PACS 602: RE/PRESENTING OCEANIA

Fall 2010    Thursday    2:30 – 5:00 pm    Moore Hall, Room 108

Instructor: Tarcisius Kabutaulaka    Office Hours: Mondays 1:00 noon – 2:00pm
Office:    Moore 220    & Wednesdays 1:00pm – 2:30 pm, or by
e-mail:    tkabutau@hawaii.edu    appointment.
Phone:    956-2659

Aloha, halo olketa, Nisa bula vinaka/namaste, Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Kia Orana, Taloha ni,
Kona mauri, Hafa adai, Alii, Iokwe yuk and Fakaalofa lahi atu. Pacific Island greetings and
welcome to PACS 602: Re/Presenting Oceania.

Seminar Description

PACS 602: Re/Presenting Oceania is one of three core and required seminar courses for students
enrolled in the MA program in the Pacific Islands studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa,
Center for Pacific Islands Studies (CPIS). The course is also intended for graduate students
whose programs of study include a significant Pacific Islands studies component. Taught in
tandem with PACS 601: Learning Oceania, this seminar critically analyses how the Pacific
Islands have been represented in scholarly and popular writings and other medium. It focuses
particularly to the ways in which dominant representations are being challenged or contested,
especially by Islander scholars, artists, writers, performers, poets, and film makers as well as
practitioners of other critical disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches.

In this seminar, we will range broadly across the landscapes and seascapes of the Pacific Islands
region to interrogate the meanings, processes, medium and politics of representation. We will
analyze the ways in which Pacific Island societies and Islanders have been represented, and how
they might be re-represented and understood differently. We will deal with the complexities and
controversies around concepts like culture, race, ethnicity, indigeneity, gender and sexuality. We
will engage colonialist assumptions about modernity and progress, and examine how those
assumptions are represented and concretized through policies and initiatives affecting
governance, economy, and more generally, development. We will also consider the history and
genealogy of the contemporary imaging of the Pacific Islands as paradise. Our focus, however, is
to examine how Oceania is being re-imagined and re-presented in ways that are more relevant, meaningful, and reflective of Islanders’ beliefs and experiences.

**Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the seminar students should:

1. Understand the concept of representation and how it influences images of and relationships between cultures and peoples.

2. Identify, describe and discuss how Pacific Island societies, cultures and peoples have been represented in scholarly and popular discourses.

3. Examine and explain alternative re-presentations of Oceania, its peoples and cultures by drawing on the work of Islanders as well as non-Islander.

4. Engage in critical discussions about re-presentations of Oceania and how Islanders are constantly engaging with and re-presenting images about them, their societies and cultures.

**Seminar Structure**

We will meet once a week for two-and-half hours (Thursday, 2:30–5:00 pm) to discuss the key themes and issues arising from the readings, audio-visuals, photos and art works assigned for each week. There are at the most four readings assigned for each week. Audio-visual materials will be used where and when appropriate. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the issues raised in the assigned readings and other material for that week. These discussions will be student-led.

The instructor’s role is primarily to facilitate and guide the discussions. At the beginning of each class the instructor will spend about 10 to 15 minutes to frame the discussion and highlight the broad conceptual issues and themes, and how they relate to the representations of Pacific Islanders and islands. The instructor will also provide a reading guide for each week. This will be given to you a week prior to the readings being assigned.

There will also be class trips, or ethnographic expeditions to the Bishop Museum. In budgeting for these trips, you should include $10.00 (approx.) – the price of a single *kama’aina* admission – to the Bishop Museum. There is also the possibility of visits from accomplished and well-known Oceanian historians, writers and artists. We will also look out for and participate in other events that will help enhance our knowledge of the issues covered in the course.
Expectations and Requirements

Your performance in the course will be assessed based on a number of assignments that you are required to do during the semester. These include: (1) two class presentations or leading discussions; (2) six summary/reaction papers; (3) one ten-page essay; (4) participation in class discussions. These are discussed in detail below.

