atmosphere of economic fear and physical intimidation that produced two plebiscites (constitutional and compact) in which a simple majority was recognized as sufficient. When a suit challenging the legality of a majority vote was filed by a few women, threats to their families and the murder of their attorney’s father were the outcome. The breakdown of law prompted four US Congressmen to caution the secretary of Interior on the need to support individual rights and constitutional process before the compact could be considered again, and a report on the investigative team’s findings became available in 1989. In 1991 the department asked Palau to set a date by which to resolve its dilemma or to chart its own course.

The last chapter is a brief ethnographic overview of Palauan history and culture in terms of the prospects for compact ratification. A thoughtful reader might wish for a more comprehensive treatment of a highly complex people in a transitional decade.

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Republic of Palau

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One should not lightly embark on the task of reviewing Leibowitz’ monumental treatise on the remaining eight American-linked island polities in the Caribbean and the Pacific. This “comprehensive analysis” in sheer bulk covers 701 pages of text, replete with 2692—frequently lengthy—fineprint footnotes citing one-tenth that number of federal statutes alone, over six hundred judicial decisions,—including some not officially reported (eg, 103 n30; 151 n94)—and containing innumerable references to congressional documents as well as to a wide gamut of published materials and personal informational sources. All these citations serve as textual corroboration and supplementation, and occasionally as cognatic digressions—as example of the last, what is a valid delegation of legislative authority (555 n159)? Almost as a device calculated to counter the author’s admission of error “on the side of thoroughness” (xv) that results in an intensity of commitment characterizing the text, a well-selected, sensitively annotated, 23-page bibliography graces this tour de force. Notwithstanding the aid of the 59 page-length columns of the concluding index, the miscellany packed within the covers of this single volume is so wide ranging as almost to defy access short of resort to page-by-page perusal, particularly of the extensive footnotes.

The bifurcated organizational format employed in Defining Status permits general coverage within an “Overall Framework” of federal relations with the commonwealths, freely associated states, and territories of the United States, and then returning to expound separately on Puerto Rico and the Northern Marianas (commonwealths); American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands (territories); and the Federated States of Micronesia,
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Marshalls, and Palau (freely associated states). In addition to presenting briefly the historical experiences of continental, off-shore, and then post-World War II territorial acquisitions, Part I includes a useful consideration of the criteria employed for admission to statehood. Various forms of racial discrimination in the insular polities are surveyed, all judicially proscribed except for preferences on land (103)—and Leibowitz disapproves of even these (105). The general tenor of this part may be gleaned from the subheadings used in its concluding chapter: “Need for Stable Federal Policy”; “Need for Limits on Federal Power”; “Need for Support for Status Change”; “Need for Clear, Long-Range Status Direction: Statehood”; “Need for Agreed Upon, Clear Short-Term Objectives”; and “The Federal Bureaucratic Role” [critiqued]. Be forewarned that this format does not result in matters having relevance to many of the insular polities being considered just under Part I, or even in Part 2 under the particular entity that is the geographical situs of the reader’s interest (eg, fishing controls applicable to all—found in text on Guam [396ff]; use of commissions in all to determine application of federal laws—under Northern Marianas [555n157]).

In Part I, Leibowitz seeks to clarify the difference in status between territory, commonwealth, and freely associated state (FAS), a matter considerably muddied by actions of both congressional and executive branches in the United States. The key principles of commonwealth are posited as “mutual consent and restriction on Federal power” (50), while “the unilateral option to leave, the right to declare independence, has become the difference between the Commonwealth and the FAS in US thinking” (63). He finds the relationship of the FAS “on the whole is closer to that of an independent country . . . while in the case of the Commonwealth the analogy is closer to that of a State” (67, 68). Leibowitz favors abolishing the distinction between incorporated and unincorporated territory; the extension of constitutional protections to all territorial citizens (29) would bring both commonwealth and territory within the United States common market, and would increase the federal political rights of their United States citizens to include representation in the Senate and voting for the president (120). He protests the “double-think” by which “broad implied authority is found to sustain Federal action while very narrow readings of Congressional legislation is the rule when the territory seeks extension of its authority” (xvi). He traces the root of conflict between the insular polities and Washington to the former’s desire for autonomy and the latter’s resistance, resulting in considerable drift and the executive left devoid of guidelines. Leibowitz challenges the Congress’s reliance on the “territorial clause” of the US Constitution (Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2) for plenary power, and proposes the formulation of limitations on Washington in its relations with the territories similar to those between the states and the federal government (10).

