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Hawaii has long been a crossroads of the Pacific. Starting many centuries ago, people came to these islands from the Marquesas, Tahiti, and probably the Cook Islands and Aotearoa (New Zealand). In the last couple of centuries, Asians and Europeans came as colonists, laborers, and sailors of fortune. In the decades since World War II, migrants have come from many places, including an increasing number from other Pacific Island countries: from Tonga and Samoa, from Fiji and Guam, from Kiribati and Tuvalu. These Pacific Islanders are part of a vast international web of people on the move, driven by circumstances and drawn by opportunities. A person may be born in a village in Western Samoa, raised in Australia and New Zealand, college educated in California, and employed in Hawaii. That person may have relatives in all those places, and may travel among them from time to time.

Although Pacific Islanders make up an important part of the population of the Fiftieth State, very little scholarship exists to describe their existence, their problems and prospects. Almost all the scholarly work on Pacific Island peoples in Hawaii is about native Hawaiians; very little is about the other island peoples. And even concerning Hawaiians there are some enormous gaps in the scholarly literature.

The Pacific Islander Americans Research Project (PIARP) was founded in 1991 to begin to remedy that situation. It is an enterprise of the faculty and students of Brigham Young University-Hawaii, sponsored jointly by the Division of Social Sciences and the Institute for Polynesian Studies. Its goals are to advance the scholarly understanding of Pacific Island peoples in the United States generally and in Hawaii in particular, and to prepare students for graduate schools and careers in the social sciences.
B.Y.U.-Hawaii is in many respects a unique school. A private, four-year liberal arts college located on the North Shore of the island of Oahu, approximately thirty-five miles from Honolulu, it is designed to serve the peoples of the Pacific. Thus, by design, over half the B.Y.U.-H. students are Pacific Islanders from two dozen countries. Another quarter come from the Asian edge of the Pacific Rim. Less than a quarter are mainland Americans. The faculty are coming increasingly to resemble the Pacific diversity of the student body. B.Y.U.-H. teaches several Pacific Island languages and offers a bachelor’s degree in Pacific Islands Studies, as well as programs in Hawaiian Studies and Polynesian Studies. The school is home to the Institute for Polynesian Studies and the journal Pacific Studies, and is closely affiliated with the Polynesian Cultural Center. All of this means that there are more Pacific Islander Americans at B.Y.U.-Hawaii than on any other American campus, that we devote a very large share of our resources to Pacific Islander concerns, and that we are uniquely placed to study Pacific Islander Americans.

A word should be said about the term “Pacific Islander.” We use it in this volume to describe people whose ancestors were indigenous inhabitants of any of the island groups of the Pacific, from Guam to Easter Island, and from Hawaii to Papua New Guinea. It specifically does include native Hawaiians, although the experiences of Hawaiians are in many respects quite different from other Pacific peoples in America because Hawaiians (those still living in Hawaii, at least) are not immigrants but a colonized people. Because people like the hypothetical Samoan above move about the Pacific with such velocity, living now in one country and now in another, the line between “Pacific Islander,” “Pacific Islander American,” and “Pacific Islander something else” is not a stable one. There are not two boxes, native and immigrant. Labels inevitably become somewhat imprecise.

This special issue of Social Process in Hawaii is a product of the Pacific Islander Americans Research Project. The purpose of the issue is to make a small start at answering the call of Debbie Hippolite Wright and Tracie Kaluai (in the second article following this introduction) for more information about Pacific Islander Americans, so that not only social service agencies, but also government officials, educators, and the general public will cease to deal with Pacific Islanders on the basis of near perfect ignorance.

The selections that follow range from the highly personal, autobiographical narrative of Tupou Hopoate Pau’u’s journey to Tongan ethnic identity, to the formal, scientific investigation by Lynne Hansen-Strain into the ways strong oral traditions affect language learning. The articles are all concerned with the lives of Pacific Island peoples in the islands of Hawaii. Debbie Hippolite Wright and Tracie Kaluai examine what social service agencies know about Pacific Islanders and what barriers their ignorance about Pacific Islanders places in the way of their clients. Dianna Fitiseamanu and several colleagues analyze the dynamics of Pacific Islander families, and take issue with some common interpretations of Islander family practices. Dorri Nautu and Paul Spickard trace the images that Hawaiians, Samoans, and Tongans have of each other and the social distance they feel from one another, in an attempt to delineate the relationships among these three Island peoples in Hawaii. Bill Wallace describes the environmental history of the ahupua’a of Laie on the island of Oahu.

Nearly all the authors of the articles in this issue are or have been affiliated with PIARP. The Project is a collective enterprise, so that all the research team members at any given time contribute ideas and labor to each intellectual product. Some articles bear the name of single authors, for they were written alone; others have as many as seven co-authors.

At this writing, Tupou Hopoate Pau’u (Tongan) is a senior history student at B.Y.U.-Hawaii. Debbie Hippolite Wright (Mao-rī) is assistant professor of social work there and associate director of PIARP. Tracie Kaluai (Hawaiian) is a graduate student in social work at the University of Washington. Dianna Fitiseamanu (Samoan from New Zealand) is about to enter graduate school in organizational psychology at Columbia University. David Hall (Cook
Islander from New Zealand) is a senior computer science student at B.Y.U.-H. Karina Kahananui Green (Hawaiian-Chicano from California) is a senior history student at B.Y.U.-H. Brucetta MacKenzie (I-Kiribati) is a recent B.Y.U.-H. graduate in business. Dorri Nautu (Hawaiian-Filipino and several other ethnicities) is about to enter graduate school in public policy. William Kauaiwiulaokalani Wallace III (Hawaiian-Samoan) is assistant professor of history and a fellow of PIARP. Lynne Hansen-Strain (White American) is professor of linguistics. Paul Spickard (White American) is associate dean for the social sciences and director of PIARP.

Notes

1For further information on this migration, see the introduction and items on migration in Paul R. Spickard, et al., Pacific Islander Americans: An Annotated Bibliography in the Social Sciences (Laie, Hawaii: Institute for Polynesian Studies, 1994).

2Spickard, et al., Pacific Islander Americans.

3These include students from Hawaii. All together, fifty-six nations from around the world are represented on campus.
me, stood a boy who repeatedly said, "She wraps her lunch with newspaper," in between fits of laughter. I had just turned five years old; this was my first day at this school and I wanted to die. More so, I just wanted to get up and beat this dude up. Realizing that my wrapping was different from everyone else's because everybody kept pointing at it, I did not have to speak English to understand what they were making fun of. Frustration from the growing crowd and the humiliating circumstances formed tears that rolled endless upon my cheeks. I got up and ran all the way home.

The emotions of this experience were new to me. It made me realize that I was different. It was not a difference that came with skin color or physical appearances, because most of the students at this school were Polynesians (although it was a white group that humiliated me.) But it was a difference in lifestyle and accepted norms. Because of these differences, I felt frustration about many things: wrapping my lunch in Glad Wrap or foil rather than with newspaper; wishing that I had blonde hair and blue eyes; despising the thickness of my own hair and its curliness; being unable to wear the latest "in" clothing that the other students were wearing. Actually, in the beginning, I really did not have a sense of style. I did not know that some clothes were more accepted than others. To me, everything I had on, especially my new dresses and bell bottom pants from the second-hand and Salvation Army stores, were the best there was. I did not wear any of these out of style fashions back in Tonga, so to me this was "in."

However, experience proved me wrong again. It was during a class picture-taking session in my third-grade year that I realized again I was different. What I wore caused me to be isolated from the other students. I still remember the picture clearly. I had worn an ankle-length checkered black and white dress. It was very old fashioned. Not only that, I had let my hair out. It was so thick that in the picture it covered the faces of the two people at both of my sides. My teacher, looking at the picture, commented while pointing at me, "Who's this African." The class laughed and I felt so hurt. I hated myself. I felt ugly; I hated my hair; I hated who I was because I was different and as much as I tried to be accepted into this society, I found myself always at a dead end. I tried hard to be accepted, but my rewards were mockery, laughter, and tears.

My New Zealand upbringing caused me to know that I was different. I could not understand why it was so hard for them to accept me. Because of this, I had a harder time accepting myself. I believed that because I was a Tongan, I was no good and had no value to my society. This became, without my awareness, the beginning of many years of my search for an identity.

