

# A Samoan Sense of Self: An Exploration

*Karlene Mamea, Julia Ioane, and Peter Slater*

PSYCHOTHERAPIST, AUCKLAND; LECTURER/CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST, AUCKLAND;  
PSYCHOTHERAPIST, LONDON

Corresponding author: Julia Ioane

## Abstract

How is a Samoan sense of self created and used? This article explores Samoan concepts of self within traditional stories. Implications for therapy as a Samoan therapist, or with Samoan clients are offered, with reflections on the nature of the relationship between Samoan understandings of self and psychodynamic theory.

## Whakarāpopotonga

Pēhea ai te whakaara, te whakamahi kiritau o te tairongo Hāmoana. E tūhuria ana e tēnei tuhinga ngā ariā kiritau i roto i ngā kōrero tūturu. Ko ngā tohu haumanu mā te kaihaumanu Hāmoana, mō ngā kiritaki Hāmoana rānei e hoatu tahi ana me ngā whakahoki maharahana ki te āhua o te whanaungatanga i waenga i te mātauranga Hāmoana mōna ake me te ariā whakanekenekenga hinengaro.

**Keywords:** Samoan; self; stories; Pacific; psychotherapy; sense

## Introduction

Given the prevalence and many challenges of cross-cultural therapeutic work in Aotearoa New Zealand it is crucial to explore the relationship between indigenous knowledge and Western understandings of self. Bowden (2010) suggested that vast changes in counselling practices need to be made to accommodate the Pacific worldview, including “movement and influence within, around, and beyond each person [client and counsellor]” (p. 6). This article was written by the first author for her Master of Psychotherapy thesis, under the supervision and guidance of Drs Ioane and Slater.

In order to explore what kind of relationship exists between a Samoan sense of self and psychodynamic psychotherapy, it is first necessary to find out what constitutes a Samoan self. This article provides an outline of Samoan concepts of self using traditional stories. The stories chosen include *Telesā: The Covenant Keeper* (Wendt-Young, 2011), a popular fiction novel; the myth of “Sina and the Eel”; and the song, “Tatau Samoa”. These stories were chosen

---

Mamea, K., Ioane, J., & Slater, P. (2018). A Samoan sense of self: An exploration. *Ata: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand*, 22(1), 103-113. <https://doi.org/10.9791/ajpanz.2018.08>

as representative of traditional constructs of Samoan perspectives, values and history, providing insight into the meaning attached to a traditional way of being and relating with oneself and the world.

I have also considered articulation of the Samoan self from academic writing from Samoan and non-Samoan authors. Academic understandings assist me to make sense of the expressions of self in the Samoan stories. It is my assumption that articulations of self through traditional stories contain subtle clues to hidden knowledge.

## A Sense of the Samoan Self

In her conceptualisation of a “self”, Melanie Klein (1975) spoke of an infant’s relationship to primary figures. In my experience, a Samoan “self” may be considered in relation to what it means to be Samoan. Whether born in Samoa or overseas, traditional narratives depicting Samoan creation stories, exploring relationships and the importance of the environment can be linked to the formation of a Samoan “self”. In the search to make meaning of my “self”, it is important for me to find what constitutes a Samoan self using not only my mind, but my emotional, physical, and visceral senses as well.

Several authors who hold vast knowledge of *gagana Samoa* and *aganu’u Samoa* (Samoan language and customs) write about a traditional sense of self (Tuagalu, 2008; Tui Atua, 2005). Additionally, the need for an open and holistic articulation of Samoan identity is emphasised by multiple authors (Lupe, 2007; Mackley-Crump, 2015; Macpherson, 2001; Taumoeofolau, 2013; Tuagalu, 2008; Wendt, 1999). A fluid identity accentuates the reality that Samoans are constructing their identities in various contexts, in conjunction with multiple cultures and ethnicities. Although an all-encompassing approach is ideal, tangible concepts of a Samoan structure of self are still needed in order to understand any relationship to psychodynamic theory.

