contemporary issues—kastom, national icons, fluidity of cultural traditions, the indigenous voice—and redresses the discrimination toward oral traditions, performance, the ephemeral, and women's arts. This book bridges a myriad of issues, ideologies, and cultural and political agendas. It is an excellent resource.

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Morton’s Becoming Tongan is a bold and arresting attempt by a non-Tongan to describe and analyze, using conventional social science research techniques, what she perceives to be the process whereby Tongans “learn” their culture, the process of socialization. Apart from a few minor (typographical) errors (such as palagu instead of palaku on page 106, or ‘ofafine instead of ‘ofefine on page 127) the book, although written primarily for other academics and university students, would also appeal to those interested in Pacific peoples generally. It is appropriately illustrated, with a bibliography that might have been even more useful to students of anthropology and sociology had the author spent time at the University of the South Pacific, particularly in the Pacific Collection of the library.

Initially motivated by what she confessed to be “culture shock” at what she describes as “violence” between parents and their children, Morton’s fascination with Tongan childhood drove her to carry out a study on the subject. The results have been a PhD and this book, which in my view is a most welcome addition to the literature on Tonga, particularly given the dearth of written information on the topic of Tongan childhood. Becoming Tongan therefore promises to go a long way toward helping enhance non-Tongans’ understanding of what it means to be Tongan, since for Tongans themselves, particularly those born and raised in Tonga, the question does not normally arise.

The question of how a person becomes a member of a culture is one that has rightly preoccupied the thinking of many anthropologists since the beginning of their discipline. After all, “culture,” if defined as the way of life of a people, has to be “learned” and “transmitted” to succeeding generations. This desire to find out both what had to be learned and how this was done was perhaps what motivated Margaret Mead to “study” Samoans in her day. More recently, questions of identity, personhood, self, and emotions have become increasingly important not only in the western world but perhaps more to the point, in postcolonial and postindependent (Pacific) societies where portrayals of people who were both subjects in and objects of western research have often been targets of claims of ethnocentricity and arrogance by some local scholars.
For example, some of the “sources” Morton has used, including the widely read *Growing Up in Polynesia* (Ritchie and Ritchie 1979), have been effectively criticized by many of my own Polynesian students as well as others studying outside the region, mainly in New Zealand. More recently, Pacific educators have become more conscious of the relationship between education and cultural identity and are working toward developing more culturally sensitive curricula (see, for example, Teasdale and Teasdale, 1992).

Focusing her study on socialization in order to redress the lack of a comprehensive study of Tongan children, Morton covers the whole of childhood from before birth to late adolescence. Her book begins with a very useful discussion of different theoretical strands, which the author uses to weave together and inform the rest of her account, one that generally adopts the view, following Cook-Gumperz and Corsaro (1986), that socialization is “an interpersonal activity of ‘becoming’ rather than an unfolding of a biologically based plan or an imprinting of social structure onto the child” (10).

Chapter 2 sets the context of the study with detailed analysis of the basic concept of *anga fakatonga*, which Morton translates to mean “the Tongan way.” It describes Tongan social structure and organization, household composition and life in Tonga, in general based mainly on her observations of the village of Holonga (probably one of the most studied villages in Tonga!) and backed up by the usual well-known sources on Tongan social structure such as Bott, Gifford, James, Kaeppler, and Marcus.

Chapter 3 focuses on childhood attitudes to phenomena such as reproduction, pregnancy, and childbirth, as well as care of infants and the first birthday, while chapter 4 is an ethnopsychological analysis of Tongan notions of personhood (especially relating to children). Here Morton discusses the concept of *poto*, which she describes as “social competence” and which she claims to be the aim of socialization—the inculcation of the cultural values of respect, obedience, and independence. A gender perspective is appropriately used in this section to illustrate the pivotal role of gender in the process of becoming Tongan. This section was of particular interest to me because I have a somewhat different perspective on *poto* (the basic concept of Tongan education, one derived mainly from conceptual analysis of the Tongan language of education [as well as my own knowledge of Tongan culture], and which includes intellectual and spiritual dimensions; see Thaman 1988, 1995).

