result is a story vivid in detail, written in simple and captivating prose; and no historian would dare claim a monopoly on objectivity. For this reason, it is hoped that New Zealanders reading Mau will not find it either “pro-Samoan” or “anti-New Zealand.” If history has any lessons to teach, one of them must be that people’s attitudes can change over time. What was inherent in the call for Samoa mo Samoa was a reaction to the way army men inexperienced as colonial administrators trampled on fa’a Samoa. The New Zealand Labour government that came to power in 1935 had little if any support for the likes of Logan and Richardson. That Western Samoa’s path to independence was smooth and peaceful was due largely to a change in attitude when more enlightened people like Powles and Davidson were recruited to work with Samoans—men who viewed fa’a Samoa as a valid and essential component in the political organization of the new state. To quote Field’s remarks on colonialism in the concluding chapter, “If one accepts colonialism as a valid concept, and I don’t, one must in consequence accept that some nations have the necessary credentials to rule others.”

This book is the result of meticulous research, written in the most readable and entertaining prose. Not many works of nonfiction can be easily translated into the Samoan language without loss of meaning. The technical jargon characteristic of anthropological discourse would be a nightmare for anyone attempting a Samoan translation. Mau was translated into Samoan and published as a serial by the news-paper Samoan Observer in 1987. Derek Freeman’s Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth came out a year before Mau. It is doubtful that many Samoans who are not literate in English will get to read, know, or care about that debate. For this reviewer, the best indicator of the success of Field’s book is the way Samoan students at the National University of Samoa have appreciated it. Many of them have read it from cover to cover, and Mau does read like a detective story. To Michael Field—Mālō lava le alo faiva.

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This compact paperback is the revised edition of a 1979 publication about the history and inhabitants of Australia’s Far North Queensland. Singe, one-time high school teacher, fisherman, and taxi driver on Thursday Island, the administrative center of the Torres Strait, specifies that he has “tried to make this the Islanders’ story” (xii). As a longtime resident of the region he uses an assortment of local knowledge in an attempt to represent an Islander perspective: “Islanders will develop their own way of doing things, as they must, and this will not necessarily be
the way that whites in government, education and the general community would wish" (239).

The account of historical events in this book is clearly sympathetic to the colonial and neocolonial experience of the indigenous inhabitants. Singe makes use of established archival sources while liberally borrowing from ion Ildriess, a well-known Australian popular historical novelist, who readily mixed fact and fiction in numerous books on Torres Strait. Singe does not shy away from subjective interpretations and at times lapses into paternalistic commentary. By no means a history in the scholarly tradition or a postmodernist treatise of the Other, this popular-style book does capture the lurid record of race relations in the region. It is an examination of the historical relationships among population groups of Western Province in Papua New Guinea and Cape York and Torres Strait in Queensland, their dissimilar interactions with outsiders, and the contemporary issues confronting the Torres Strait region. There is little doubt that today a crucial foreign policy concern for Australia is its international border with Papua New Guinea; Singe discusses some implications of this for local residents. He asks about the “increasing ‘Papuanisation’ of the Torres Strait Islands” that is escalating because of the immigration of economic refugees (236) and briefly examines the border issue and illegal commercial fishing in the region.

This edition of The Torres Strait: People and History includes the original fifteen chapters with minimal revisions and the addition of a foreword by the author and a short final chapter, “The Islands (1988).” The first half of the book, “History,” covers the time of first contact to the 1980s and includes common Pacific themes of exploration, missionization, exploitation of labor and resources, the impact of World War II, migration, and issues of autonomy and modern identity. The remaining sections of the book, “The People—Their Life” and “Which Culture?” include a range of topics (some only sketches of the issues): economics, church politics, a sociopolitical history of selected Islander, Aborigine, and Papuan communities, and a consideration of Australian national and state foreign and protectionist policies.

Readable, and on the whole historically accurate, Singe’s book is worth examining if one is uninitiated to the Torres Strait, but for the Pacific scholar or specialist the popular history approach will be frustrating. Although he acknowledges materials held in prestigious libraries in New South Wales and Queensland, Singe fails to make reference to accessible contemporary scholarly work in anthropology, historical reconstruction, political science, and race relations concerning the region. It is unclear whether this is an oversight or lack of scholarly rigor. One of the more disturbing omissions is the work of Jeremy Beckett which spans a thirty-year research period in the Torres Strait. Singe claims that his book is “not an anthropological work” (xiv) and refers readers only to edited volumes by A. C. Haddon from the 1898 Cambridge Expedition and a more recent popular book on myths. Yet he makes extended comments...
about Torres Strait Island custom and cultural continuity without consideration of the many useful scholarly materials available on the Kiwai, the Cape York Aboriginal groups, and the Torres Strait peoples, all of which examine the process of social change and present-day issues. They would complement and enhance this popular account, and it is unfortunate Singe was not able to take the opportunity during his revisions to examine them.

This new version has many fewer historical photographs than the original. Suitably, some additional ones of contemporary life in Torres Strait have been included. Editorial errors regarding notation of the unnumbered illustrations may cause confusion to the reader. Similarly, the lack of referencing in the text and only a listing of sources at the end of the book by chapter are bothersome (241–246).

In spite of the shortcomings in erudition, the author does portray the Torres Strait Islander predicament. In his new concluding chapter, he is unequivocal regarding the cry for autonomy among younger Torres Strait Islanders and reiterates a pledge by Getano Lui Jr, currently chairman of the Island Coordinating Council: “Total control of seas, total control of air, and total control of our lands” (233).

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If there were any doubts about the views of the National government on New Zealand’s antinuclear policy, they were dispelled by Foreign Affairs Minister Don McKinnon’s 1991 Anzac Day speech, when he referred to “the constraints of the antinuclear policy.” On the eve of a trip to Washington, McKinnon pledged that he would do what he could to convince New Zealanders of the benefits of the alliance. Any skepticism one might have had about the National party’s preelection ploy of pledging their allegiance to the nuclear-free legislation had been heightened by the appointment of McKinnon as Foreign Affairs minister, since McKinnon had resigned as Defence spokesperson in protest against National’s acceptance of the policy. Yet McKinnon was also now saying that repeal of the legislation was not an option, given the underlying antinuclear stance of public opinion.

These recent events provide some perspective from which to assess the conclusions in Paul Landais-Stamp and Paul Rogers’ Rocking the Boat. They suggest that “it would appear that the United States, Britain and Australia failed totally in their attempts to overturn the ships-ban” (4) and that “public support for the nuclear ships ban . . . may well be sufficiently strong to prevent a future National Party government reversing the country’s nuclear-