After seven years in New Zealand, my family migrated again, this time to Australia. We moved for economic reasons, as well as to join members of our extended family. I was almost eleven during this migration and my English vocabulary had extended beyond four words. In fact, by now it was my Tongan vocabulary that amounted to only about four words. I could understand what was being spoken to me in Tongan, but I could barely speak. As a Tongan in Australia, I found myself being woven into the fabric of British colonization. Experiences in Australia left me as an antagonist towards my own culture, people, and heritage. I came to reject any parts of me that could be identified as Tongan, while praising the White people's world for their educational systems that I learned in; their foods tasted better (so I thought) than the taro and lu pulu served at home by my Mum. I found myself always desiring MacDonald's or Kentucky Fried Chicken.

I struggled for racial equality in the only society that I knew, but I met many setbacks and frustrations. For example, to feed a growing family, my parents entered the work force as unskilled laborers. This meant that, to make ends meet, we as children were expected to help out by working too. These times made me reject my culture more. I felt that maybe if I had not been born a Tongan I would not have to struggle and work. Maybe if I had been born White, my parents could be lawyers or doctors who could provide more for our family's needs, so I would not have to go to work with them. But that was not my lot in life.

I remember after school we were expected to help my Mum with one of her jobs. She worked three jobs at that time. My Mum
was a janitor at a primary school near our home. We were expected
to come straight home after school, change, and go over to help
her. We dusted, we swept, we cleaned toilets and mopped floors,
while children from our neighborhoods stared with mockery.
I felt ashamed at doing this. Although other children did work doing pa­
er runs, yard work and other jobs, in my eyes I was the only one
working. Only my family worked hard, because we were not white
and because I was Tongan. These experiences made me really un­
happy. I kept thinking, “Why didn’t my parents just stay back in
Tonga and raise us there so that we wouldn’t have to go through all
this unhappiness?” However, as a solution to our dilemma, my
mother would always give us sermons about studying hard in
school so that we would not have to go through the hurts and pains
that she had endured. This to me was not a reality that could be
easily reached. I did not like this type of talk. I was anxious for an
immediate solution and an educational career was not the solution
to my sorrows in Australia.

My experiences with work in this manner made me feel in­
fierior toward all White people. I viewed them with such esteem
and status that I could not begin to compare myself to them and felt
my inadequacy within their realm. This began a period of envy and
admiration for the White people’s world. At the same time it was
my culture that I rejected the most, because I believed that if I were
not a Tongan, life would be so much easier and I would not have to
go through all these hard times. I no longer identified myself as a
Tongan, but rather as an Australian, whether it be in my clothing,
my friends, the food that I ate, the places that I went. I wanted so
badly to be White. Yet all I needed to do every morning was to
wake up and look into the mirror, and realize that I was and will al­
ways be Tongan.

This fact was made real by a young man named Paul. I was
ten years old. I remember how my sister Lisia and I endured a full
year of racial comments by this person. Every day after school, we
would pass him on our way home. From the other side of the street
he would always say aloud, “You niggers go back to where you came from.” This was ironic, for I was fairer then he. He was two
years my senior, making him four years older than my sister. We both were hurt by his racial ignorance and abuse which left us
many times crying upon each other’s shoulders.

I began to think that no matter how hard I tried to fit into
this society I would never be accepted. Whites from my point of
view at this time were classified as autocratic rulers. I felt that to be
accepted into their world, I had to submit to their tyranny and
snobbery, that as a minority class I had to bribe them, flatter them,
and court their favors. However, this thought was extremely dis­
tasteful for me and certainly I had no intention of trying to pacify
this fool who had insulted me with such names. “I am not a nigger.
I am a Polynesian,” was my silent and unheard cry. I felt really in­
sulted by the word “nigger.” Yet, these experiences did not make
me want to become any more Tongan. I still rejected my culture,
because it was my Tonganness that had given me all these hard
times.

The conclusion that my sister and I came to was that this
young man needed a punch in the nose, which is exactly what we
did. Enduring his comments no longer, we just charged at him one
afternoon after school and my sister gave him a bloody nose. We
never did hear another mean comment from him again, let alone
see him, because from that day forward he decided to take another
route home. The sad thing about this whole experience was that we
had to resolve the problem through violence.

This encounter had me questioning myself and the fact that
I was Tongan. I was not a “Blackie,” as some kids called me, nei­
der was I a “nigger,” but yes, my skin color was different. I could
not understand why the Whites would not accept my color, because
I had accepted their whiteness. These experiences made me feel
that being a “non-White” made me less of a human being.

In searching for comfort amidst my conflicts, I stopped at­
tending any Tongan functions. I made White friends and associated
with them in a white social life. I became blood sisters with a
White girl named Melinda Bentley. We became best friends and
did everything together. We had our birthday parties celebrated together, we ate together, we played together and would not go places without each other. Thus, I tried really hard to assimilate into the white man’s world. Being with Melinda made me feel that I had accomplished this. Still, many times—especially at school—I knew I was different. When boys would come and talk to us, a majority of them would speak to me only because I was Melinda’s friend. Other than that they could not have cared less about who I was. I was also very shy amongst them, so that as soon as they started to talk or ask me questions, I would just become so silent and think of an excuse to leave them. I was lost. I didn’t want to be a Tongan, I wanted to be a White girl, yet I could not act like a White girl in certain ways because my Tongan culture would not allow me. I did not realize that it was my Tongan upbringing at home that made me non-talkative to boys. I just thought I was shy.

Life did not get any easier. I had reached a stage where I really did not know who I was. I had lost an identity and I did not know where else to turn. However, my parents knew and saw the hard times that I was going through. They decided that I needed to go to Tonga. Here I was, at thirteen years old, rejecting everything about me that was Tongan, and they wanted to take me to Tonga? They had to be kidding. I rejected the proposal, but they were not kidding. I arrived in Tonga in December 1981.

My mother was the one who took me to Tonga and left me at a boarding school for one year. Whether they were inspired to make this decision on my behalf or not, I will always be grateful to them. My whole life was never to be the same after my one year experience in Tonga.

I remember clearly the day my mother left me at the dorm. I clung to her like a little child, and all she did was release my hands from around her neck and tell me to learn the Tongan way and be humble. After that she turned and walked away. I was to not see her again until I returned home the following year. My dorm mother took me inside and showed me to my room. While walking through the hallway, I noticed all the girls were outside in the hallways studying. No study was allowed inside the rooms. We walked past this very dark girl and I knew she was not Tongan because she looked different (later I learned that she was from the Gilbert Islands). She was on her hands and knees, crawling around the floor—swatting flies, it seemed to me. I thought she was eating them, too. I got really scared seeing this, and was afraid for my own life, thinking that maybe they were cannibals. Later I was to learn that she was only killing mosquitoes. As I got to know her, I found her culture and people were the most humble and friendly of all in the dorms.

On March 3, 1982, Cyclone Isaac hit Tonga, destroying its many crops and homes, leaving a lot of my people homeless and hungry. Everybody came together throughout the whole island and helped each other out. As a matter of fact, I remember enjoying myself that day. Just before the cyclone hit Tongatapu, during the harsh winds and rain, I was running around outside with my Gilbert friends underneath the coconut trees collecting coconuts, watching carefully that coconuts would not fall on my head.

This experience made me realize the Tongan way: Koe Tonga Mounta Ki He Loto. Despite the destruction that this cyclone brought to Tonga, the only mountain a Tongan needed to claim was his heart. There was only hardship and destruction brought by this cyclone, but they were nothing because of the strength that was within the Tongan heart. Nothing was impossible. I watched and admired my people work together to build huts for families, to work at each other’s plantations in order to provide food. I saw how the young people never answered back to their elders and the respect they showed them. I witnessed how many families with barely sufficient food for their needs were willing to give away to others who needed it more. I learned to have respect and reverence for the Sabbath Day because of the laws of my constitution. I came to love our national anthem of Koe ‘Otua Mo Tonga Ko Hoku Tofta’—translated, this means “God and Tonga are My Inheritance.” I was learning, I was accepting my culture, and I was loving myself.
I realized that, in Tonga, work was not to enslave a person, but to teach one responsibility. That was why my parents made us work when we were young children. In fact, I was not the only one working. Many of my peers in Tonga were working, too. This was evident in the dorm life that we lived.