The contents of Part 2 are a series of well-researched legal and political cameos sandwiched between truly encyclopedic cultural surveys of each
island entity. The surveys range widely over history, geography, economics, and anthropology, frequently embellished with references to the political dynamics of Washington-island relations. Without question, a contribution of Part 2 is its exhaustive—chronological and analytical—account of the negotiation of the FAS compacts (Chapter 13). Provisions as originally proposed, added, deleted, and modified are all considered, as are the numerous “subsidiary” agreements that properly should not be treated as “subordinate” (596), as well as references to understandings reached but never formally incorporated. Included are citations to pertinent congressional hearings, reports, and debates, and to the contributions of named Micronesians and Americans who helped shape the course of the marathon bargaining that led to the dismemberment of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI). The history of the Northern Marianas Islands (NMI) covenant receives similar but more condensed attention (528ff); repeatedly the theme appears of how the Puerto Rican commonwealth experience influenced the language of the final NMI covenant (eg, 552ff), although the Northern Marianas contend that their political status is distinct from that of Puerto Rico. I had believed myself reasonably conversant with the course of these Micronesian negotiations, but the text provided new insights. Probably most telling is the dispelling of misunderstanding over the NMI covenant’s limitation on the alienation of lands. Rather than having a Micronesian source as a safeguard against outsiders, this limitation becomes an imposition by the United States negotiators requiring the commonwealth to protect itself against its own excesses (591–592). If for no other reason than these treatments of the NMI covenant and the FAS compacts, Defining Status will earn itself a useful place on the Micronesian reference shelf.

During the previous quarter century, at one time or another Leibowitz has represented each of the island polities on which this study is focused (xv). Through revisiting the ground of former battles and preparing for those shaping up, he continues as champion of the Islanders’ cause. Unquestionably, the technical legal issues considered are researched in depth and professionally developed, but their presentation frequently carries more the tone of the advocate’s brief than of abstract discourse. They are so many, however, their scope so sweeping, and both the judicial decisions and statutory provisions cited so numerous as to defy analytic comment here short of requiring a comparatively thick tome. On disputatious subjects such as civil liberties, immigration, or taxation in the islands, attorneys, certified public accountants, governmental bureaucrats, and others having occasion to make instrumental use of what are frequently monographic considerations, will find them an extremely helpful resource. For the average reader untutored in the intricacies of legal discourse, it should be remembered that what to the author may be “pettifogger’s points” to another lawyer may be “serious issues of controversy and difficulty” (368).

A strength of Defining Status, namely the kaleidoscopic breadth of its
background development including its wealth of bibliographic coverage, contributes to its major weakness. Almost everything one might have occasion to inquire about the eight American-linked island polities appears to be touched on somewhere in the text, but this treasure trove of detail cannot always be used as definitive. For one thing, the precision of language that characterizes treatment of legal matters, and appears premised on long professional experience, is not duplicated on the more general matters. Reference to the American military’s influence on the “communal land structure” of Hawai’i and Guam (87) ignores that the Great Mahele and the Spanish land laws had far earlier destroyed the systems of land tenure in Hawai’i and Guam, respectively. What is “traditional” in a technical sense of the Marshallese urban movement (605)? Can the experience as elected Speaker of American Samoa’s lower house be properly considered as providing Lutali “experience . . . within traditional Samoan officialdom” (emphasis added; 455)?

Accompanying this lack of cultural sensitivity is an underlying unfamiliarity with the Pacific area. Sometimes this is revealed with respect to the American-linked polities. It was not in 1885 (4) that Spain’s rule ended and Germany “acquired and dominated” the Micronesian islands that made up the T T P I , and the Faichuk Islands are not an “outer island culture” in the State of Chuuk (previously Truk; 616), but a division of the Chuuk lagoon. Other times it is in reference to the general Pacific. In 1969 the T T P I was not “the last colony under Trusteeship Council jurisdiction” (641), and the release by the United States of Central Pacific island claims involved Kiribati, not Niue (473n303). Incidentally, with respect to these claims, although mention was previously made of Swain’s Island when considering American Samoa (403n6) no mention is made in either note to the Tokelauans’ objecting to New Zealand’s having surrendered the indigenes’ claim to this island.

Probably most telling in counter-indicating unquestioned reliance on the text as reference is editing inadequacy. Obvious inconsistencies have not been reconciled, such as describing Tinian in the Northern Marianas as being “largely populated by Carolinians, Yapese” (548) and subsequently as an “expatriate Chamorro colony on Yap [that] shifted to Tinian” (551; emphases added). Citations contain errors, some clearly typographical. On a personal note, of four references made to my publications, inaccuracies exist in half (486n12; 495n48). On a related vein, better editing would have caught verbatim repetitions to the vote on the CNMI constitution (505, repeated on 506; or 576n266, partly repeated on 578). Also addressed should have been the unnecessarily specific paraphrasing of some documents and text padding—including the examination of all sixty reported cases from 1900 to 1975 in American Samoa’s High Court on the exercise of matai power (443–446). The space thus saved might well have been used to fill significant lacunae: for American Samoa, consideration might have been given to the most important mass television experiment in public education up to its time, the role of the Fita Fita Guard, and the splitting of
matai titles, which in Western Samoa materially contributed to its 1991 abandonment of matai suffrage.

