



Te Tumu

School of Māori, Pacific & Indigenous Studies

Semester One 2019  
Seminar Series

**Presenters:**

**Vaivaimalemalo**

**Dr. Michael Fusi Ligaliga**

Lecturer

Te Tumu School of Māori, Pacific and  
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**Seminar location:**

Te Paparewa: Ground Floor  
performance space, Te Tumu

**Date:**

Friday 29 March 2019

**Time:**

3pm – 4pm

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Seminar Series prepared by  
Te Tumu Research Committee

## *Fa'a Samoa: Peacebuilder or Peacebreaker?*

### Understanding the Domestic violence problem in Samoa: A Peace and Conflict perspective

Over the past 30 years, Samoa has been a model example of peace and stability throughout the Pacific region. The fusion of traditional (*fono o matai* and *fa'a matai*) and western institutions (Westminster style of democracy) of governance, albeit not a perfect marriage, has nonetheless been credited with Samoa's ability to sustain peace and stability. Despite this, domestic violence in now an epidemic in Samoa. Numerous research have adopted the concept of *fa'a Samoa* to examine Samoa's protective and preventative mechanisms (*va* or relational spaces, *va tapuia* or sacred spaces, *fa'aaloalo* or respect, *alofa* or love, and *malupuipuia* or protection) against domestic violence. However, little is known whether or not there are aspects within *fa'a Samoa* that contribute to or influence domestic violence in Samoa.

To explore these issues further, three peace and conflict theories are introduced to provide an alternative perspective to the domestic violence problem in Samoa. Galtung's Violence Triangle (1990) (GVT), (Lederach's (1997) Nested Time Paradigm (NTP) and Dugan's (1996) Nested Theory of Conflict (NTC) are adopted to discuss the issue of domestic violence in Samoa.

GVT raises important institutional and cultural problems that can influence and justify the act of domestic violence. Some of these contributors are subtle and at times invisible, while others are masked and hide behind Samoa's traditional institutions. Whether violence is perceived as unseen (structural and cultural) or visible (direct violence), this needs to be addressed.

The application of Lederach's NTP and Dugan's NTC with Samoan traditional protective mechanisms to draw attention to the shortcomings of previous reports and to make practical recommendations for addressing the problem of domestic violence in Samoa.

All welcome to stay after the seminar  
for light refreshments and further discussion