Every Saturday was our working day. We rotated days of cleaning our own bathrooms and toilets. We weeded our own gardens, prepared our own foods, and washed our own dishes. This was not a paid job. We were expected to do this. Not only that, we had to go out into the plantations too, and tend the crops and pick up coconuts. We were taught discipline and the rewards of hard work: food for our nourishment and a sense of self-satisfaction for a job well done. I remember laughing loudly during one study period—a violation of dorm rules. One of the prefects of the dorms put my name down with a couple of other friends on the toilet cleaning list. I did not feel humiliated. In fact I had so much fun cleaning those toilets with my friends that we decided to clean the bathroom, too. No one mocked us, because everybody had to do the job eventually, so I did not feel that I was being laughed at or put down. The self-rejection and hate for my culture were slowly vanishing and I actually found myself smiling.

When my year in Tonga was over, going home was hard. I remember calling home to my parents and asking them to please keep me in Tonga for one more year, but they could not. Leaving Tonga was hard. As I said my goodbyes, on that day I felt like my heart was breaking. I knew I would miss my people and the feelings of security and self confidence that I had felt amongst them. I had found an identity: I was a Tongan, and boy was I proud! I greedily accepted this new identity and felt a newness of life. I finally found who I was in the culture of giving amongst my people. I knew the definition of the true meaning of fetokoni 'aki: giving without expecting anything in return. I grew to respect the tales of the past and the traditions of my family. I had a great love for my extended family and felt humbled by their simple ways of living. Although it was only a Tongan hut that I was born in and lived in during my visits with my family, this was home. This was my in-heritance. This was my tofi'a. I grew more to understand the depth of the words: “There’s no place like home.” This was my home and it meant more than just a place to live. It meant that, when I finally took the time to look inwardly in the mirror at the image that was staring back at me, I saw somebody who was worthwhile. I saw a person with a culture, full of rich traditions and virtuous morals. I had found a genuine smile. I vowed to myself on my flight back to Australia to teach and educate all my friends and family about my Tonga, my home.

After arriving back in Australia, I started school again. Racial discrimination resumed, and it hurt me. However, it did not matter as much, because I knew that, back in Tonga, I had a culture and a people that accepted me and loved me for who I was. Thus, upon enrolling in my classes, the Deputy Head Mistress read my transcripts and registered me in the top science, math, and English classes for my year. In my math class I just seemed to have a hard time with my teacher. Continuously she would pick on me, not only to answer questions that she knew I would not know, but she always made sure that she would embarrass me during the process. I was expected to always call her “ma’am” every time I answered a question or asked for help (which I hardly did anyway). The girl whom I sat next to asked me one day why Mrs. Walton picked on me all the time. I just responded, “Because of my color,” and left it at that. After a term with her, she recommended my being moved to the intermediate class, because she said I could not cope with the work. In fact, it was not the work; it was the teacher that I could not cope with. Thinking about her today hurts me and still promulgates bitter feelings.

Experiences like this made me shrink from speaking out in my classes. I felt that if I were to express my feelings, I would be made a fool and students would laugh at me. However, during my geography class one day, my teacher helped me speak up for once. It was a discussion about Third World countries. He mentioned that Tonga was a Third World country and looked in my direction as if challenging me to speak. There was a pause and I felt uncomfortable. I quickly replied that, while Tonga may be Third World in
terms of economic and technological advancements, when it comes to culture and traditions, its morals and richness are incomparable. He sternly replied that those things were not important. I said they were, because if the class is only going to learn about the poverty of my country then they will never appreciate the values of my culture.

After my remarks, he sent me out of the classroom to stand in the hallway. This was a punishment for talking back to him. The smirks and smiles of my classmates reminded me of the experience with my newspaper-wrapped lunch. I turned to look at my classmates and then back at my teacher, and I remarked, "You're just prejudiced." Fire reddened his face as I slammed the door behind me. This time I was not crying, but rather very satisfied with myself. I felt triumph over myself in accepting my culture finally and fighting for my right of identity. Moments later he came out and gave me a sermon about manners, nothing I have cared to carry through with me into this life now. Seeing my stubborness, he sent me down to the principal's office. Much to the teacher's surprise and mine, the principal understood the situation from my point of view, and allowed me to give a presentation on Tonga in each of the geography classes at my level.

Thus, my promise on the plane from Tonga was beginning to be fulfilled. Tonga was to be taught to a White man's society. It did not matter if my presentation was accepted or not. What mattered was that the gap of inequality was slowly being bridged between my culture as a Tongan and my lifestyle as an Australian. I learned a very important lesson from this. I realized that, as the Australian culture was rejecting me, I became a stronger person. The more they threw up walls against me because of my color and difference, the more I became a Tongan. I won in the end because I had the best of two worlds.

In 1989, I went to the United States to further my education. BYU-Hawaii was a combination of both Australia and my Tongan experience. It was an American school, but most of the students were Pacific Islanders from many different countries. However, association with my own people sometimes left me unhappy because often I would be labeled ta'ahine fie palangi. I was often accused of wanting to be a White girl. If by any chance I did not go to one of our Tongan Club activities I would be frowned upon and teased. I would be called an ulu pupula person or pig head. The irritating thing was that I knew I could speak Tongan better than even most of these students who came here straight from Tonga. I participated in social events when I had the time; if I did not have the time, then I would not. When I introduced myself anywhere I would always say I was from Tonga. If anybody asked about my accent, I would softly say I was raised in Australia, "but I have a Tongan heart and I'm Tongan all over.

It was not until November 1990 that my grief finally came to an end and I was rightfully accepted as Tongan. I ran as a contestant for a scholarship pageant on campus. In introducing myself on the night of the competition, I said that "I am from Tonga, the land where time begins." I heard cheering and I hoped it was my Tongan friends. I won the title as Miss Na Hoa Pono for 1990-91 that night, and it was a pretty exciting feeling. However, the real win came when, finally, I was fully accepted as a Tongan because I did something prestigious for my culture. My peers, when they spoke of me, would now say that I was a Tongan girl.

Yes, I have lived in a lot of places. Right now, if I were to go back in time and change any of my life's stories, the only things I would change would be my complaints and grumbles. Everything else I would keep, because it was all the hard times that have made me who I am. I will graduate next year with a B.A. degree in history and a minor in speech communication, and I hope to go to law school. However, the only degree that counts right now in my life is the B.A. of identity that I have found for myself. I am a person, I am a human being, I am a very proud Tongan and I am only grateful for a wonderful upbringing in all the cultures that have raised me. To all of these cultures, thank you. To my Tongan culture most of all, Malo 'Aupito e fanau tama.
3

Barriers to Social Services for Pacific Islanders in Hawaii
Debbie Hippolite Wright
and Tracie Kaluai

Very little is known about Pacific Islander Americans, and even less is known about problems they confront when attempting to obtain assistance from social service agencies. This article describes ways Pacific Islander Americans use the social service system in Hawaii, and the barriers that impede effective utilization of these services. Thirty-five social service agencies dealing specifically with violence against women and alcohol and drug abuse were surveyed; twenty-one were domestic violence agencies and fourteen were alcohol and drug treatment programs.

The intent is not to explore the effectiveness of the specific programs provided by these agencies, but rather to assess the agencies' level of cultural sensitivity and competency for dealing with the special needs of Pacific Islander clients. Hawaiians, who are Pacific Islanders, are included in our survey. However, it is important to note that, although Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders face some of the same economic and social problems, there are significant differences between the indigenous Hawaiian people and immigrants from other Pacific Islands. The specific issues unique to the indigenous Hawaiian people are worthy of attention but are beyond the scope of this project.

Who Are Pacific Islanders?

Pacific Islanders are the indigenous peoples who populate the islands of the Pacific Ocean. They are frequently divided into three groups: Polynesians, Melanesians, and Micronesians. Centuries ago, they traversed vast expanses of the Pacific Ocean, establishing cultures throughout its furthest reaches, from the Northern Marianas to New Zealand, from Easter Island to Papua-New Guinea.

Pacific Islanders are distinct, diverse, and numerous. The larger groups that reside in the United States include Hawaiians, Samoans, Chamorros, and Tongans. Some of the smaller groups are from Palau, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Tahiti, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Fiji. In Polynesia, traditional societies had many similarities of language and culture, and identified themselves with an ascribed leadership determined by one's genealogy. In most cases chiefly positions were attained by virtue of birth. In contrast, Melanesian traditional languages and cultures were more diverse. These cultures tended to be socially and politically more egalitarian. Leadership was determined by one's achievements, obtained by sharing one's wealth with followers. Traditional Micronesian culture embraced social, economic, and political practices somewhere between Polynesian and Melanesian traditional cultures (Latukefu 1990).

