

## **SPACLALS Report**

Held in November 2007, the Tenth Triennial SPACLALS Conference proved to be a very rewarding event for all involved. The theme of the Conference was “Images, Ideologies and Realities in Oceania,” and the keynote speaker was Dr. Teresia Teaiwa, Programme Director for Pacific Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. Our two plenary speakers were Dr. Selina Tusitala Marsh from Auckland University and Dr. Subramani, from Gujarat India.

The twenty five presenters, and some attendees, came from New Zealand, Australia, India, Fiji, and Hawaii. We also had quite a large representation from our own National University Faculty members, as well as local participants.

Quite a few of the papers focused on the problems of literacy throughout Oceania, with multilayered and multicultural causes and solutions. Many other topics were visited, including tourism; the changing face and culture of Pasifika peoples as globalization hits “close to home”; the image and realities of Island vs. American identities; methods of teaching; a moving paper on the role of the unrecognized Island men who were members of the 28th Maori Battalion, and a controversial paper on the changing face of the Church, in particular the practice of giving.

Two of the more notable events, especially for the international participants, were the poetry reading at the Samoan Tourism Fale and the final session of the Conference, which was a Readers’ and Writers’ forum. The Conference was a success in that it offered opportunities for local academics to present and expand their experiences academically and otherwise, as well as providing a forum for cross-cultural understanding, academic exchanges and development through language and literature.

Kathleen Arp

SPACLALS Secretary