A Samoan sense of self has been described as a relational self (Tamasese, Peteru, Waldegrave, & Bush, 2005), inseparable from relationship to others (Ellis, 2006; Lupe, 2013; Tuagalu, 2008). Most prevalent in my research is the concept of relatedness and the importance of relationship as crucial to the structure of a Samoan self. The interpersonal nature of a Samoan self is revealed through discussions of the concept of the *vā*, that is, the “social spaces of relationships” (Tamasese et al., 2005, p. 303.), “the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates, but space that relates” (Wendt, 1999, p. 224). Respect within relationships is important as alluded to through *tuā’oi* (boundaries), *tapu* (forbidden, taboo), *vā tapua’i* (spirituality of the *vā*) and *feagaiga* (covenant in relationships) (Iosefo, 2016; Najita, 2006; Peteru & Percival, 2010; Tamasese et al., 2005; Tuagalu 2008; Wendt, 1999).

Relationship with others is further dependent on a sense of duty and responsibility to one’s *aiga* (family/village) or church through behaving in accordance with values characteristic of these groups. Values such as reciprocity, service, giving and courtesy pervade ways of connecting with others. Samoan identity is enshrined within one’s obligations to family and community, guided by respect for the limitations between all things. One only knows oneself in relation to others and, as Ellis explained, “there is neither I nor one. And in the Samoan accounts, neither that I nor that one is single or singular” (2006, p. 696). These “others” which Ellis pointed to are external cultural markers (the village, suburb or area one grew up in,

family, church), whose membership acts as a point of reference to understanding oneself.

Certainly, in my lived experience, relatedness is often affirmed by group conformity, with a vast majority of Samoan people (whether in Samoa or overseas) involved in church or village activities. Mageo (1989) and Peteru and Percival (2010) emphasised that belonging or *fa'asinomaga* is pivotal to understanding Samoan identity. Mageo reported this social aspect as a key component to Samoan identity, stating, “the Samoan superego demands that social mores take precedence over the more eccentric dictates of one’s own personal ethics” (1989, p. 191). In addition, the nature of important social relationships is based on longstanding traditions of synthesising culture with religion; for example, the Samoan constitution is founded on Christian principles (*Fa’avae Samoa i le Atua* or “Samoa is founded on God”) (Lui, 2007). The role of spirituality (and in recent times, Christianity) as prominent in the construction of a Samoan self is further affirmed by several authors (Lui, 2007; Lupe, 2013; Tuagalu, 2008; Tamasese et al., 2005; Tui Atua, 2002), and permeates social relationships, a sense of self-worth, and one’s place in the world. As a collective environment relies on conformity to thrive, membership to one’s Samoan-ness requires a kind of adherence to what is considered the “greater good”. Social and religious institutions often become the hub for group activities and are reinforced by family and village-wide gatherings and customs, affirming the relationship between group participation and identity.

## A Samoan Spirit

The Samoan soul or psyche has been described as translating to the word *mauli* before being changed by missionaries to the word *loto* — the essence or heart of a person, more closely related to emotional will or desire (Aiono-Le Tagaloa, as cited in Peteru & Percival, 2010). Religious influence aside, Milner (1993, p. 141) explained *mauli* as “located in the region of the solar plexus ... seat of the emotions”. The implication that the emotional centre is in the pit of the stomach not only describes a concept in European terms in a physical bodily sense, but also poses a different construction of self to traditional views of a psyche or soul related to the mind, brain or head. Lupe (2007) described the Samoan ego as comprising a body/heart stance, connected closely to typically indigenous thinking where the interaction between objective and subjective realities are carefully reflected. This is in comparison to what Lupe described as a split between the body and heart in Western notions of the ego, which is detrimental to a Samoan ego. This is reminiscent of the mechanism of splitting both good and bad objects from the ego, and how this weakens the already fragile infant ego. Bad experiences are supremely denied whilst good experiences are idealised to protect against the fear of persecution. The split of the physical and emotional is considered unusual in Samoan culture, and the interaction between them is what constitutes the Samoan psyche, similar to the cycles of interaction between internal and external objects, re-projected and re-introjected.

Specific cognitive processes which comprise a Samoan sense of self include *mafau* (memory) and *loilo* (intellect) (Peteru & Percival, 2010) and the specific use of Samoan language comprises significant aspects of the Samoan psyche. In his conference paper titled “More on Meaning, Nuance and Metaphor” (2002), Tui Atua described how the use of words, language and tone is used to reiterate a sense of cultural self. The Samoan language uses allegory, allusions and metaphor in *fagogo* (fables or fairy tales), *lauga* (speeches) and

throughout rituals and customs (Tui Atua, 2002). The roles of chiefs and orators for each village are imperative to the health of the village, and through meticulous use of words in *alaga'upu* (expressions) for specific functions (for example, the exchange of gifts for funerals, marriages, and requests for forgiveness), relationships of power, respect and reputation are negotiated. Samoan oratory is its own art form; skilled orators are revered and there is a language which is exclusively used for the purpose of oratory (Tui Atua, 2002).