Pacific Island Immigrants

Islanders have migrated throughout the Pacific for many centuries, and with special velocity in the second half of the twentieth century. Recently, two final destinations for many migrating Pacific Islanders have been Hawaii and the western part of the United States. Unfortunately, Pacific Islander Americans have become an invisible minority group.

Even in Hawaii, most of what is believed about Pacific Islander Americans is very superficial and unrealistic. This view in part stems from the stereotypical images painted by Waikiki night club acts. These stereotypes perpetuate misconceptions of Pacific Islanders as happy-go-lucky, exotic, bronze-bodied individuals without a care in the world. In contrast to these stereotypes, many Pacific Islander Americans are faced with the reality of being some of the economically and socially disadvantaged of Hawaii. A 1987 survey conducted in Laie (a rural community on the north shore of Oahu populated mainly by Pacific Islanders) indicated that many single-unit dwellings house more than one family. In fact, thirty-six percent of those households surveyed had someone who would
move out if they could afford separate housing. However, the median family income for those wishing to move out was $20,500 per year (Group 70 International 1987), well below the $39,038 median family income in Hawaii (Hawaii 1991). Many find it necessary to share resources in order to survive. The Laie survey found that, in this predominantly Pacific Islander community, households are much more crowded than is the case for Oahu as a whole. More than one third of the households meet the US census definitions of "crowded" or "very crowded." It is not uncommon for two or three families to be living in one house. When asked where she lived, a third grader from a Pacific Island family responded, "I live in Laie with my aunts, uncles, and cousins." In fact, this little girl was living in a house with her parents, two brothers, a sister, a paternal uncle, her wife, their children, and an unmarried maternal aunt (personal communication, October 2, 1992). A large number of Pacific Islander Americans in Hawaii live in lower income areas with more than one nuclear family under the same roof. This is done generally out of economic necessity, although familial closeness is also a factor.

Pacific Islander immigrants who come ill-equipped in technological and language skills are forced to tolerate sub-standard economic conditions. They come from societies not as technologically advanced as the United States and therefore are disadvantaged when competing in the job market. They end up working in unskilled, low-income jobs. In Hawaii, some Pacific Islander families band together to perform strenuous labor such as building rock walls, landscaping, collecting coconuts, and trimming coconut trees for income (personal communication, October 23, 1992).

Pacific Islander Americans face additional financial and social pressure due to expectations stemming from their indigenous cultures. These expectations including responsibility and support for the extended family. Significant amounts of money are sent to relatives who may be struggling financially in their home islands or attempting to emigrate to another part of the world. A middle-aged Samoan man who immigrated to the United States several years ago and has done well by American standards described feeling very responsible for sending money to members of his extended family. He said, "Sometimes the money goes towards paying for a wedding or a funeral or just paying bills" (personal communication, October 18, 1992).

A loss of cultural identity and self-esteem is another mammoth problem with which Pacific Islander Americans struggle. For older adults, the transition in the land of opportunity can be immensely difficult. New culture, new language, and new institutions to contend with bring a loss of prestige and status. Once revered as possessors of a wealth of knowledge and experience in their island culture, the elderly are seen in the new context as inexperienced and inadequate. For instance, the elderly in Samoa are sought for advice when making important choices in areas such as career, marriage, or education. However, when a Samoan family emigrates to Hawaii, the struggles for socio-economic self-sufficiency and the unfamiliarity of the social system obscure the position of the elderly.

Pacific Islander American youths' loss of cultural identity is perhaps more profound than their elders'. Identification with their ethnic group may be marginal. For instance, some adapt characteristics visible in other ethnic minority groups, such as speech, dress, and social practices. In fact, a Pacific Islander American man, a freshman attending a university in Texas, refused to acknowledge his own culture. He refused to speak the native tongue that was spoken at home, and if asked his ethnic background he would avoid answering the question. Instead this young man adopted the culture of his Black friends. He spoke Southern Black English, dressed like M.C. Hammer, and participated in rush ceremonies for an African American fraternity. This young man's sense of Pacific Islander identity was marginal partially because there are so few Pacific Islander Americans in this area of the country and partially because adapting to the ways of his friends was a means of being accepted. As a result of this young man's behavior, he identified as an African American rather than a Pacific Islander (personal communication, September 23, 1992).
Barriers to Utilization of Social Services

In order for social service agencies to provide effective services to Pacific Islander Americans, there is a need to discover more about Pacific Islanders and identify the barriers that impede them from receiving services they need.

Cultural Sensitivity

The agencies surveyed displayed a lack of cultural knowledge and sensitivity. This common barrier exists, due mainly to the dearth of information regarding Pacific Islander Americans. This dearth was evidenced in part by the difficulty agency employees had in identifying the ethnicity, not only of their clients, but also of their co-workers. They could not identify co-workers beyond the general categories of Black, White, Asian, Hawaiian, and mixed. One agency representative who was unsure of the ethnicity of a co-worker said “Well, he was born and raised in Hawaii, so I guess he’s a Pacific Islander, probably Hawaiian.” A supervisor in another agency stated that she did not know what a Pacific Islander was. Her uncertainty about what constitutes a Pacific Islander was not uncommon.

There appear to be fundamental differences in the way the agencies dealing with violence against women and the agencies dealing with alcohol and drug abuse approach Pacific Islander American clients. The agencies dealing with violence against women recognized there was a distressing dearth of information and knowledge regarding Pacific Islander Americans, and they expressed a desire for more information and cross-cultural training. By contrast, the agencies dealing with alcohol and drug abuse viewed the ethnicity of the individual as of little importance in comparison to the individual’s addiction. The respondents from the drug treatment programs expressed that the “drug culture” was far more significant to them than the ethnic background of the addict. One respondent said, “We treat everyone the same. We don’t care what nationality they are.” Another person said, “We’re not dealing with ethnicities, but a disease.” It is important to understand the common dynamics that exist for drug addicts; however, it is remiss to ignore the cultural influences that may have impact on the individual’s treatment.

Inconsistent methods of data collection by social service agencies add to the difficulty of offering culturally sensitive services. People who seek out social services are encouraged, but not required, to indicate ethnicity on agency intake forms. Seldom do such forms list individual island identities, such as Tongan, Samoan, and Fijian. Many Pacific Islanders, who do not see their specific ethnic group listed, do not necessarily identify themselves in another category that appears on the intake form, such as “Pacific Islander” or “Asian/Pacific Islander,” so they list no ethnicity. Therefore, often the only recourse available to agency representatives is a visual assessment of ethnicity during an interview. This is not a guarantee that a client’s ethnicity is accurately discerned. A Pacific Islander American man recently approached a social service agency worker for assistance. However, he was not understood because he lacked English competency. The agency worker surmised that this person was Samoan, because he resembled many of the agency’s Samoan clients, had a name that sounded Samoan to the worker, and lived in an area where many Samoans reside. A Samoan paraprofessional was located to help this person. Everyone concerned was embarrassed when it was determined that the man was not Samoan.

There is an under-representation of Pacific Islander American staff members in Oahu’s social service agencies. Agencies dealing with domestic violence indicated that approximately 22% of their workers were thought to be Pacific Islanders. However, there is some confusion regarding this best guess percentage because over half of this group were thought to be Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian. Since workers were more likely to identify colleagues as Pacific Islanders if they were born and raised in Hawaii, these figures are extremely optimistic. It was even more difficult to get a sense of the ethnic makeup of staff members working in the area of drug abuse. Many of the respondents from drug agencies refused to comment or avoided the issue of ethnicity of workers by saying,

“There are no colors of people, just people,” and, “We just learn to understand people even if they are different from us.” The ambiguity of these statistics and the tone of these comments reflect two fundamental problems: (1) inability or unwillingness to identify Pacific Islanders’ ethnicity either as clients or as workers, and (2) lack of uniform information-gathering procedures from one agency to another.

Lack of Cross-Cultural Training

None of the agencies surveyed provides its staff with any systematic training on Pacific Islander Americans. Two out of the twenty-one agencies dealing with domestic violence and sexual abuse indicated they provided on-going service training on racism, women of color, and other minority issues. However, information about Pacific Islanders is not dealt with specifically. Although two-thirds of the agencies dealing with drug abuse indicated having some kind of cross-cultural training at least once a year, training regarding Pacific Islanders was virtually non-existent. The few attempts at staff training regarding Pacific Islander Americans have been inadequate. They fall short in providing social service workers with competency when working with Pacific Islander Americans.

