

ENG 770: Seminar in Cultural Studies (Asia/ Pacific): Pacific Literary Criticism

Spring 2013

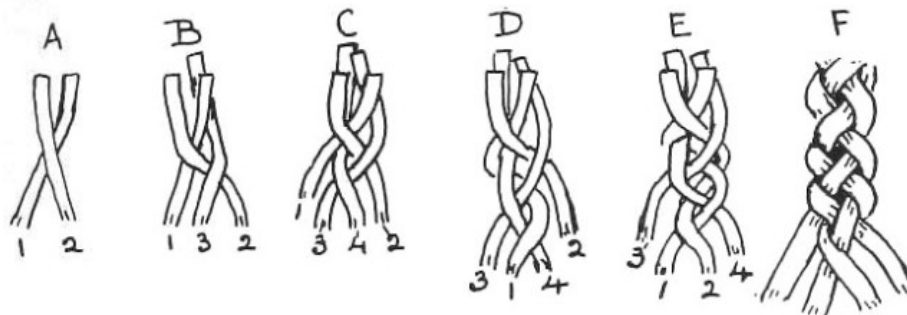


FIGURE 68.
Plaiting of four-strand round rope.

Professor:

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Class meetings:

Friday 3.30pm KUY406

Pacific Literary Studies is no longer an emerging field: scholars, writers, community members and students have participated in vigorous and complex conversations about literature and writing in the region for many years. These conversations have intersected with others: Cultural Studies, Indigenous Studies, Postcolonial Studies, Gender Studies and so on. In this course we will identify, explore and engage with the key strands of scholarship about literary studies and cultural studies in the Pacific. We will consider the field as a field, noting the accumulation of voices and perspectives across time, paying attention to major sites, individuals, themes, preoccupations and concerns of Pacific literary scholarship. Alongside the critical reading required for each week, students will produce their own reading log that records their reading of primary/ creative Pacific texts throughout the semester. A final research project will provide students with an opportunity to follow up on a specific relevant topic of interest to them.

Course Requirements

- Attendance and participation
- Two short assignments: one text based, one archive based
- Informal and semi-structured writing assignments
- Reading log
- Research paper

Required Texts

- Penny van Toorn. *Writing Never Arrives Naked*.
- Epeli Hau'ofa. *We are the Ocean*.
- Hereniko et al. *Inside Out*.
- Te Punga Somerville. *Once Were Pacific*.
- *The Contemporary Pacific* 13.2 (Special issue - Native Pacific Cultural Studies)
- *The Contemporary Pacific* 22.2 (Special issue - Albert Wendt)
- Rob Wilson *Reimagining the American Pacific: From South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and Beyond*

All of these texts are available through the UHM bookstore with the exception of TCP13.2 (out of print but available on scholarspace).

<http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/10635>

Required reading not listed above will be available to download and print via Laulima.

We will also have two weeks when students (in clusters) will be required to read different texts in preparation for the class discussion. In these cases, we will determine who will read what ahead of time, and students will prepare to informally present on their reading to the rest of the class. Students need to locate the texts themselves; I'm happy to help if you get stuck.

Week 4: Foundational conversations

SPAN

Mana

South Pacific Literature: from myth to fabulation

Week 13

Chadwick Allen *Trans-Indigenous*

Raylene Ramsay *Negotiating Identities in Francophone & Anglophone Pacific Literatures*

Elizabeth DeLoughrey *Routes & Roots: Navigating Caribbean & Pacific Island Literatures*

Lee Wallace *Sexual Encounters: Pacific Texts, Modern Sexualities*

Paul Lyons *American Pacificism: Oceania in the US Imagination*

Susan Najita *Decolonizing Pacific Cultures*

Assessment

Assessment	% of final mark	Due date
Informal & semi-structured writing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short thoughts (X4)• Reading log	20 10	
Text-based short assignment	30	
Research paper	40	

Informal & semi-structured writing

20% 'Short thoughts'

You are to write four short (2-3 pages) pieces which have a combined weighting of 20% of your overall mark for the course. The topics for each 'short thought' are listed below. Bring reports to class in the week indicated.

These reports are not researched: they are your own ideas on the topic. They will be marked on the basis of successful completion of the task and the quality of your answer.

- 1

Propose a metaphor for the Pacific region. Consider its possibilities and its limitations as a metaphor.

- 2

Attend the 'Words in the world' conference. Is it Pacific literary studies? Which parts are/ aren't Pacific literary studies? How do we decide whether and/ or how to weave the conversations you hear at the conference into our genealogy of Pacific literary studies?

- 3

In her essay Teaiwa describes NPCS as a field of study that is "in the process of becoming." Is it still in the process of becoming? Has it arrived? Did it pass us by? Are we in the middle of it? How will we know if it's here? If a field of study is in a journal and no one reads it, does it make a sound?