A Samoan sense of self involves locating oneself in relation to others in a group or subgroup within Samoan culture. Relationships between group members are governed by the *vā*, which dictate language and meaning between Samoans. Therefore, a Samoan sense of self is conceived of through relationship(s), which then provide meaning and identity. With this logic, it is my sense that the relationships expressed within traditional Samoan stories contain important descriptions of a Samoan self.

## How Traditional Stories Communicate a Samoan “Self”

His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi (hereafter, Tui Atua), *Tamaaiga* (title given to the holder of one or more of the four paramount titles of Samoa), raised as a keeper and guardian of Samoan indigenous knowledge, stated that “you need [the Samoan indigenous reference] in order to know yourself, to protect yourself and to find yourself in your search for meaning and for God” (Tui Atua, 2008). It is interesting to note that Tui Atua did not provide a concrete or straightforward definition of the “Samoan indigenous reference”, although I understand this as referring to traditional Samoan knowledge, that is ancient customs, history, myths, legends, *fagogo* (fairy tales, sometimes intermingled with song told at night to children), and spiritual concepts.

Gabbard (2014) argued that a significant function of mythology is to reconstitute the creative power of the origin of the world. Therefore, the stories function as a moral lens, a “charter for belief in a sacred order of both the world and human society ... setting forth models of correct behaviour, constructive values, ethics and morality” (p. 245). Lupe (2013) noted that folktales or *fagogo* express powerful symbolic language which carry important psychological information, where powerful metaphors, inferences and symbols communicate nuances of cultural values, history and rituals (Tui Atua, 2002). *Mama*, according to Tui Atua (2002), refers to literal and symbolic food or nurturance, and fosters spiritual, emotional, physical and mental growth. Both *mama* and *fagogo* transport a sense of awareness of a cultural and physical self from one generation to the next. The following stories were chosen in order to further comprehend a Samoan sense of self with this awareness in mind.

### *Telesā: The Covenant Keeper* by Lani Wendt-Young

This novel describes the local ancient myths of the *Telesā* (originally *teinesā*) spirit women and the relationship of these myths to the main characters’ sense of themselves. It highlights the struggle of keeping a traditional heritage alive in the face of the modern world.

The story centres on Leila, a half Samoan, half American teenager, on a mission to find out more about her Samoan heritage and her mother’s family. Along the way, Leila discovers she is the chosen spiritual embodiment of Pele, a *Telesā Fanua afi* (the goddess of earth and

fire). Leila discovers that her biological mother, Nafanua, is also a *Telesā*, although she embodies *Telesā Matagi* (the goddess of storm, air, wind and lightning), and alongside Leila's maternal aunts are *Feagaiga sā* — a sacred covenant, charged with protecting the lands of Samoa from human destruction, pillaging and misuse. Nafanua is the covenant keeper, the leader of the sisterhood and Leila finds that *Telesā* have gifts with the landscape; gardens, trees, and water, which she has had a longstanding fascination with.

This story highlights multiple realities for the main character's sense of identity. An intangible, spiritual power is described within this novel as being part of a Samoan legacy, as well as a long tradition of struggle for land, independence, and for love. Leila's identity struggle draws on her "Samoan-ness"; the power and fear that accompanies both her spirituality and sexuality, as well as her responsibility to contribute to the livelihood of her fellow Samoan people, through protecting the landscape. Secondly, Leila's Western (or American) self is displayed as individualistic, materialistic and in contrast to her Samoan-ness. Leila's story highlights the ambivalence in her identity, torn between her relationships to two different parts of herself. The process of finding her Samoan-ness requires Leila to accept Pele as part of her, thereby internalising an aspect of her mother, Nafanua. Leila's internalisation of Pele/Nafanua means the actualisation of her Samoan-ness, therefore, no longer repressing the nature of her relationship to her parents (or heritage, traditions, and expected roles). Perhaps author Wendt-Young is pointing to one's internalised relationships as integral to understanding oneself as a Samoan.

