

# RECOVERING VOICES

Seminar Series in Endangered Languages and Indigenous Knowledge



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Sāmoa - Faleapuna, Safune, Lauli'i, Lufilufi, Vailele, Matautu-Lefaga  
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on:

Tuesday April 11, 2017

12:00pm -1:00pm

Cooper Room (E207-A), NMNH

presents:

## O a mai oe? Samoa Language in Diaspora Aotearoa-New Zealand

The population in Aotearoa (New Zealand), especially in urban areas, is highly diverse. This results in a very diverse linguistic environment. However, as has been the trend globally, the vitality of languages of Pacific peoples living in Aotearoa is in decline.

The Census of Population and Dwellings data and the diaspora communities themselves have reported that the number of fluent speakers of languages of the Pacific is declining. Communities in turn have brought the story to life, sharing their concerns about what the loss of heritage language means, and their desire to arrest this.

In this talk I report on language use and language attitudes among speakers of Samoan living in Aotearoa as well as on efforts to maintain the language. Language is an important component of identity and cohesion. Languages reflect peoples' attitudes, beliefs and opinions not only of ourselves, but of others. Furthermore, given the inextricable relationship between language and evolving social change, language practices will play an important role in emerging national issues, and will become more important as diversity increases.

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An initiative by the National Museum of Natural History,  
in collaboration with the National Museum of the American Indian  
and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

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