate on the question of militarism on Guam; voices that support the presence of US bases and those that are opposed to this presence. It is frequently argued by military proponents, that Guam has experienced developmental benefits that are unique in the Pacific and accrue from the wealth generated by US military bases, which take up one third of the Island territory. The seeming universal access to air-conditioning is often used colloquially to contrast Guam's supposed wealth with that of its near and less developed neighbours. By contrast, those opposed to US militarism on Guam allege that this "cold comfort" is a veneer; a poor exchange for the continued environmental, cultural and social degradation which has followed military expansion in Guam and the broader Marianas region. My documentation of this political struggle will demonstrate how resistance to militarisation on Guam is negotiated against a complex backdrop of intertwined historical, economic, political and social factors that work collectively to legitimate that presence. Efforts to defend indigenous culture and present alternative, less-militarised, islander-oriented histories have been an important part of resistance and aim to decenter predominant discourses which, in the post WWII context, reinforce the need for patriotism and gratitude towards the US. On the one hand this activity poses a mounting challenge to those who would 'normalise' the presence of the US military in the northern Pacific. On the other hand, the personal politics of this situation are complex, as activists try to articulate a line of argument which, although critical of militarism and its impacts on Guam, also does not undermine the personal loyalties they feel to family and friends whose fortunes are tied up with that presence.

Holly Guthrey

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Victim Healing after Conflict in the Solomon Islands

This paper will empirically analyse what factors contribute to individual healing after trauma through the use of focus groups and interviews with victims of conflict in the Solomon Islands that also witnessed in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Edwina Hughes

Peace Movement, Aotearoa

The costs and consequences of militarism in times of peace

The costs and consequences of militarism and militarisation in times of peace are often overlooked when compared with the attention given to the extreme drama of armed conflict and war. This presentation provides an overview of those costs, with a focus on Aotearoa New Zealand. Points covered include New Zealand's role in the global cycle of violence, its willingness to maintain armed forces despite the lack of any direct military threat to the nation, and some of the impacts this has on the Pacific region. The presentation includes a section on the increasing level of militarisation of children and young persons and their education here, based on recent research for reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The desirability of an institution which has the use of armed force as its primary role being involved in youth development work is considered, along with the likely consequence it will have of further normalising militarism in the future.

Phyllis Herda

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Operation Bleacher: Gender Relations in Tonga During WWII

Operation Bleacher, the code name for the establishment of the American military presence in the Tongan archipelago during World War II, saw the deployment of 30,000 American servicemen moving through the Tongan archipelago between March 1942 and the end of the war. At one time there were 13 camps on Tongatapu and it is estimated that, at any one time, up to 10,000 American servicemen were based in Tonga. The times, by all accounts, were wild with young men off to or coming from battle looking for a good time. Relations between American servicemen and Tongan women soon developed. While the consequence of the arrival of large numbers of American servicemen on local gender relations are acknowledged for some countries, notably the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, little is known about the effect on Tonga of the influx of young men during the war. This paper examines the American presence in Tonga during the war and questions the nature of wartime encounters between local women and foreign servicemen. It also considers the fate of Tongan children fathered by American servicemen.

Jacqueline Leckie

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"Who am I? Where is my Father?" Militarisation and 'Mixed Race' children in Fiji from World War II

This quotation is from Martha who was one of the children born to American servicemen in Fiji during World War II. Her questions are personal and a direct consequence of the presence of tens of thousands of American servicemen on Fiji – including her father – who she did not meet until around 1998. Her questions are also

more general and indicative of the ambiguous and shifting identities of Fiji's *Kailoma* or 'mixed race' communities. Her narrative, along with those of other children born to Americans in Fiji during this war reflects the pivotal role many 'part-Europeans' had in the colony's society and economy. It also reveals the personal impact of unacknowledged paternity and being classified as 'Others' in a racially stratified colony.

John McLane

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One Disease, One People, Two Histories: The Samoas in 1918

The 1918 influenza pandemic devastated Western Samoa, killing more than a quarter of the population in a matter of weeks and striking particularly hard at the traditional chiefs and religious leadership during a time of great political ferment. With the seizure of Western Samoa from Germany in 1914, the governance of the territory became vested in the New Zealand military under Col. Robert Logan. Decisions made in Auckland, as well as those made by Col. Logan, left Western Samoa vulnerable to infection. American Samoa, in contrast, avoided infection entirely. Through a strict quarantine imposed under the authority of US Navy Commander John Poyer, the military administrator in Pago Pago, American Samoa emerged from the pandemic as one of a very few polities around the globe who did not lose a citizen to the disease.