## Sina and the Eel

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the varying versions of "Sina and the Eel" and that in retelling it I am endeavouring to capture its essence. This story describes the origin of the coconut tree in Samoa, which has been an important source of sustenance, both as food for Samoan people and as a product for the local economy — its husk, flesh, juice and oil has been utilized for centuries, and is now a commodity sold and used around the world.

The main character is a beautiful girl named Sina, who lived on the island of Savai'i. When the high chief of Fiti heard about her beauty, he wanted to marry Sina, and transformed himself into an eel, setting out to find her. Sina found the baby eel, keeping it as her pet, caring for him in a nearby spring. The eel began to demand more love from Sina, wanting to spend more time with her, and had grown so big that she no longer saw him as a pet and became frightened of his gaze. Sina decided to bathe in a different spring, but the eel followed her there and made her angry, so she decided to relocate to another village. Sina decided to move to the largest of the Samoan islands, Upolu, and fled to a nearby family village, although she saw the eel following her as she moved from the western end to the eastern side of the island. At the village Moata'a (just out of the main town centre), Sina went straight to the *malae* (open space for meetings) and to the chief's *fale* (house). Sina sat between two of her cousins at the front of the *fale*, wanting attention and protection, as her fear of the eel intensified. The eel edged across the *malae*, confident and purposeful, and circled the *fale* in front of the chiefs, saying, "O beautiful Sina, listen to my words and in pity, fulfil my last wish. I am the Tuifiti (chief of Fiti) and I came to win you for my wife. I have lost the art of magic-making and I am unable to change myself back into a man. I have one wish

to beg of you; if I die, cut off my head and bury it in front of your *fale*. A tree will grow out of it, a tree which will be very useful to you; when the *To'elau* (northeast trade wind) fails to blow, take the leaves and weave fans for yourself. When it bears fruit, they will appear in bunches of threes and fours. Drink from these fruits when you are thirsty as every time you do, it is as though you will be kissing me". In the ensuing battle between Sina's cousins and the eel, his head was cut off. Sina, remembering her once fond feelings for the eel, carefully planted it in front of her *fale*, caring for the growing plant just as she cared for the baby eel. Soon, the first coconut tree grew, with its fruit bearing the face of the eel.

Perhaps the story of "Sina and the Eel" outlines a kind of transition between Klein's (1946) paranoid-schizoid position to a more depressive position. From the hostility Sina held towards the eel in fear of his intensity, to her recognition of her previous love for the eel, as she plants the eel's head in order to re-experience his love for her. Hinshelwood (1991) stated that the sadism of the paranoid-schizoid position eventually makes way for more appeasing feelings (in the depressive position), and feelings of fear of loss of the loved object as well as a wish to repair any damage done is present. In Sina's repulsion from the "split" eel, perhaps the death instinct dominated her mind, and only once the threat was annihilated (or the eel became the receiver of Sina's projective identification), then the life instinct could take over and her loving impulses were emphasised. Many female characters in Samoan mythology are represented as either creative or destructive figures (Gabbard, 2014), and indeed the female characters in both this story and in *Telesā* display powerful aggressive and resourceful drives. Klein (1975) stated that the formation of the ego was largely determined by the oscillation between splitting and repression of objects on one hand, and integration of objects on the other. Perhaps this story could portray the eel as a kind of object; loved at first, and then hated, as Sina tried desperately to cut off her own hate of the eel. It wasn't until the object/eel was repressed fully (or killed), that Sina could incorporate the eel's tenderness and love.

The story of "Sina and the Eel" describes several cultural values and explores Sina's own sense of safety, love and anger, giving voice to the complexity of relationships; that aggression, conflict, nurturing and loving feelings can co-exist whilst maintaining a sense of connection. In any case, it is possible that Sina's sense of herself is articulated through her relationship not just to the eel, but to her brothers and cousins, who acted upon their duty to protect her. As her own sense of anxiety and felt response to danger is soothed by external objects, their responsibility and relationship to her precipitated the climactic part of the story, in which the realisation of Sina's love for the eel was then felt safe enough to express.

## Tatau Samoa

This song depicts the origin of the practice of tattooing in Samoa. According to Wendt, "the *tatau* and the *malu* (women's *tatau*) are not just beautiful decoration, they are scripts/texts/testimonies to do with relationships, order, form and so on" (Wendt, 1999, p. 5). As an external expression of "Samoa-ness", the markings in the *tatau* have often been adapted by those wishing to assert their Samoan heritage, different to the rituals and responsibilities of the traditional *malofie* and *malu*. I chose this song for its commentary on symbolism which I believe points to crucial aspects of the Samoan psyche.

