Otago Medical School Alumnus Association
2013 History of Medicine Series
Room G30, Hunter Centre, Great King Street, Dunedin
Thursday 30th May 2013 at 5.15pm

Associate-Professor Jacqueline Leckie will present

The Medicalization of Madness in Colonial Fiji

This presentation examines the encounter between indigenous and community constructions of madness — in that most extreme site of confinement — the lunatic asylum. This was established in Fiji in 1884. The asylum was an early hospital in the Pacific, indeed among colonies worldwide. It still functions as St Giles Psychiatric Hospital. It was a microcosm of the broader encounter and engagement between Fijian communities, the state and medical authorities over the care and confinement of those considered lialia, pagalaa or mad. This was also part of the general medicalization of mental illness in Fiji. The talk will trace the tensions in the management of madness at the asylum and what this might tell us about the nature of mental illness in an ethnically complex colonial society.

This is a public lecture. All interested are welcome