Having been separated less than 20 years previously in the Tripartite Convention of 1899, Western and American Samoa maintained close ties. Lacking any significant difference in genetic, dietary, or cultural vulnerability between the two pieces of the Samoan state, explanations for the very different outcomes of the pandemic of 1918 must be sought in the political and economic spheres. The structure, authority, personality, and history of each administration, as well as the economic imperatives of the colonial enterprises, determined the eventual responses to the approaching pandemic.

The example of successful quarantine in American Samoa coupled with the devastating impact of the influenza in Western Samoa led to widespread discontent with the New Zealand administration, and significant goodwill amongst Samoans toward the U.S. Military government in Pago Pago. While Western Samoa suffered through the Mau and eventually obtained independence from New Zealand in 1962, American Samoa remains a territory of the United States and has produced only rare attempts to change this status. The two Samoas in 1918-1920 demonstrate a case of political decisions producing a medical outcome, which in turn drove eventual political realities.

Raijeli Drodrolagi Nicole

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Re-thinking and Re-framing Civil-Military Relations in Fiji - A Strategy for Democratically Containing Fiji's Military in Politics

The 1987 military coup marked a turning point in Fiji's history with the military setting into motion its direct intervention in domestic politics. Since then, the country has had 4 coups, 3 constitutions, 4 general elections and at least a dozen governments. The December 2006 coup touted as the *coup to end all coups* belies the reality that the Fiji military is quite accustomed to intervening in domestic politics. Hence, the proposed 2014 elections raise the important question: what is the role of the military in post-election democratic times? This paper argues that any re-democratisation project in Fiji needs to critically re-visit Fiji's civil-military framework. In doing so, the paper, drawing on my dissertation "Civil-Military Relations in Fiji: A Concordance between the Military, Political Elites and the Citizenry" highlights Rebecca Schiff's "Theory of Concordance" (1995) as a framework to unpack civil-military relations (CMR) in Fiji and to articulate a possible pathway to regaining civilian control of the military. Schiff's point of departure from the dominant paradigms of CMR does not posit absolute separation between the key civilian and military institutions. Rather the theory suggests that effective civil-military relations can be realised via the extent to which the political elite, the military and civil actors find agreement, and accommodate one another in the definition of the values and objectives of the armed forces. Applying Schiff's theory to Fiji, the

seminar will highlight ways in which the citizenry—specifically—civil society—can be empowered *to proactively* engage with the military. I propose an engagement that contains the military and opens up paths to free elections and democratic civilian rule.

Teresia Teaiwa

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Analysis beyond crisis: militarization, militarism and articulations in Oceania

Much of contemporary policy, media, and scholarly attention to militarization in Oceania focuses on those instances when militarization either mediates or engenders crisis. Militarization is hardly ever considered problematic during peace time, but this paper suggests that there is also a need to understand it, and its more insidious corollary of militarism, beyond moments of crisis. Drawing on the Cultural Studies notion of articulations, the ways that militarism infuses expressions of nation, race, gender, religion, education and athleticism in Oceania will be described. The paper revisits my previous work (Teaiwa 2001, 2005, 2008) and draws on research and field work done between 2008 and 2010 to propose a framework for ongoing critical analyses of militarization and militarism in Oceania.

Angela Wanhalla

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War, Race and Marriage in New Zealand and the Pacific, 1942-1947

Drawing upon archival records as well as oral histories, I examine the US War Department's marriage policy in regards to race as it played out in the South Pacific and New Zealand. This paper explores the extent of interracial marriage between US soldiers and indigenous women in the Pacific, and outlines the implications of the War Department policy on marriage for these couples. In seeking to

outline the costs of war marriage and military policy, I trace the fate of those couples who did marry and attempted to enter the United States.

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Gender-Based Violence and the Military in Timor-Leste

This paper enquires into the conditions that facilitated high incidences of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Timor-Leste during the military occupation of 1974 to 1999 and the post-conflict international humanitarian military presence from 1999 to 2010.