1.

'O le mafua'aga lenei ua iloa  
O le taga o le tatau i Samoa  
O le Malaga a teine e toalua  
Na fe'ausi mai i Fiti i le vasalolua  
Na la aumai ai o le ato au  
Ma si a la pese e tutumau  
Fai mai e tata o fafine  
'Ae le tata o tane

This is the origin we know  
Of the tattooing of the *tatau* in Samoa  
The journey by two women  
Who swam from Fiji across the ocean  
They brought the tattooing kit  
And their unchanging song  
That said women were to be tattooed  
And not men

2.

A o le ala na tata ai o tane  
I na ua sese si a la pese  
Taunu'u i gatai o Falealupo  
'Ua vā'aia loa o le fai sua ua tele  
Totofu loa lea o fafine,  
Ma ua sui ai si a la pese:  
Faimai e tata o tane,  
'Ae le tata o fafine

But the reason why men are tattooed  
Is because the song went wrong  
Reaching outside Falealupo  
They saw a giant clam  
The women dived  
And changed their song  
To say men were to be tattooed  
And not women

3.

Silasila i si tama ua ta'atia  
O le tufuga lea ua amatalia  
Talofa ua tagi aue  
Ua oti'oti solo o le 'autapulu tele  
Sole ia e loto tele  
O le ta'aloga fa'atamatane  
E ui lava ina tiga tele  
Ae mulimuli ane ua e fefete

Pity the youth now  
While the *tufuga* (tattoo artist) starts  
Alas, he is crying loudly  
As the tattooing tool cuts all over  
Young man, be brave  
This is the sport of male heirs  
Despite the enormous pain  
Afterwards you will swell with pride

4.

O atunu'u uma o le Pasefika  
Ua sili Samoa le ta'uta'ua  
'O le sogaimiti ua savalivali mai  
  
Ua fe'iafi mai o na fa'a'ila  
O asofa'aifo, fa'amuli'ali'ao  
Fa'aatualoa, selu fa'alauftao  
O le sigano fa'apea fa'aulutao  
Ua ova I le vasa laolao

Of all of the countries in the Pacific  
Samoa is the most famous (for tattooing)  
The *sogaimiti* (Samoan males who wear  
*tatau*) walking towards you  
With his *fa'a'ila* (motifs) glistening  
Curved lines, motifs  
Like centipedes,  
Like *sigano* (flowers),  
The greatest in the whole wide world

(Translation from Wendt, 1999. For audio, see *PeseSamoa*75, 2011)

In this song and in the traditional stories discussed, the relationship to land or landscape is a common theme. Puluotu-Endemann (2009), in his holistic health model encompassing Pacific values and beliefs, stated that context, time and environment are important dimensions to Pacific-wide values. Representations of the land occur in various ways through traditional stories, in patterns used in *tatau*, in the use of symbolism in expressions, metaphors and stories. The relationship to the environment forms a central part of both internal and external identity — often Samoans will “locate” each other through identifying village links (as in my experience both in New Zealand and Samoa). Perhaps an adequate description of the relationship of the Samoan psyche to the land was “lost in translation”, omitted in the same way that some words are inadequate, but close to the concept in another language.

## Concluding Thoughts — The Samoan Self and Psychotherapy

Several writers have compared the Samoan psyche with Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of the ego, super ego and id (Lupe, 2007; Lupe, 2013; Mageo, 1989; Mageo, 1991; Peteru & Percival, 2010). Mageo (1989, 1991) distinguished Western understandings of self (the exclusivity of the mother-child relationship and the ego self) from Samoan structures of self, highlighting an exterior (Samoan) focus versus interior (Western) understandings of the self. Although this reflection is useful to the research, Mageo’s work sought to conceptualise Samoans through Western cultural ideals. Tuhiwai-Smith (2012) commented on the danger of anthropological studies on indigenous communities, “... anthropology is the one [discipline] most closely associated with the study of the Other and with the defining of primitivism” (p. 66).

Indeed, there are different views on the way non-Western cultural knowledge may coincide with psychotherapy. However, where Samoan structures of the self acknowledge ancestral culture in terms of rituals, language, customs and land, Melanie Klein’s emphasis for instance, remained on infant anxiety with reference to the formation of the personality (from Freud’s concept of the ego, superego and id). Although both perspectives emphasise the fluidity between inner and outer, the lens with which the self is constructed is focused differently.

