

Grappling with the Bomb: Opposition to Pacific nuclear testing--1950s to now

Written by John Hallam
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Centre for Peace
and Conflict Studies

The Human Survival Project at CPACS invites you to a seminar—

Grappling with the Bomb: Opposition to Pacific nuclear testing--1950s to now

By Nic Maclellan

Discussant: Anne Noonan

Date: Wed 4 March 2015

Time: 5.00-6.30pm

Place: Room 229, Education Building, University of Sydney

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In the fifty years from 1946 to 1996, the United States, France and the United Kingdom conducted more than 315 nuclear tests in the Pacific islands. Throughout this period, there was popular opposition to these tests across the Pacific Islands, led by churches, trade unions, women's organisations and indigenous leaders.

This seminar will discuss islander protests during the 1950s through a case study of the UK nuclear testing program in the British Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, codenamed Grapple. The history of the 1957-8 Grapple tests is presented through the letters, archival records and oral testimony for four people: British pacifist Harold Steele, Australian businessman James Burns, Gilbertese villager Sui Kiritome and Fijian sailor Paul Ah Poy.

The seminar will also highlight contemporary legacies of these struggles, as the international community mobilises to address the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons. Nic's case study focusses on the Grapple tests in Kiribati: Kiritimati and Malden were these nuclear test sites.

Nic Maclellan works as a journalist and researcher in the Pacific Islands. He is a correspondent for Islands Business magazine (Fiji), and a contributor to The Guardian, Inside Story, The Contemporary Pacific and other regional media.

He has written widely on decolonisation and demilitarisation in the Pacific and is co-author or editor of: *La France dans le Pacifique – de Bougainville à Moruroa* (Editions La Découverte, Paris); *After Moruroa – France in the South Pacific* (Ocean Press, New York and Melbourne); *Kirisimasi* (PCRC, Suva); and *No Te Parau Tia, No Te Paru Mau, No Te Tiamaraa* (PCRC, Suva)