

and a year later launched its MA in Pacific Studies. The University of Christchurch through the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies did not have a BA in Pacific Studies, but had been offering an MA in Pacific Studies for about a decade by then, and had just begun offering a PhD. VUW inaugurated its BA in Pacific Studies in 2000, and I was hired as the programme's first lecturer. In 2003 we were able to hire a second lecturer, and this made our expansion into postgraduate teaching viable; in 2005 the university and the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) approved our offering a BA (Honours) and MA by thesis. In 2002, the University of Otago also launched a BA major in Pacific Studies. There is also an MA in Māori and Pacific Development offered at the University of Waikato, and indeed there is much to be said for not undertaking regional or interdisciplinary studies until the postgraduate stage. The Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i is recognised internationally as a premiere Pacific Studies programme, rivalled only by the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University; both of these centres focus on postgraduate or graduate research and teaching.

Developing syllabuses and curricula for Pacific Studies as an undergraduate major has been quite challenging. I have only ever enrolled in one Pacific Islands Studies course myself—and this was a seminar on the Micronesian Compact of Free Association in 1990 coordinated by Professor Bob Kiste, former Director of the Center for Pacific Islands Studies and Tony De Brum, former Marshallese congressman. My own academic background is in history—I received a BA in History from Trinity College, Washington, DC, where I read mostly American and European history, with an independent foray into the history of the May Fourth movement in China for my senior thesis—I must have been prescient because just as I was finalising my thesis draft, dramatic events were unfolding at Tiananmen Square. My MA is in History from the University of Hawai'i, and the courses I took there ranged from American Micronesia, to ethnographic history, historiography, more Chinese history, and European intellectual history. I did not write a thesis for my MA, but did a major research essay on American colonialism and Micronesian women activists. The MA led me on to a PhD, which I undertook at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), in a programme called History of Consciousness. One of the founders of the History of Consciousness programme at UCSC was a historian named Hayden White. And although I never actually took a class with Hayden, reading an essay of his titled 'The Burden of History' left a lasting impression on me. In the essay Hayden describes literary representations of historians as somehow detached from the present and consumed by their occupations in the archives. He refers to a character in one of the novels of Jane Austen (or was it by a Bronte?) as gaunt and drawn—unable even to enjoy the pleasures of a full and wholesome relationship with his young wife.³ For me, the pleasures of an academic life have always been about having space, time, and