The interaction between objects highlights the relationship between the internal and external worlds, connecting an individual with their primary figures. The fluidity with which the Samoan self is built requires consideration of the relationship between self and others, as well as land and culture. The living reference Tui Atua spoke of in his writing seems to be encoded in one’s heritage — not just within cultural traditions but also ancestry, where infant life must be influenced by the infant life of one’s parents, grandparents, and those before them.

The understanding of the fluidity between inner and outer realities has great implications for psychodynamic psychotherapy involving Samoan people as therapists, clients or both. Non-Samoan therapists working with Samoan clients need to consider the potency of the relationship the client is likely to have with their family — including wider extended family and church groups. This may bring about new understandings of the role that guilt and shame may play for the client in the articulation of his or her difficulties. Guilt, shame and



anxiety could manifest in many indirect ways, and the utilization of the symbolic linguistic style typical of traditional Samoan cultural signifiers may gain both the therapist and client indirect access to understandings of these emotional states. Therefore, the use of metaphor, expressions, humour and storytelling may be employed in order to gain awareness of unconscious material.

It seems that for the Samoan psyche, the relationships between internal and external truths are fluid, neither completely separate nor one and the same. Therefore, the weight of the relationship between therapist and client must be considered in therapy; perhaps understanding oneself alone and considering one's parents as separate and autonomous objects may be difficult and may impede therapeutic progress. In my opinion, the ability of the therapist to comprehend the markers of the Samoan self involving relationships to others and to land is vital to forging alternative understandings of oneself.

This paper explores a Samoan sense of self, drawing on traditional Samoan stories. I have concluded with some beginning thoughts about the relationship between this and Western psychotherapeutic conceptualisations of self. I suggest that further exploration of the relationship between these world views is essential given the growing prevalence and diversity of Samoan communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, and hope that this paper provides a foundation upon which such exploration may be built.

## References

- Bowden, A. R. (2010). Beyond definition and method: The next era for counselling and psychotherapy. *Asia Pacific Journal of Counselling @ Psychotherapy*, 1(1), 4-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21507680903570235>
- Ellis, J. (2006). 'Tatau' and 'malu': Vital signs in contemporary Samoan literature. *Modern Language Association of America*, 121(3), 687-701. Retrieved from [http://www.mla.org/bib\\_periodicals](http://www.mla.org/bib_periodicals)
- Gabbard, C. (2014). Sina and Nafanua: Mother goddess enacting primordial spirituality in Samoa. In T. M. Suaalii-Sauni, M. A. Wendt, V. Mo'a, N. Fuamatu, U. L. V'ai, R. Whaitiri, S. L. Filipo (Eds.), *Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion* (pp. 243-253). Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.
- Hinshelwood, R. D. (1991). *A dictionary of Kleinian thought*. London, England: Free Association Books.
- Iosefo, F. (2016). Third spaces: Sites of resistance in higher education? *Higher Education Research @ Development*, 35(1), 189-192. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1133273>
- Klein, M. (1946). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 27, 99-110. Retrieved from <http://www.pep-web.org>
- Klein, M. (1975). Envy and gratitude and other works 1946-1963. (M. Masud & R. Khan, Eds.). *The International Psycho-Analytical Library*, 104, 1-346. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.
- Lui, D. (2007). Spiritual injury: A Samoan perspective on spirituality's impact on mental health. In P. Culbertson, M. Nelson-Agee & C. 'Ofa-Makasiale (Eds.), *Penina uliuli: Contemporary challenges in mental health for Pacific peoples* (pp. 66-76). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.