Dissemination of accurate information regarding Pacific Islander Americans in staff training sessions would contribute to the overall success of social service provided. Some topics which need to be included in training sessions are: (1) the current social and economic situation of Pacific Islanders; (2) the world views of different Pacific Island peoples; (3) cultural traditions of Pacific Islanders; and (4) cultural perspectives on different social problems encountered by Pacific Islander Americans.

Culturally Biased Assessment Tools and Intervention Techniques

Assessment instruments used by surveyed agencies were standardized and based on Western conceptualizations of the identified problem. These lend themselves to a Western perspective on dealing with people in crisis. Biased assessment instruments are inadequate to recognize the complexities of the ethnic clients’ predicament. Most assessment tools attempt to assess the client’s symptomatology, significant precipitating events, financial, emotional, and psychological condition. However, none of the agencies asked questions dealing with culturally significant practices, rituals, or events that might have had impact on the client. A number of agencies recognized the biased nature of uniform assessment tools, but they continued to be administered, reportedly because there was insufficient manpower and financial support to make significant changes in these tools. Respondents contended that face-to-face assessment interviews bridge the cultural gap between the client and staff. However, since there is such an ignorance of Pacific Islander Americans, it is unlikely that workers will offset the bias of these instruments.

Furthermore, none of the agencies interviewed indicated using culturally sanctioned interventions with Pacific Islander American clients. One such intervention is Ho’oponopono, which in Hawaiian literally means “to set aright.” It is a Native Hawaiian method where “solutions are sought in family gatherings...” (Howard 1974.) Traditionally this form of intervention requires the involvement of the extended family. Once the extended family is made aware of the nature and extent of the problem, the feelings and emotions of all individuals are aired. Thus greater understanding on the parts of both the offended and offender is achieved and family support is brought to bear. Familial involvement, support and problem solving are key features of this intervention which brings about change in an ethnically sensitive manner.

Unfortunately, instead of using such culturally appropriate modalities of treatment the agencies surveyed use only Western, personalist forms of intervention. Usually a particular family member or the immediate family is encouraged to be part of the helping process, even though many Pacific Islander Americans still view their extended family as a vital part of their lives and may not conceive entering treatment without extended family involvement. An intervention such as Ho’oponopono could be included in the treat-
ment of domestic violence, sexual assault, and drug and alcohol abuse. Unfortunately, we found many agencies viewed involvement from the extended family as more of a hindrance than assistance. One agency worker said “We can’t have too many people involved because we have to consider the right to confidentiality of other clients.”

Recommendations

Obviously, we have a long way to go before the needs of Pacific Islanders can be dealt with sufficiently by social service agencies. In order to facilitate this there must be:

First, a systematic dissemination of information regarding Pacific Islanders and their cultures in staff training and service meetings.

Second, an emphasis upon graduating Pacific Islander-Americans from institutions of higher learning in social service areas such as social work, public health, and other allied professions.

Third, conceptualization of various social problems from a Pacific Islander’s cultural perspective.

Fourth, traditional modalities of intervention found within the cultural framework should be implemented when appropriate.

Fifth, a standardized method of collecting and categorizing data by social service agencies within the state of Hawaii.

Last, accurate demographic information about Pacific Islander Americans should be obtained. This can be done by changing the present broad groupings found on many demographic data forms to add specific ethnic groups such as Samoans, Tongans, Marshallese, I-kiribati, Fijians, and so forth.

Conclusion

A number of barriers stand in the way of Pacific Islanders receiving culturally sensitive social services. The primary barrier is the lack of information regarding Pacific Islanders, including native Hawaiians. In order for this situation to change, social service agencies must obtain and disseminate accurate information regarding Pacific Islander Americans to staff members. Social problems must be conceptualized and addressed from a Pacific Islander American perspective, and culturally appropriate intervention techniques must be utilized. Hiring of Pacific Islander social service workers also needs to be a priority.

References


Family Dynamics Among Pacific Islander Americans

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A television news program not long ago showed images of a Samoan family in California. A neighbor saw large numbers of people entering the family's home, heard "a great deal of noise," and called the police, saying something suspicious was going on next door. Police arrived on the scene, surrounded the house, and confronted the Samoan family. With a police helicopter beating the air overhead, the officers frisked men and women, young and old. It was never clear to observers what they were looking for, but gradually it became clear to the police what they had found.

They had found a birthday party. The Samoan household's baby was one year old, and, since they were loving and respectful people, they had invited all the members of their extended family to come share in the auspicious occasion. The joyous event included singing and dancing, which triggered the neighbor's complaint. The police were embarrassed by their mistake. The party-goers were bewildered and intimidated at the treatment they had received.

Pacific Islander American families are not much understood by non-Pacific Islanders. It may be partly because they are not much studied. What literature there is dwells on two themes. First, a small number of anthropologically-oriented writings (Handy and Pukui 1972; Shu 1985-86) talks about patterns of kinship in Polynesia—the roughly one-third of the Pacific that is most familiar to Americans. In addition, a slightly larger and growing body of literature talks about domestic violence (Dubanoski and Snyder 1980; Gray and Cosgrove 1985; Counts 1990; Mokuau 1991). Only a tiny number of scholars have paid attention to other dynamics in Pacific Islander families (Jolly and Macintyre 1989). Almost none of them have had anything to say about Pacific Islanders who reside in the United States.

This, then, is a first foray into that large, almost uncharted territory: the family among Pacific Islander Americans. It was undertaken by the Pacific Islander Americans Research Project, a student-faculty research unit sponsored by the Institute for Polynesian Studies and the Division of Social Sciences at Brigham Young University-Hawaii. The team operated on the theory, common in the psychotherapeutic community (Caille 1982; Doherty and Baird 1983), that detailed, structured interviews with family members would provide insight into both structure and processes in Pacific Islander families.

The interviewers comprised four women and a man, all Pacific Islanders and all students at BYU-Hawaii. They interviewed forty-one people in fall 1992 and winter 1993, all Pacific Islanders in their twenties and thirties, and all students at BYU-Hawaii. Twenty of the interviewed people were men, twenty-one women. Sixteen were Tongan, seven Fijian, five I-kiribati, and thirteen Samoan. All spoke about their families of origin—the households in which they grew up, generally in their countries of origin although sometimes in the United States. The interviews lasted from one to two hours each.

The inquiry was directed toward four topics: the meaning of "family" in each of the cultures under study; family structure and decision-making; discipline; and culture change. After taking background data on the respondent's age, sex, ethnicity, birth order, birthplace, place where raised, marital status, and occupation, the respondents were asked the following questions:

Meaning of "Family"
What comes into your mind when I say the word "family"?
What is the word for family in your language?
What comes into your mind when you think of the word for family in your native language?
Who would you include as members of your “close family?”

Family Structure
How are important decisions in the family made?
How does your family express caring for each other?
How are disagreements resolved in your family?

Discipline
Whose job was it to discipline your family members?
How were members of your family disciplined when you were a child?
Can you describe a time when someone got in trouble?
How were they disciplined?
Do your parents continue to discipline you in any way now?

Culture Change
What aspects of your upbringing would you like to maintain in your “own” family?
What things would you like to see change in your “own” family?

The four Pacific Island peoples interviewed—Samoans, I-kiribati, Fijians, and Tongans—come from widely separated parts of the Pacific. Physically they do not resemble each other: Samoans and Tongans are Polynesians, I-kiribati are Micronesians, and Fijians are Melanesians. Linguistically and in most aspects of culture they are quite distinct. Yet with respect to family structure and dynamics, the people interviewed in this study exhibited remarkable similarities. Except where noted below, their family attributes were similar enough that it was decided to describe them together in this article.

The Meaning of “Family”
The people interviewed had two definitions of “family.” One, which they frequently offered when they were asked to respond to the English term, had to do with what many people would understand as the nuclear family: father, mother, and children, all living under one roof. A Tongan man said, “I think of my own family: my brothers, sisters, my parents, my home.” Interwoven with that definition, however, was the imperative of respect. The man went on: “When I hear the word family, I think of respect and unity. . . . In Tonga we are very family-oriented and everyone is, it’s a part of our culture that we respect our parents truly.”

When the interviewers asked people the word for “family” in their native tongue, each had a quick response. For some Tongans, it was famili, a term borrowed from English. But most of them also recognized kainga, which also included, as one said, “The extended family and cousins, uncles, aunts, grandma, granddad.” The Samoan word, aiga, is linguistically related to kainga, and carries the idea of going back five generations and including all collateral kin under an umbrella that large. The Fijian word for this extended family is matavuvale. In Kiribati, it is te utu.

