

Emerging Issues for Te-Moana-Nui-A-Kiwa | Presentations & Presenter Bios

An Overview of Pacific health indicators

Dr. Ramona Tiatia

A snapshot of the key indicators and health status for Pacific communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand with a presentation on housing as a key determinant of health for Pacific diaspora.

Background

This is Ramona's third year as convenor of the Pacific Summer School. She holds a Pacific Research Post-doctoral Fellowship from the Health Research Council of New Zealand and is the incoming Chair of University of Otago's Pacific Academic Staff Committee and member of the Pacific Leadership Group. Based in the Department of Public Health at Wellington her primary research interests include: Pacific housing, home-based justice and dialysis services, rheumatic fever, urban youth development, renewable energy and visual and digital methodologies. She is a team member of *He Kainga Oranga/Housing & Health Research Programme* that was awarded the New Zealand Prime Minister's Prize for Science and Innovation in 2014. A board member of the Public Health Association.

Introduction to Pacific Diasporas

Dr. Michelle Schaaf

This session will provide an introductory description of issues and themes pertaining to Pacific Societies, such as pre-history, colonisation, migration and identity in traditional and contemporary contexts.

Background

Rosaline Michelle Schaaf is of Tongan, Samoan and Scottish descent. She grew up in Dunedin where she now resides with her husband, son and step-sons. She is a Lecturer in Pacific Studies in Te Tumu, School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies, at the University of Otago, where she teaches in the area of Pacific diaspora; sport, race and gender; and the politics of representation and the Pacific body. Michelle also currently holds the positions in the University of Otago as Programme Coordinator Pacific Islands Studies and Associate Dean Pacific – Humanities. She is currently researching Pacific migration experiences to Dunedin from the 1950s to the 1990s.

From Natives to New Zealanders: The reported Pacific body

Christine Ammunson

From Natives, to Overstayers. From Islanders to New Zealand born Samoans. And more recently, Samoan New Zealanders and Pasifika Kiwis. The way Pacific peoples have been reported on in the New Zealand media reflects the prejudices and politics of the time. How far have we come in terms of media representation? Where will the journey take us and our children? And what can we do as consumers? Human Rights Commission's Christine Ammunson will be talking about racism and perceptions about Pacific people as represented in the popular press and online social media.

Background

Samoan New Zealander Christine Ammunson is an award-winning journalist and communications expert who led the thinking behind the NZ Human Rights Commission's *Give Nothing to Racism* campaign that won the Asia Pacific Supreme Communications Campaign Award in 2017. Christine was also the strategist behind the nationwide campaign for an independent inquiry and state apology for victims of institutional state abuse. She was a guest speaker of a paper titled: "Using Oratory to Create Dialogue on the Most Difficult Subject", at the Professional Speechwriters Association 2017 World Conference that was hosted by Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business, Washington DC. In her session, she will talk about her experience as a political press secretary and what it was like to meet some of America's most notable American presidential political speech writers including Tony Schwartz, the ghostwriter of the book that made President Trump plausible, *Art of the Deal*.



Youth engagement and non-communicable diseases - the case of Fiji

Dr. Patrick Vakaoti

According to the World Bank, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is the leading cause of death in many Pacific countries. In Fiji, 80 percent of deaths is NCD related, costing the economy between 250 and 406 million dollars. The NCD crisis requires more than a medical response. This presentation explores the opportunities for youth engagement in the fight against NCDs. It draws on examples of youth civic, social and political involvement and applies them to NCD prevention work. This has implications for research, policy and practice work with both young people and NCD prevention. Whilst the presentation focusses on Fiji, participants will be asked to consider its relevance for Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa, who are disproportionately affected by NCDs compared to other ethnic groups.

Background

Dr Patrick Vakaoti is Associate Dean (Pacific), Division of Humanities and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, Gender and Social Work, University of Otago. He has a background in Sociology and is interested in issues experienced by Pacific young people. Lately, his research has concentrated on the civic and political participation of young people in Fiji.

