

Subfield Proposal: Pacific World and Indigeneity
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Field: America

Courses:

1. History 1911: Pacific History
2. English 90AU: Australian Indigenous Literature

This proposed subfield seeks to redefine the America field along geographic and thematic lines, expanding the geographic scope to the greater Pacific World and focusing on histories of indigenous peoples within the U.S. and Pacific.

My personal interest in proposing this subfield lies in my interest in Hawaiian history and pre-history. What will hopefully develop into my Junior Paper and Senior Thesis, my research through the Mellon-Mays Fellowship also involves histories of Hawaii and parallel histories among other indigenous Pacific peoples. I hope to write on early 20th Century construction of local racial identity in Hawaii and incidences of racial violence. Coursework in this subfield will contextualize moment in Hawaiian history not only within the context of American history but also within a larger context of the Pacific World and in some cases with indigeneity as the central point of conversation.

Although I have touched upon issues of indigeneity and Pacific peoples in previous classes, I have done so in relation to discourses of U.S. imperialism and colonialism and not from a perspective centered in the Pacific. The Pacific World and its indigenous peoples have been covered previously in my classes as periphery topics, and I hope to instead approach these topics as central points of discussion. Additionally, I would like to examine the Pacific not only on a global scale but also more closely from the bottom up as through literatures and oral literatures of indigenous Pacific peoples (e.g. Australian aboriginals).