Both these conceptions of family operated in the minds and lives of the Pacific Islanders interviewed. Most people had associations with the word “family” that had to do with this larger entity. A male Tongan defined his close family as “My cousins, my grandparents, my family, even down to second cousins. Anyone who is related . . . . cousins, uncles, grandparents . . . . My uncles and aunts are like mothers and fathers. My cousins are just like brothers.” Sometimes the idea of the extended family conjured up associations that were warm and social. “A lot of kids, happy, togetherness with the family, big feast,” said one woman. “Love, picnics, beach . . . . To go out and do the work together, have fun together,” said a man.

Frequently the people interviewed spoke of the sense of belonging and joy they felt when all the extended family gathered to
mark a significant milestone, such as the baby's first birthday party described at the beginning of this paper. Other occasions included births, deaths, weddings, graduations, and coming of age ceremonies. All branches of the family chipped in to pay for such occasions. One Tongan man said, “When there’s a family occasion such as a funeral or birthdays or any party...everyone is helped out, even if...you are already married and have your own family, you still come and support and help pay for all expenses.” One person spoke of getting together with her extended family at Christmas and holidays for about three weeks at a time, to have fun together.

In other instances, people associated the extended family with more formal occasions that had to do with decisions affecting the whole group. One person said, “Our tribe will come together and discuss about...money given by the government...If there is a disagreement...it is brought to our grandfathers...[who] would be listening...and then solve the problem.”

Frequently, though individuals understood and valued this large family ideal, in practical fact most of their lives were organized around their nuclear families. Although they spoke of their families as these extended entities and recalled large family occasions with fondness, almost every time they were asked about actual decision-making, discipline, and expressions of love, they zeroed in on the nuclear family as the unit of action. Frequently they would say, “My father this...” or “My sister that...” Seldom did they speak about aunts or cousins unless prodded by the interviewer.

It seems clear that Pacific Islanders value both the extended and the nuclear family. A commitment of loyalty, obligation, and support to both groups is crucial to the Pacific Islander American way of family.

The Structure of Power

The respondents were unanimous in describing male-dominated families. Fathers made the final decisions on all significant issues.

A Kiribati woman said, “The father is the head of the family...He’s the boss. Even though my Mom disagrees, she has to go along.” A Fijian said, “Usually my Dad made the important decisions. He may let us think about the decision, but usually he is the one who decides.” The mother frequently was accorded some input, often taking the role of intermediary to express the opinions of other family members before the father did the final deciding. A Tongan woman said, “My Dad makes all the decisions...My Mom...suggests softly and then my Dad will say yes or no.” A Tongan man said, “My Dad is the head of the family, he makes the decisions. But Mum also has a say in making decisions....[She] suggests, but it all comes down to the father.”

Out of respect, the children obey. Sometimes obedience means a serious change in their life plans. One Tongan woman recalled, “When I finished high school I didn’t want to go on my mission [a Mormon custom, involving two years’ service abroad for a man, a year and a half for a woman]. Then my father forced me to go on a mission, so I had to go and I didn’t have any decision in the matter. My father made the decision for me to go.”

With respect to the question of the relative importance of the extended and nuclear families, it is perhaps worthy of note that almost all of the examples that the respondents gave of such decision-making took place within the nuclear family. A few spoke of times when aunts or uncles broke into nuclear family decision-making. But in the vast majority of cases, the parents, and specifically the father, made the decisions. They were not referred to some larger extended family council or clan leader.

Sometimes older siblings, brothers in particular, felt themselves deputized to take on the decision-making role. One Tongan said, “I’m considered one of the older ones in the family, so I can tell the younger cousins or brothers what to do...[When] the father’s not around, the mother [makes the decisions. If] the mother’s not around, the next oldest.” Another said, “I’m their teacher. I look after the younger ones.”
Expression of Caring

To a person, the people interviewed described their families as loving ones, where a great deal of caring was expressed. But to a person, they said that caring was seldom expressed in words. A Samoan man said, "There's no such thing as 'I love you,' or 'I feel for you.' There's none of them. It's expressed through Christmas and birthday presents. There is no verbal expression. I couldn't even say 'I love you Dad' or 'I love you Mom.'" A Samoan woman said of her parents, "They didn't really express it in words... My Mom took care of me." She told how her father would show his love for his children by walking them over a mile to school. "When we were afraid Dad would walk with us until it got light... then he would walk all the way home and start working in the plantation."

An I-kiribati man said, "We don't hug or say it but... I show my love for my mother by obeying her words." Many described obedience to and respect for elders as a way of showing love. A Tongan said love meant "Respect for the elderly people. Do not question the authority that they have. Whenever they need help, help them out... My grandfather, always have to carry for him heavy stuff. You know, he can carry it, but he's older. So... I carry it for him." People talked about sharing of food as an important way of showing love. Members of the extended family would drop by, especially on Sundays after church, and would automatically receive the best food which the household was able to provide.

So the love that exists in abundance in these families was expressed not in words but in deeds, gestures, and behaviors. Pacific Islander men displayed their love by looking out for the welfare of their female family members. By contrast, women tended to demonstrate care and concern by doing manual tasks of a nurturing kind. This can be seen in the testimony of a man who lives in the same college community as his two sisters. As for familial caring, he said:

That's a real important role. Especially since my sisters are here we really care for each other and they care for me. I check on them sometimes to see how they are doing. If I meet them at the dances or at the movies I make sure they come home and I leave or go out on a date with someone. Same relationship how they care for me. Like if I'm going to the temple or something they ask me if my white shirt is clean, and I bring it over to them and they wash it or something, or if it's all right with me I just tell them that I'm okay.

Other males reported similar surveillance and chaperoning activities. No one seems to have felt a need to chaperone the men.

Many of these same respondents had no difficulty expressing their love for family members to the interviewers, but they could not articulate themselves directly to their families.

Discipline

One of the ways that the parents of the Pacific Islander respondents expressed their caring was by disciplining their children. Discipline among Pacific Islanders is intimately connected with caring, and also with respect. The word "respect" appears over and over in the transcripts of the interviews, perhaps more frequently than any other word. Some Tongans used a word, faka'apa'apa, which evokes an elaborate system of duty, honor, obligation, and security that stands as the rock of stability at the base of Tongan society (Tuifua 1992). One young man said "Famili... in Tongan... means the relationship we have in a very respectful way... When I hear the word famili, it creates that sense of respect." It is in context of the value which Pacific Islanders place on caring and respect that one must understand the issue of discipline.

From the perspective of middle-class, White Americans, Pacific Islander disciplinary practices seem harsh. Almost always, in the families of the people interviewed, discipline involved forthright physical punishment. Dubanoski and Snyder (1980) go so far as to label such practices "child abuse." They may not be right.
Almost always, it was the fathers who did the heavy hitting, and boys especially were their targets. One recalled, “We got hit. By a stick or a broom or something... One time... I got hit. I was so upset at my Dad’s sister. She came and stole something at home, and I was very young and I swore at her... ’cause I was so mad, and my Dad heard. He came and he hit me and I still have a lot of scars all over my body because he was so mad.” Another man recalled an occasion when “I didn’t tell my Dad where I was going to go. So I walked in the house and he threw a big punch. A big punch!” That would not happen now, however, in this person’s estimate: “Now that I’m tall and bigger and much stronger, my Dad doesn’t hit me any more. You’ve taken his punishment in a good way, so now you just talk.”

Girls also got hit, but not so often and not so hard. Mothers were more likely to scold or to reason with children than to hit, although sometimes they, too, got physical. One woman remembered that, “Usually in our family when we do something... [our mother would] always come and sit me out, and tell me to sit down, and then she tell me not do this because—and then she would explain it and everything. But sometimes she would pinch.” Only a few of the respondents reported being slapped by aunts or uncles. Sometimes the delegation of leadership to the oldest member of the younger generation meant that an older brother or sister felt empowered to slap a younger sibling, but that was very rare.

The people who were interviewed had a somewhat different understanding of this physical punishment than some non-Pacific Islanders might suppose. Almost to a person, they spoke in positive terms of the corporal punishment they had experienced. A Tongan man said he would discipline his children “just how I was punished, because I like it that way, ’cause right now I don’t regret anything that my parents did to me. I think that’s how they show their love to me.” In all four ethnic groups, the children expressed this same idea, that physical punishment was one way they knew their parents cared for them. A student from Kiribati said the father’s beatings “showed his love for us, because if they didn’t do that we would be really naughty.” A Samoan woman said that “If somebody were to ask if I was abused when I was a child I would say no.” A Samoan man said, “I think I learned more being disciplined—being hit, rather than not being hit. I think I learned more from my father through discipline. If it wasn’t for him, I wouldn’t be here today.” A Tongan said that physical punishment “made me do what I am supposed to be doing.” A woman told how her father had insisted her brother go spend two years on a Mormon mission, and had beaten the younger man up when he refused to go. During the missionary period, the young man wrote and thanked his father for beating him into going, and he did not change his story once the mission had ended.