Attendance and Participation
Commitment and responsibility are needed to make this a successful semester. Students enrolled in this seminar are expected to be on time, in attendance and actively engaged for all sessions. In order to be able to participate effectively in the discussions, you must read the readings and reflect on the themes and issues raised prior to coming to class. Students are required to write on the reading assignments for any session they miss; these writing assignments are in addition to the 6 required summary/reflection papers cited below. I also urge you to be diligent note-takers and to identify an effective method for organizing, storing and preserving the many class handouts that will be coming your way. Attendance and participation will make up for 10% of your course assessment.

Students must always respect the views of their peers, particularly if there are differences of opinion. During the semester, sensitive issues will arise, and every effort must be made to encourage dialogue and open communication.

Summary/Reaction Papers
You are required to write and submit 6 three-page summary/reaction papers on 5 weekly readings and one on the visits to the Bishop Museum. Everyone must write on the readings for weeks 4 and 11. You can choose which other weeks to write on. With the exception of the required written reflection of our visit to the Bishop Museum that will be due the following week, these other summary/reaction papers are due at the start of the seminar session for which the readings have been assigned. These papers are worth 5% each, and altogether account for 30% of your overall course assessment.

Presentations & Discussion Leaders
For each week, beginning in Week 4, two students will lead the discussions. Each student is expected to lead 2 sessions during the semester. You should preferably partner with a different person each time. Each session you lead is worth 15%, making this worth 30% of your overall course assessment.

The discussions will reflect the themes and issues raised in the readings assigned for each week.

We will assign the Discussion Leaders in Week 1. Each pair will need to have at least two meetings outside of class to discuss and organize their presentation. When they have a plan – based on their discussions of the readings – they should then see me at least one week prior to
their presentation to get my input and reaction. It is important to meet with me to ensure that you are on the right track; it will increase the likelihood of a productive and meaningful presentation. These consultations should preferably be done during the assigned office hours (see above). Failure to do this will cost you 5% of the grade allocation for this category.

Note that you might want to consider using activities that will illustrate or illuminate the important issues raised in the readings. It is important that both students should be involved equally in the presentations and facilitations of discussions that should last 1 hour and 15 minutes.

**Essay**

In addition to the above, each student is required to write a ten-page essay on some representational aspect or practice (such as literature, music, dance, theater, film) in Oceania. The essay must be research-based, and must show that you have used at least five sources. These will be included in the references. To facilitate the planning, structuring and completion of the essay, students should provide me with a short précis or description of their choice of topic and approach at the end of class on 30 September. Once your topic has been decided upon between you and the instructor, it cannot be changed without the instructor’s permission.

This research essay is worth 30% of your final grade. It is **due on Friday, 3 December, no later than 4.30 pm**. No late submissions will be accepted.

Students may also choose a performative or creative option (instead of the ten-page essay) to be determined and negotiated with the instructor. In all likelihood, there will need to be a short written or textual companion piece to any performative or creative project. There will be individual presentations of these performative or creative projects during the last meeting of our seminar on December 7th. The quality and effectiveness of the in-class presentations will be a part of the overall grade for those who choose this option.

**Grading Scale**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Class Presentations (15% each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Essay, or Performative equivalent</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Reflection Papers (5% each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100–97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96–93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92–90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89–86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85–83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82–80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79–76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75–73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69–66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65–63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>62–60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Readings & Resources

Like other graduate courses, readings, interactions with others, observations and experiences are fundamental to success in the course. As a starting point, I have provided a collection of readings for each week. These are available on Laulima (www.laulima.hawaii.edu).

Books

Apart from the readings provided on Laulima, the following books are recommended. You can purchase copies from the University Bookstore.