The Pacific Sport's Body and Physicality – Body size/shape: Surviving Fatness and Brownness

Dr. Michelle Schaaf

There are two views that have been aligned to physical education. The first concerns oppressive body and beauty standards that endorse skinniness and whiteness. This discourse situates physical education as an instrument to control bodies. The second pinpoints bodies as separate and subordinate to the mind. This alignment of physical education with these two understandings has racialised impacts on Māori and Pacific youth. The overt focus on body size and shape encourages the view that there is a correct and healthy type of body, one that is directly linked to physical size and weight and usually related to a white Pākehā/Palangi ideal. This paper explores the impact of ingrained societal attitudes to the obese and problematic body norms for young Pacific women when they are portrayed regularly in media statements as responsible for and contributing to national obesity statistics in New Zealand.

Background (see above).

Embracing technology through everyday practical tools as an enabler to preventing social harm among Pacific and Maori communities

Akerei Maresala-Thomson

Family Violence emerges from the harsh realities caused by factors such as unemployment; not having a license to drive a motor vehicle; and financial illiteracy. Akerei describes a key project he helped to develop called MYRIVR, a free mobile in-app directory that was first inspired by street-gang youth needing assistance with emergency accommodation and care. MYRIVR is gradually being used by many Maori and Pacific communities needing professional advice and support to cope with an array of social and health issues linked with family violence. Evaluation results of MYRIVR's uptake by Massey University will reveal how it is helping individuals in crisis to mitigate risks associated to offending and domestic victimisation. Akerei hopes to use MYRIVR to help detainees being deported from Australia to New Zealand. This presentation is based on a recent presentation at the IVAT 2017 Summit in San Diego, California where Akerei and Ramona (convenor) were both invited to attend as part of the Aotearoa/New Zealand Pacific delegation.



Background

Akerei was the former General Manager of the Village Collective, a Pacific NGO based in Auckland, New Zealand. Previous to taking on this role, he served 12 years in the New Zealand Police as a ranking Senior Sergeant where he managed the Pacific, Ethnic and Asian portfolios for Counties Manukau District and coordinated the Police National Radio Language Programme. Akerei also held a strategic international position as Technical Advisor where he trained local police of small island nations across the South Pacific region and advocated on pre-migration issues for nearly a decade. He is passionate about preventing domestic violence and innovations for positive social outcomes and was recently named as New Zealand's 86th White Ribbon Ambassadors.

Pacific cultural capital – the Samoan epistemology

Dr. Ramona Tiatia

Pacific cultural and social capital is closely defined by cultural wealth, traditional and customary practices. This session will provide an introduction to Samoan cultural capital and provides insight about a range of complex yet beautiful notions associated to Samoan meanings associated to land, architecture, village lore and reciprocal cultural gifting.

Background (see above).

Pacific populations, pharmacokinetics and immunology

Dr. Dianne Sika-Paotonu

Abstract TBC

Background

Dianne is a Pasifika Biomedical Scientist and Lecturer working for Victoria University of Wellington based at the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health. She is a senior lecturer in Pharmacology and Pathophysiology and has a background in Cancer Vaccine Immunology with a PhD in Biomedical Science from the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research. Dianne's PhD work explored the modification of cancer vaccines to launch stronger immune responses against cancer tissue. She has received numerous awards for her research that include the MacDiarmid New Zealand Young Scientist of the Year - Advancing Human Health & Wellbeing; Colmar Brunton Research Excellence Award; and the Australasian Society of Immunology BD Science Communication Award. In 2016 Dianne joins the Rheumatic Heart Disease / Group A Streptococcal Diseases team based at the Telethon Kid's Institute in Perth, Australia. She has recently joined the University of Otago, Wellington in the Pathology and Molecular Medicine Department and appointed as the new Associate Pacific Dean.



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