- Lupe, K. (2007). An ocean with many shores: Indigenous consciousness and the thinking heart. In P. Culbertson, M. Nelson-Agee & C. 'Ofa-Makasiale (Eds.), *Penina uliuli: Contemporary challenges in mental health for Pacific peoples* (pp. 122-135). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Lupe, K. (2013). Pacific Indigenous well-being: Wise body, singing heart. In M. Nelson-Agee, T. McIntosh, P. Culbertson & C. 'Ofa-Makasiale (Eds.), *Pacific identities and well-being: Cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 213-224). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Mackley-Crump, J. (2015). *The Pacific festivals of Aotearoa New Zealand: Negotiating place and identity in a new homeland*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Macpherson, C. (2001). One trunk sends out many branches: Pacific cultures and cultural identities. In C. Macpherson, P. Spoonley & M. Anae (Eds.), *Tangata o te moana nui: The evolving identities of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand* (pp. 66-80). Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.
- Mageo, J. M. (1989). Aga, amio and loto: Perspectives on the structure of the self in Samoa. *Oceania*, 59(3), 181-199. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1834-4461.1989.tb02321.x>
- Mageo, J. M. (1991). Samoan moral discourse and the loto. *American Anthropologist*, 93(2), 405-420. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com>
- Milner, G. B. (1993). *Samoan dictionary: Samoan-English, English-Samoan*. Auckland, New Zealand: Polynesian Press.
- Najita, S. (2006). *Decolonizing cultures in the Pacific: Reading history and trauma in contemporary fiction*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- PeseSamoa75. (2011, January 31). *The Golden Ali'is — Tatau a Samoa* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ml4aDhsvD64>
- Peteru, M. C., & Percival, T. (2010). *O 'Aiga o le 'anofale o afio'aga ma le fatu o le aganu'u: Samoan pathways to the prevention of sexual violence* (Research Report). Auckland, New Zealand: University of Auckland.
- Pulotu-Endemann, K. (2009). *Fonofale model of health: Pacific models for health promotion*. Wellington, New Zealand: Health Promotion Forum.
- Tamasese, K., Peteru, C., Waldegrave, C., & Bush, A. (2005). Ole Taea Afua, the new morning: A qualitative investigation into Samoan perspectives on mental health and culturally appropriate services. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 39(4), 300-309. Retrieved from <http://www.uk.sagepub.com>
- Taumoevalu, M. (2013). Respect, solidarity and resilience in Pacific worldviews: A counselling perspective. In M. Nelson-Agee, T. McIntosh, P. Culbertson & C. 'Ofa-Makasiale (Eds.), *Pacific identities and well-being: Cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 115-129). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Tuagalu, I. (2008). Heuristics of the vā. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 4(1), 107-126.
- Tuhiwai-Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Dunedin, New Zealand: Otago University Press.
- Tui Atua, Tupua T. E. Tamasese. (2002). *More on meaning, nuance and metaphor*. Paper presented at Pacific Fono, Moving Ahead Together. Porirua, New Zealand: Centre for Samoan Studies.
- Tui Atua, Tupua T. E. Tamasese. (2005). Clutter in Indigenous knowledge, research and history: A Samoan perspective. *The Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 25, 61-69. Retrieved from <http://www.ms.govt.nz>

Tui Atua, Tupua T. E. Tamasese. (2008). *Tupualegase: The eternal riddle*. Paper presented at Faculty of Arts Maori and Pacific Tuakana Leadership Dinner. Auckland, New Zealand: Centre for Pacific Studies.

Wendt, A. (1999). Tatauing the post-colonial body. In V. Hereniko & R. Wilson (Eds.), *Inside out: Literature, politics, and identity in the new Pacific* (pp. 399-412). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Wendt-Young, L. (2011). *Telesā: The covenant keeper*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.



**Karlene Mamea** is Samoan, born in New Zealand and from the villages of Matautu Lefaga, Siumu, Fa'atoia, and Aleipata in Upolu. She has been working in the fields of alcohol and drug addiction and rehabilitation in a correctional facility setting since graduating with a Master of Psychotherapy in 2016. Karlene's hope is that more conversations regarding Pasifika psychotherapy become visible and accessible. Fa'afetai tele lava.

**Julia Ioane** is a New Zealand-born Samoan with ancestral ties to Fasito'outa and Leauva'a from the heart of Polynesia, Samoa, and is an avid rugby fan! She is a clinical psychologist and lectures in psychology at Auckland University of Technology, with a private practice in Auckland working with children, young people and their families in care and protection; and youth justice. Julia's research interests include violent and sexual youth offending, and writing on Pasifika epistemology and practice. Contact details: [julia.ioane@aut.ac.nz](mailto:julia.ioane@aut.ac.nz).



**Peter Slater** is a London-trained adult psychoanalytic/integrative psychotherapist with 18 years in private practice. He was previously a Senior Lecturer at Auckland University of Technology, designing and delivering AUT's most recent child and adolescent psychotherapy training programme. Peter returned to the UK in 2017 and is currently practicing as a psychotherapist with Harley Therapy in London.