4. Epeli Ha’uofa (2008), *We are the Ocean*, Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.

Note: The readings for this course are available on Laulima: https://laulima.hawaii.edu

Food/Refreshments

At each meeting we will have a 15 minutes break at around 3:30 pm. It is traditional in Pacific Islands Studies graduate seminars to have food/refreshments during the break. This provides us with the opportunity to interact informally and refresh intellectually and physically. Two people will volunteer to bring food/refreshment for each class. A “food volunteer” list will be distributed in the first week.
## CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topics/Activities/Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td><em>August 23 – First Day of Instruction</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 23–27</td>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction/Orientation to the Seminar</strong></td>
<td>In this first class we will go through the syllabus and discuss the course outline, work expectations, assessments and the learning outcomes. I will also distribute the (i) discussion leader/presentation and (ii) food volunteer list. We will also have general discussions of the concept of “representation”, and the representations of Pacific Islands and Islanders in particular. We will share the images we have of the Pacific Islands and Islanders, how those images form and how they influence our relationships with the islands and islanders. This raises the questions: What do we know about Oceania? How do we know what we know? What is/are the source(s) of our knowledge of Oceania? How does that knowledge influence how we relate to Oceania?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td><em>Aug. 30 – Last day to drop courses</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 30–Sept. 3</td>
<td>September 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representation, Knowledge &amp; Power: A General Exploration</strong></td>
<td>In this class we will examine the concept of “representation”, looking at the nature, dynamics and politics of representation. We will examine how we give meaning to places and cultures and relationships of power. This is a general overview that is meant to provide the frame and context within which we then explore representations of the Pacific Islands. We begin by looking at Edward Said’s discussions on “Orientalism” and its relationship to the representations of Oceania. The chapter by Regis Stella, although focused on Papua New Guinea, provides a broad overview of representation and indigeneity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>* September 6 – Labor Day (Non-Instructional Day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 6–10</td>
<td>September 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Imagining &amp; Re/presenting Oceania</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Culture, Identity &amp; Other Issues in Re/Presenting Oceania</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We begin addressing a number of key themes in the representing and re/presenting of Oceania. The stakes are incredibly high, and around such contested concepts as race, culture, ethnicity, and indigeneity. Here, we examine how Oceania, its peoples, societies and cultures have been imagined and represented in scholarly and popular discourses and writings, as well as through other medium such as art and films. We examine the concepts used in such representations and discuss how this has influenced understandings of, reactions to and relationships with Oceania, its peoples and cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th><strong>This is one of two weeks for which everyone is required to write a reflection paper.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 13–17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Re-Imagining & Re-presenting a New Oceania

This week we begin examining how Pacific Islanders are re-imagining and re-presenting Oceania, its people and cultures. Epeli Hau'ofa's essay, "Our Sea of Islands," is arguably the most influential piece of writing on the Pacific over the last decade or so. It is assigned reading in numerous classes, cited regularly in scholarly and more popular works, and has been reproduced in a variety of publications. Hau'ofa challenges colonialist representations of the Pacific by calling for a re-imagining of Oceania. He challenges dominant conceptions of time, space, and place in the Pacific; and encourages the peoples of the region to define themselves through a variety of creative expressions, and in ways that are locally appropriate and meaningful. Let us revisit this powerful and empowering essay in light of the events of the last decade or so, and especially against the invited responses that accompanied its initial publication.

Readings:


Local Knowledge and Local Epistemologies

We need to note the presumptions on which Western scholarship about the Pacific rests. Capitalism, Christianity, and colonialism are part of a larger and imposed modernist agenda that offers one, albeit intimidating way of knowing, being, and acting in this world. The works of David Gegeo, Karen Watson-Gegeo, Manu Meyer, Subramani, and Stephen Winduo argue for an awareness of alternative knowledge and epistemologies critical to a very different understanding of Oceania and its varied peoples.

Readings:


**Video:** “Breaking Bows and Arrows” (Sinclair Library).

---

**Week 6**  
Sept. 27–Oct. 1

**One-page essay/project précis due this week**

**September 30**

**Histories and History's Place in Re/Presenting Oceania**

Questions abound as to the very nature and meaning of history in contemporary Oceania. Much conventional scholarship in the Euro-American world continues to focus on the search for a single, knowable, verifiable past. Multiple, varied, contentious, and reemerging indigenous expressions of local pasts suggest that what has come to be understood as history in the West may not be history to, for or even about the peoples of Oceania. Vernacular as well as appropriated forms of history in the region need to be appreciated. The de-centering of the practice of history in Oceania, then, requires a recognition that writing is but one form of historical expression. This is the political and intellectual position from which I have selected this week’s readings, and with particular attention to the histories of ancient and present-day voyaging, and to the practice of tattooing as history.