- 4

If you had to teach an introductory class called 'Pacific Literature' to senior undergraduates at a university, which writers would you include? Which ones would you exclude? Would your course only include writers who are Indigenous to the Pacific? How would you introduce students to European representations of the region?

10% Reading log

Throughout the semester, read creative works by Pacific writers every week. You determine the scope and focus of your reading list; the only requirement is that you read at least one new text each week (NB 'new' as in you haven't read it before rather than 'new' as in recent). Try to keep it broad in terms of genre, range, date of publication etc as much as possible, but this is an opportunity for you to focus on texts which draw your attention.

In a log/ journal, take notes on the texts as you read them. There is no specific criteria for how this reading log looks, but take the opportunity to reflect on your reading and perhaps tie it in to class discussions and other thoughts you're having at the time. During some of our seminar sessions we will take the opportunity to talk about the texts we're reading (I'm going to keep a log too, and keep you all company in the reading process – there's always more Pacific lit to read!).

30% Short assignments (2 X 15%)

Short assignment 1: foundations

Choose two pieces of Pacific literary criticism which were published before 1986 and use them to engage more deeply with a creative Pacific text of your choice (published any time).

(6-8 pages)

Short assignment 2: specificity

Choose one specific site or community in the Pacific (a nation, an island, a community, an archipelago, etc) and create an annotated bibliography of critical work about its literature.

(6-8 pages: if you have blank pages, write about why this might be so; if you have too many items for your bibliography, select those you think are most important.)

40% Research paper

Presentation (10%) Essay (30%)

Essay: Produce a research essay about some aspect of Pacific Literature that appeals to you. We will spend some time developing these papers over the course of the semester.

Presentation: Prepare to talk to the class about your topic. This is a chance to share your 'angle' on Pacific Literature with everyone else, and gives us a chance to marvel at the range of literary studies in the Pacific. We will be using a style of presentation roughly

based on 'pecha kucha' – talk about six powerpoint slides in six minutes. The six slides must focus on the following six things: the title of your project; your central question; a key critical text; a crucial contextual detail; a quotation from a text (critical or creative); an idea for further research related to your topic.

The fine print

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Issues of workload do not constitute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. If you require an extension, contact me as soon as possible by email and/ or in person. Your request must be followed up by relevant documentation (eg a medical certificate) as soon as possible.

Plagiarism is not tolerated in this course. Plagiarism is when you represent someone else's work (creative or critical) as your own. This includes instances in which you do not provide adequate referencing for ideas you are writing about as well as clear cases of 'cut and paste' from another source. Remember that even if you are panicked because of a deadline or other concern, plagiarism is never worth the risk – it's easy to spot and I will treat every case very seriously.

> Image on front of syllabus: Te Rangihiroa *The Material Culture of the Cook Islands [Aitutaki]*. New Plymouth: Thomas Avery and Sons Ltd, 1927. p69. This image is a 'taura puna,' a four strand rope.

	Topic	Reading/ preparation	Student work
11 Jan	Genealogies of criticism		
18	Region 1: Oceania & decolonization	Epeli Hau'ofa <i>We Are the Ocean</i> Plus readings on Laulima	short thought 1
25	Writing	van Toorn <i>Writing Never Arrives Naked</i> Plus readings on Laulima	
1 Feb	Foundational critical conversations	EITHER SPAN OR <i>Mana</i> OR <i>South Pacific Literature: From Myth to Fabulation</i> OR <i>Readings in Pacific Literature</i> Plus readings on Laulima	
8	CONFERENCE	'Words in the world' conference - UHM	Short assignment 1
15	Field: late 1990s	Hereniko et al (eds) <i>Inside Out</i>	Short thought 2
22	Field: late 2000s	<i>The Contemporary Pacific</i> 22.2	
1 Mar	Region 2: Empire & form	<i>Reimagining the American Pacific</i> Plus readings on Laulima	
8	Disciplinary, interdisciplinarity	<i>The Contemporary Pacific</i> 13.2 Plus readings on Laulima	short thought 3
15	Publishing & collections	Readings on Laulima	
22	Region 3: Indigeneity & diaspora	Te Punga Somerville <i>Once Were Pacific</i> (discussion to be convened by guests) Plus readings on Laulima	Short assignment 2
29	SPRING BREAK		
5 Apr	Intersections	Allen OR Ramsay OR DeLoughrey OR Wallace OR Najita OR Lyons	short thought 4
12	New directions & returning to the foundations	Students to identify and source readings Plus readings on Laulima	Reading log
19		Individual research presentations	
26	Final class		Research essay