It may be contended by some observers that this sort of positive statement about physical punishment simply reflects the psychological dependency of an abused person upon her or his abuser. But it may be equally valid, given the ubiquity of the practice of physical punishment throughout the Pacific areas under study, to take these statements at closer to face value. If the people involved do not experience physical punishment as tyranny and abuse—if, to the contrary, they see the punishment as centrally important to the development of their own positive character qualities and to the maintenance of family stability—by what right may someone with another theory of childrearing impose a negative value judgment? (cf. Gray and Cosgrove 1985).

The literature on child abuse suggests that physical punishment may be more dangerous for children when it is negatively sanctioned (Dubanoski and Snyder 1980). Conversely, it may be less dangerous in the Pacific Islander American instance, where it is viewed as a natural and positive way to raise one’s children. Also, if physical discipline is a usual method rather then a desperate last resort, it is less likely to be abusive (Parke and Collmer 1975). Similarly, if physical discipline is swiftly and unselfconsciously administered, it is unlikely to result in serious injury (Korbin 1987a, 1987b).

A Tongan woman summed up the Pacific Islander American view of physical discipline. Back home, she said, “My Mom
gave me the stick.” When she came to the United States she was surprised to learn that, “Over here parents are not supposed to hit your kids…. That’s how you teach your children…. If you don’t hit them then they will not learn anything.” Physical discipline in these Pacific Islander families was one prime way by which parents showed the depth of their caring. Children showed their caring in return by obedience, by respecting the elderly, by taking care of their siblings, by not answering back.

Cultural Change

Each of the people at the time of the interview was living in Hawaii, thousands of miles from her or his homeland and native culture. Nearly all are also physically remote from their families, extended and nuclear, though some had a few local relatives. Moreover, their countries of origin are undergoing dramatic changes under the impact of global market forces and the swirling movements of goods, people, and culture across and around the Pacific. It is inevitable that these particular individuals should express personal feelings at some variance with what they perceive to be traditional family imperatives in their native cultures.

Many people when interviewed said they would not do exactly as their parents had done. This was especially true in the matter of discipline. Even though they valued the punishment they had received, they said they would exercise a lighter hand on their own children. One woman quoted above as approving of the way she was raised, said nonetheless, “I think whenever my parents see anything wrong they would just hit you without letting you explain your point. So what I want to do is let them [my children] explain first.” Several respondents echoed these sentiments. They would not completely eschew corporal punishment, but they wished to inject an element of dialogue before leaping to discipline. Another said he would let his children have a bigger say than he had in making decisions about their own lives: “I would let them choose for themselves. I would just explain everything to them and let them choose.” Most of the respondents were not quite so liberal: they would discuss issues with their children, they said, but not allow them total freedom to make their own choices.

Both these desired changes—talking with children before punishing them and discussing options before making decisions—will depend on establishing new patterns of verbal communication. Not only were all the people interviewed better at showing love than speaking love, they felt themselves tongue-tied before their parents in most situations. One Tongan man described a case that applied to others as well: “Even though we have something in mind to say…. it’s very rude to talk back to our parents, even if we feel they are not right. And [if] there is something in our hearts that we need to express to them, we cannot say until, I don’t know, you just cannot say anything back.”

One of the factors one would like to tease out is the impact of religion on moving the people interviewed for this study away from traditional family dynamics. All are members of a faith, Mormonism, that is highly bound up with White, middle-class, American culture. As one put it, “The Mormon belief is that you give up your culture and you take on Mormon culture.” In practical fact, since some of the respondents came from nuclear families that were Mormon but extended families that were not, their Mormonism drew them out of the extended family network. Then, too, certain Mormon practices are built around the nuclear family. Some spoke of having family home evening, a weekly togetherness time practiced by most Mormon families. Some spoke of family councils—another Mormon device—where they tried to air grievances and work out differences.

The person whose family showed the most evidence of these Mormon influences was a Tongan male whose parents had been educated at BYU-Hawaii years before and whose father had since accepted a calling as a bishop—the equivalent of a pastor or priest in Protestant or Catholic circles. The young man described his family’s situation: “My Dad used to discipline us [physically, but] ever since my Dad got the calling for church…. he does away with the Tongan, whack!, belt stuff. He gets on a one-to-one basis...
and we just talk and clear it off . . . So instead of taking me into the room and belting me he just talked to me really good and made me feel so bad that I started crying. But my Mum she got really mad, so got the thing and started to beat on me, but my Dad just talked to her and my Mum tried to convince him to hit me, but he didn't.” Because of the influence of the church, this family seems to have made a cultural transition in its way of relating.

Yet this family was unique among those interviewed for this study, in the degree to which it had adopted a foreign model of family communication. Because this is not a longitudinal study, it is not clear at this point exactly how much culture change actually has taken place in these families, or will take place in the future. Nor is it clear what part of any culture change can be laid at the door of Mormonism, and how much ought to be attributed to more general causes.

**Summing Up**

From these interviews, it is possible to construct a fuller picture of the roles and behavior patterns that characterize Pacific Islander Americans than has existed up until now. For example, the respondents have given a picture of family structure where much of what is most important is organized around the nuclear family, yet the collateral family takes over at key points. The wider kin network is emotionally important to the individual and is there for ceremonies and celebrations, as well as for major decision making. In some instances, extended family members are accorded positions much like those of parents and siblings, although most daily functioning happens within the nuclear family.

There is a strict hierarchy of power and authority in Pacific Islander American families, with parents taking primacy over children, men over women, older over younger siblings. A great deal of caring is expressed in these families, but it is seldom expressed verbally. Together with caring, respect is the highest value in the Pacific Islander American family system.

**Bibliography**


Influences of Oral Traditions on the Language Learning of Samoans and Tongans in Hawaii

Lynne Hansen-Strain

Abstract

This paper examines group differences in second language development from perspectives provided by the literature on orality and literacy. Findings are presented from an empirical study that investigates two hypotheses: (1) that university ESL students from traditional oral cultures, in this case Tongans and Samoans, tend to focus significantly more on interpersonal involvement in their ESL speaking and writing than do students from more literate cultural traditions, and (2) that in comparison with learners from more literate cultures in Asia, the learners from oral traditions tend to use difficult structures more frequently and correctly in the spoken modality than in the written. In support of both hypotheses the data indicate significant group differences in the patterning of interlanguage task variability. In conclusion, a model of discourse variability is proposed which takes into account speech modality, degree of planning, and level of interpersonal involvement.

The present study focuses on the learning of English in Hawaii by students from two Pacific Island cultures, Samoan and Tongan, both characterised by rich oral traditions. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks provided by the literature on orality and literacy, the subjects will be compared with three Asian groups whose literate traditions differ sharply from the Polynesians. Using English speech and writing samples, comparisons will be made of two aspects of second-language discourse: interpersonal involvement and
modality preference. Evidence on the extent to which discourse features of Samoan and Tongan are transferred into the English of the Pacific Islanders promises important insights, not only into the processes of second-language acquisition, but also into the communication of these groups as they function in the English milieu of Hawaii.

Concerning the extent of group differences in second-language acquisition, there is some disagreement. One view is that group variation is not a significant factor. That is, speakers of different mother tongues are said not to vary much in language learning strategies and outcomes, and any differences that are observed are held to be trivial. This position is taken by some researchers who, in seeking to demonstrate that the same innate language-learning mechanisms that account for the learning of first languages are also responsible for the learning of later ones, have not focused on group differences in learner language (Dulay and Burt, 1974; Felix, 1980; Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1982).

A second and opposing view is that groups vary significantly in second-language learning. A learner’s first-language background is immediately apparent in second-language performance and, in the course of instruction, is reflected in the occurrence and severity of various learning difficulties. Such first-language group differences are often reported by language teachers in multicultural classes who regard the variation as an obvious and critical component of the instructional setting. Upon commencing teaching duties in an English as a Second Language program in Hawaii, for example, the writer was told by experienced teachers that the Polynesian students would be eager to participate in speaking activities in class but would not benefit much from the explicit teaching of grammar. Asians, on the other hand, would be reticent about participating in class but would excel in reading and in the learning of grammatical rules.