Chapter 5 discusses the context in which knowledge of socialization is available to children, including interaction with kin, household work, school, and play. The ways in which culture is acquired—different forms of learning such as performance, observation, and imitation—are competently described in chapter 6, while chapter 7 deals with physical punishment, an aspect that Morton argues is central to Tongan socialization. In this chapter she also discusses other forms of violence and their relationship to the socialization process.

In Chapter 8 Morton tries to draw the threads of her account together
through an analysis of the socialization of emotion. This chapter, in my view, may be the most interesting for Tongans, mainly because of the centrality and interdependence of the notions of loto (inner person) and anga (outer being) to the way Tongans behave toward one another and the importance of specific context in their manifestations. In this chapter, Morton suggests that Tongan children are encouraged to monitor and manage their emotions, especially negative ones such as anger, and suggests that humor is a significant means of self-control. Finally, chapter 9 is an attempt to relate the study of childhood to recent political developments in Tonga, including the question of “loss of culture,” cultural identity, and traditions.

As a Tongan, I found Becoming Tongan a most interesting account for two main reasons: first, I was able to compare what the book said was how Tongan children become Tongan and what actually happened to me. In this regard, I have to admit that there were several differences, the most important one being the book’s description and analysis of violence between parents and children as a basic feature of the socialization process. I and my siblings were seldom hit at home. Punishment for us was mainly the denial of things we really liked, such as playing with the neighbors’ children, going to the movies, or going to the sea to swim. One of the few occasions when I can remember being physically punished was at school, when one of my teachers hit everyone in my class with a ruler because none of us knew the answer to a math problem. I do not doubt the accuracy with which Morton described incidences of “violence” at Holonga. I just wonder about using this finding to generalize about a whole society. As a Tongan mother, I cannot identify with the behavior of the women Morton described. But perhaps things have changed faster in Tonga than I realize or Morton was using a largely Australian measure of violence to ascribe different degrees of severity to what she observed. It would be interesting if someone were to examine how the variables of locale, class, education, and gender relate to the use of physical punishment as a means of socialization, not only in Tonga but in other Pacific societies as well.

The second reason why I found Becoming Tongan very interesting relates to the way Morton interrogates different research paradigms and then chooses to draw from these a method which, she says, incorporated an interactional approach to socialization in the context of an ethnopsychological study. The result is a very insightful account of what, in her view, it means to be a child growing up in a Tongan village in the 1980s and 1990s. As such, the book ought to be required reading for any human development course, particularly ones that include Pacific Island students. I shall certainly use it in my own classes, where almost all of the students are from the Pacific region and many from Tonga. The Tongan students will have yet another account to critically examine as part of their ongoing attempt to question the (foreign) social-psychological theories and philosophies that continue to inform much of teaching and learning.
in schools and universities in the region, as elsewhere. I trust others will do the same, because,

today i wonder
what the difference is
between one sea and another
or how to recover morning
and conquer doubt
the pulse of our separate
brains has the answer
it is in our becoming
that we are one

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**References**


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This volume, originally organized as a symposium under the auspices of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania, adds significantly to knowledge about female initiation throughout Melanesia and the rest of the world. It contains substantive chapters on eight different cultural groups in disparate locations in the area (although there is a heavy tilt toward the Sepik region), and every chapter not only contributes interesting data but advances theoretical and analytical understandings of ritual process in general.

Most impressive are the introduction, “Feminist Anthropology and Female Initiation in Melanesia,” by Nancy C Lutkehaus, and the conclusion, “‘Initiation’ in Cross-Cultural Perspective,” by Paul B Roscoe. These two end pieces do precisely what introductions and conclusions are supposed to do: provide the reader with a context within which to understand each chapter and its relevance to the ethnographic and theoretical aspects of the topic. The reader understands how and why these contributions are important. In her introduction, Lutkehaus frames the chapters that follow by exploring their main themes (eg, power, agency, and person) and by examining the intersection of three