**Readings:**


Week 7
Oct. 4–8

**October 7**

**On Issues and Images in Islander-Authored Literature from Oceania**

Albert Wendt has contributed to and written about the incredible vitality of Pacific arts over the last three decades. He writes; "This artistic renaissance is enriching our cultures further, reinforcing our identities/self-respect/ and pride, and taking us through a genuine decolonisation; it is also acting as a unifying force in our region. In their individual journeys into the Void, these artists, through their work, are explaining us to ourselves and creating a new Oceania" (Sharrad, p. 19). The selections listed below examine a variety of important and complex issues involved in the literary works that are a part of this creativity.

**Readings:**


**Week 8**

**October 14**

**Humor in the Pacific as Both Local and Counter-Hegemonic Critique**

This week we will be taking a somewhat different approach to the changing landscape and seascapes of Pacific studies. Humor (and the various forms that it can take) is often more than a light and simple form of entertainment. It can offer a disguised or subtle critique of power relationships and consequent inequities between colonizer and colonized or within a given society. Caroline Sinavaina-Gabbard writes; "As Samoa navigates the fragile bridge 'betwixt and between' cultural epochs of ancient Polynesia and the modern West, we will continue to rely on our comedians to keep us amused and to alert us to the serpentine currents below" (p. 201). We will be reading/viewing works for this session that should cause us to smile or laugh but also to think critically about humor in contemporary Oceania.

**Readings:**


**Video:**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th><em>Last day for restricted withdrawals</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 18–22</td>
<td><strong>October 21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Readings and Viewings – The Pacific in Film, Video & TV**

The artistic renaissance documented by Albert Wendt in his “Towards a New Oceania” has shown itself more recently in a variety of media, including films and videos produced, directed or otherwise inspired by Pacific Islanders. These cultural productions, particularly feature films, have enormous impact internationally and have made the Pacific Islands accessible to new audiences. Alan Duff, Vilsoni Hereniko, Witi Ihimaera, Lisa Taouma, Larry Thomas, and Sima Urale are artists whose names come quickly to mind. We will spend part of this session familiarizing ourselves with some of the key writings on these artistic undertakings. We will also be viewing the Pacific in film and video and on TV as well as reading about it. I ask that each of you choose, view, and bring to class any film or video created or inspired by a Pacific artist. You should have your film or video cued to a particular scene, not more than three or four minutes in length, that you find particularly important or revealing. I will ask you to speak to the seminar about this scene and your reasons for choosing it. In satisfaction of the written requirements for this seminar, your summary paper, should you choose to write for this week, may be on either your reading or your viewing.

**Readings:**


**Feature Films:**

“Samoan Wedding” (Sinclair Library).

“No. 2” (Sinclair Library).

“The Land Has Eyes” (Sinclair Library).

---

Week 10
Oct. 25–29

**October 28**

**Critical and Indigenous Ethnographies**

Renato Rosaldo writes that anthropology, that often most colonial of academic disciplines, has undergone a sea change since the late 1960s. He charts a new ethnography or social analysis that is attentive to the complexities of cultural citizenship and to the need for educational democracy. This new, more critical ethnography, informed by interdisciplinary approaches, attempts to uncover subordinated forms of knowledge. The blurring of ethnography's traditional boundaries creates space for historically subordinated perspectives otherwise excluded or marginalized from official discourse. "Culture and power," he writes, "have become intertwined in a world and in institutional settings where diverse groups, themselves internally diverse, interact and seek full enfranchisement and social justice under conditions of inequality" (p. xix).