Leibowitz' objectives in writing *Defining Status* were many: to provide "a place where the political desires and struggles of the [American-linked] territories are recorded and to which later generations of scholars and advocates may repair"; to supply "a careful review of the status potentials of Statehood, Commonwealth and Free Association within the U.S. system in relation to the needs of the territories"; and "to permit U.S. policymakers and the U.S. public to understand this anger and outrage ['in the territories fueled by Federal drift and indifference'] and to do something about it" (xvi, xvii). In all of these he has succeeded, but in doing so has introduced a torque with two aspects.

One is a tendency to "emphasize the positive" with respect to the island polities, and its converse is to "downplay the territorial negative." To illustrate, the historic importance of American Samoa's first constitution is embellished (420), as a counterweight to the secretary of Interior's claim of the right to intervene in all aspects of Samoan governance. Although in law the secretary's stance may be wrong, and in policy misadvised, the discontent with respect to the contents of the constitution that I encountered when accompanying a Senate committee in 1960, just a few months after its adoption, points up the hyperbole of the author's text.

The second aspect is a tendency to develop fully the destabilizing influence of the federal administration without comparable treatment of the island polities' inadequacies, some of which may have motivated the federal intrusions. For example, the reader is alerted almost as an aside to the "brief burst of black nationalism and violence" in the Virgin Islands (282), or the "poor administration of the Guam tax laws," that island's growing, ten-year budgetary deficit (382), or "the Federal indictments in 1986 exposing wide corruption in the Guam Government" (400).

Events concerning the American-linked island polities have moved so fast since the manuscript for *Defining Status* was undertaken as to require updating of some of its contents. When "the Guam leadership, even while arguing for Commonwealth as an interim status, called for Statehood as the ultimate status goal" (118), it was before the advocates of Guamanian independence joined the commonwealth movement; now all view commonwealth status as but an interim, whether they support independence, free association, or statehood. Discussions underway on "enhanced commonwealth" for Puerto Rico furnish an added dimension to the retention of commonwealth status by Puerto Rico. Leibowitz' marshalling of materials bearing on the need for the United Nations Security Council to end the TTPI (596–599) has been overtaken by Security Council action in December 1990, recognizing termination of the trusteeship for both the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Marshalls. Superseding the text (600), the United States and the FAS entities now exchange ambassadors, and the number of foreign ambassadors accredited to the FSM and the Marshalls...
grows almost daily. Blurring the dis­tinction between American FAS and territorial status, as marked by the former’s power over foreign affairs, American Samoa is jousting with Washington over its efforts to assume an international role in the South Pacific. But in major respects, Leibo­witz’ survey of status relations still holds, and the Congress still tempo­rizes over the Guamanian quest for commonwealth and the Puerto Rican search for a plebiscite. The final sen­tence in Defining Status refers to the Congress directing “the President to establish an Interagency Group on Freely Associated States’ Affairs” (703). As I write, the secretary of Interior is under congressional orders to prepare a policy statement on non-FAS entities, and advance word reports the state­ment will include a call for a new inter­agency group to deal with them. (Washington Pacific Report, 1 Dec 1990, 3). Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose. The relations between the American-linked island polities remain strained, and the search con­tinues for mechanisms that will con­tribute to amelioration of the perennial tension.

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Nicholas Thomas’ exploration of the role of history in Pacific ethnology does a remarkable job of exemplifying problems in anthropological discourse and of showing that these are of central concern to those of us who work in other parts of the world. Conceding little either to the cruder forms of teleological functionalism and its suc­cessors, or to the extreme introversion of much modern reflexive writing, it represents a militant middle ground. Its virtue, however, is not compromise, but a willingness to salvage insights wherever they are to be found. Thomas does not cast out the reflexivist baby with the functionalist bathwater, nor the superficially crude reports of mis­sionaries along with the equally slanted reports of such distinguished anthro­pologists as Malinowski, toward whose holier-than-thou condescension toward missionary reporting on Melanesia Thomas is sharply repro­ving. This book displays rare integrity: Thomas’ intellectual stance toward the theoretical approaches of others is fully consistent with his own discursive practices.

In outline, Out of Time is an analyti­cal rethinking of some of the major contributions to comparative Pacific ethnology, particularly those of Irving Goldman, Marshall Sahlins, and Jon­athan Friedman and M. J. Rowlands. Goldman’s comprehensive schema is carefully dissected, shown to rest on numerous misreadings of ethnographic detail, and criticized as evolutionism masquerading as diffusionism. Sahlins, despite the promise of his respect for history, is criticized for reproducing evolutionary models that depend on the perpetuation of elementary sym-