With these words as preface, we will examine the potential for critical ethnographic practices in Oceania, not the least of which are indigenous anthropologies.

**Readings:**


Geoffrey White and Ty Kawika Tengan (2001), “Disappearing Worlds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Nov. 1–5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 2 – General Election Day (Non-Instructional Day)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A More Critical Ethnography Applied:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Site Visit to the Bishop Museum</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| This week we step outside of the classroom this week to visit the Bishop Museum; more particularly the display of Hawaiian history and culture in Hawaiian Hall, and three other exhibit or display rooms featuring Hawaiian natural history, Polynesian culture and history, and the Kahili. Following from the readings and discussions of Weeks VII and VIII, our goal is to apply a more critical and ethnographic perspective to the Bishop Museum's exhibited representations of Hawaiian and Pacific history and culture. We will speak more about procedural and logistical matters for this visit as October 20th nears. In preparation for our trip, I encourage you to visit the Bishop Museum's website to get a sense of its physical layout, administrative organization, various programs, and expressed sense of mission. The website address is <http://www.bishopmuseum.org>.

*This is the second of two weeks for which everyone is required to write. The written summaries/reflections on your visit to the Bishop Museum are due at the start of class next week.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 12</th>
<th>Nov. 8–12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>November 11 – Veterans Day (Non-Instructional Day)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ***NO CLASS – VETERANS DAY***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>Nov. 15–19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Reaction Paper due</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development, Governance, Movement, and the Nation-State in Oceania</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| For nearly three and one-half centuries, Western colonialism in the Pacific has sought the remaking of peoples and their islands into something more compatible with and reflective of metropolitan homelands. Domination,
exploitation and control are often the purposes that underlay these colonial efforts. In the case of "American" Micronesia, for example, the United States endeavored to remake the Caroline, Mariana and Marshall Islands into places that had the look, feel, sound, speed, smell, and taste of America about them. This essentially violent and disruptive transformation involved the imposition of metropolitan structures and practices, not the least of which were the nation-state mode of government and the development of a modern capitalist economy. There is no simple story here, however; local responses to these initiatives make for complicated, layered and varying histories. Micronesia is not the only site for such colonial machinations. Greg Fry writes of the politics and purposes behind Australia's framing or representing of the South Pacific. Christine Jourdan and Geoff White chart the complex interplay between identity and the nation state form of government in post-colonial Melanesia, while David Gegeo examines local and differing understandings of development in the Solomons.

**Readings:**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Nov. 22–26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 25 – Thanksgiving Day – Non-Instructional Day</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><strong>No Class – Thanksgiving Day</strong></em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Week 15 | December 2 |
### Pacific Music, Poetry, Dance and Visual Arts

Creative expression in Oceania has always reflected movement, travel and exchange within and beyond the region. Sean Mallon and Pandora Fulimalo Pereira note in the introduction to *Pacific Art Niu Sila* that contemporary Pacific arts express both the particulars of the local and transnational connections with other places, peoples, and histories. Re/presenting Oceania artistically and indigenously does not occur in isolation as the movement of peoples, ideas, material goods, media, and technology through the area affects the local, the regional, and the global. This week, we will sample a variety of visual, performative and literary arts in the Pacific for the connections, linkages, and shared histories these re/presentings reveal. Special attention will be given to the exceptional vibrancy of Pacific arts in New Zealand. You are most welcome to bring to class samples of your favorite Pacific music and musicians.

### Readings:


### Video:

“Black Grace” – Sinclair Library.
**December 9**

**Overview and Revision**

This week we do an overview of the course, highlighting the themes and issues covered and how they influence the representation of Oceania. We critically discuss the role of Pacific Islanders and island scholars in the representation of Oceania. We relate what we study to everyday experiences and observations and examine the relevance of what we studied.

**Exam Week**

**Project Presentations**

We will use the university exam week for presentations of preformative projects, if there are any. We will discuss specific guidelines and parameters for these project presentations well in advance of this session. Final copies of all projects, be they in written or other media forms, will be due on December 13.