Is there evidence to support such perceptions of group differences? The simplistic view that first-language transfer is the only source of difficulties in foreign-language learning was current during the 1950s and 60s. It has given way more recently to the recognition of second-language learning as a far more complex process. Still, numerous instances of mother tongue transfer are reported that provide evidence for group differences in second-language learning outcomes (Hansen 1982; Gass and Selinker 1983; Kellerman 1984; Gass 1992). In fact, the current default view in the second language acquisition field is surely pro-transfer. In addition, the differing group characteristics of language learners that affect their language learning have been brought into sharper focus by a number of recent investigations (Scribner and Cole 1981; Wong Fillmore 1982; Hansen 1984a, 1984b; Wagner, Messick, and Spratt 1986; Hansen-Strain 1987, 1990, in press). The present study promises to add a further dimension of learner background, orality/literacy, to variables which have been shown to influence the learning of a second language.

Orality/Literacy and Second Language Development

The literature on orality and literacy contains important implications for language teaching (Gee 1986) and, I shall argue, for explanations of second-language acquisition as well. Language and literacy acquisition are forms of socialization that involve discourse practices embedded in the unique world view and experience of a particular culture. The learning of a second language is not just the learning of grammar—or even of “language”—but rather is the acquisition of these discourse conventions which, to varying degrees, depending on the first and second languages involved, differ from conventions in the native culture. An important source of mother-tongue group differences in learner language surely lies in the interaction of first- and second-language discourse practices in second language acquisition. In accounting for these group differences, two facets of language in use which are explored in the orality/literacy literature invite our consideration: (1) the relative focus on interpersonal involvement versus message content in discourse, and (2) culturally based language modality strengths and preferences.
Interpersonal Involvement in Discourse

Orality/literacy research suggests that discourse strategies associated with oral tradition place emphasis on shared knowledge and on the interpersonal relationship between communicator and audience. Literate tradition, on the other hand, emphasizes the communicative function of language: that is, the use of words to convey information or content. A continuum of discourse based upon this relative focus on interpersonal involvement versus message content has been encoded and described in slightly different ways by a number of researchers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Orality</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tannen 1982</td>
<td>Focus on involvement</td>
<td>Focus on content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Givon 1979</td>
<td>Pragmatic mode</td>
<td>Syntactic mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chafe 1982</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scollon and Scollon 1983</td>
<td>Nonfocused situations</td>
<td>Focused situations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tannen (1982) proposes an oral-literate continuum in discourse that includes focus on involvement on one end and focus on content on the other. In the former, signalling load or elaboration is placed on interpersonal involvement between speakers; in the latter, on the message content of the linguistic structures. Givon (1979) suggests contrast between pragmatic and syntactic modes of communication. In the former, social interaction and the participation of the hearer in a mutual negotiation of meaning are paramount; in the latter, social action is minimized while the grammar takes on most of the burden for communication through precise and varied lexical items and explicit syntactic structure. Chafe (1982) distinguishes between speech (conversation) and writing (essays). The former tends to have a fragmented quality and more involvement with audience; the latter an “integrated” quality and more detachment from audience. Scollon and Scollon (1981) suggest a distinction between nonfocused and focused situations. In the former the highest value is on mutual comprehension among the people involved; in the latter there are strong limitations on negotiation between participants.

Although interpersonal involvement has not been included as a variable in previous language acquisition research, it has been studied in the language use of native speakers of English. In a comparison of the informal spoken language and formal written language of fourteen university faculty and graduate students, Chafe (1982) found that the oral data contained far more frequent manifestations of the involvement that a language user has with his or her audience than did the written data. The measures of this involvement included reference to the language user, references to the language user's own mental processes, monitoring of information flow, the use of emphatic particles, fuzziness, and the use of direct quotes.

Orality/Literacy and Modality Preferences

A second insight from orality/literacy studies with applications to second-language acquisition is that of the primacy ascribed to speech and interaction in oral cultures. Ong (1982) identifies “verbomotor” cultures in which—in contrast to high technology societies—courses of action and attitudes depend significantly more upon effective use of words, and thus upon human interaction. Powerful verbal performances are produced in these groups. Such verbomotor cultures are “likely to strike technological man as making all too much of speech itself, as overvaluing and certainly over-practicing rhetoric” (p. 68). According to Ong (1982) this high societal value placed on speech and interaction fosters personality
structures that in certain ways are more communal and externalized and less introspective than are those common among people from literate traditions. Ong’s further assertion, that residually oral folk understand language and even numbers better by listening than by looking, suggests also the possibility that learning styles in orally oriented groups may tend toward modality preferences for hearing over seeing.

Although empirical comparisons have not been made of learners from oral and literate cultural traditions in terms of the relative strength of their spoken and written second-language performance, relevant evidence of group differences of second-language modality strengths is available in studies carried out in a university English Language Institute (ELI) in Hawaii. Statistical comparisons of group scores on batteries of English tests seem to confirm what teachers in this ELI program already believed: that first-language background is an important variable that may enhance or detract from students’ performance on some language tests (Hansen 1984a,b,c; Evans and Hansen 1986; Hansen-Strain 1987; Strain and Hansen-Strain 1989).

Teachers’ general impressions that students from oral cultures in the South Pacific tend to have an advantage on oral tests over Asians, for example, are supported by the findings of a study of ESL (English as a Second Language) noise tests (Hansen 1984c). Scores were reported from seven tests administered during one week to the same students. There were five tests that included an aural component (Michigan Test of Aural Comprehension [MTAC]); a dictation test (read three times, the second with pauses for writing); two noise tests; and a speaking evaluation consisting of three subtests. Each test was rated by a different pair of examiners: (1) a three-minute prepared speech, (2) reading of a prepared passage, and (3) interaction with examiners focusing on a picture. The Samoan and Tongan groups tended to score higher than they did on the two tests confined to the written word (Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency [MTELP]) and a cloze test, every seventh word deleted and scored by acceptable-synonym method. For two Asian groups, the Hong Kong and Korean students, an opposite pattern is apparent as they scored significantly higher on the two written tests than did their Polynesian classmates (p>.05).

A second impression of teachers in the ELI program is that students from South Pacific islands and the Philippines achieve higher scores on dictation tests than one would expect in view of their performance on other ESL measures. At the same time, the teachers expected that the Asian students would fall below levels that might be predicted from their other test scores. This impression is borne out by an analysis of standardised scores by culture for ESL tests (dictation test, grammar, vocabulary and reading sections of the MTELP, essay, Canadian English Language Test, and cloze test) reported in Evans and Hansen (1986). The group differences in mean scores on the dictation test (.62 for South Pacific/Philippine students, -.80 for EFL Asian students, and -.25 for the students from Hong Kong) were significant at the .001 level. These findings are compatible with the hypothesis that the second-language proficiency of learners from residually oral Pacific and Philippine societies tends to appear higher as measured by oral tests than by written ones in mainland Asia.

The present study draws upon the insights from the orality/literacy literature discussed above for its guiding hypotheses: (1) that university ESL students from traditional oral cultures tend to focus significantly more on interpersonal involvement in their English speaking and writing than do students from more literate cultural traditions, and (2) that university ESL learners from Pacific Island oral traditions, in comparison with learners from more literate Asian cultural traditions, tend to use difficult structures more frequently and more correctly in oral tasks in their second-language than in written tasks.

**Methods**

**Subjects**

The thirty Polynesian university students who participated in this study were enrolled in ESL reading classes in an English Language
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>MTELP Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongan</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Institute in Hawaii. As a comparison, forty-five of their Asian classmates were also included in the study. Thus, the subjects include students from two dominantly oral cultures in the South Pacific (Samoan and Tongan) as well as comparison groups from three dominantly literate cultures in Asia (Japanese, Chinese, and Korean). The fifteen students from each of these five cultural backgrounds were randomly selected for the study. The thirty-eight male and thirty-seven female students were from the four proficiency levels at the institute with scores ranging between 46 and 84 on the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP). They ranged in age from seventeen to twenty-nine years. (See Table 1 for a breakdown by culture of means for MTELP score.) A one-way ANOVA by culture for the five groups indicates no significant difference between them in their English proficiency level as measured by the MTELP.

Materials and Procedures

To test the first hypothesis concerning degree of interpersonal involvement in English speaking and writing, spoken and written retelling data were collected. For both retelling tasks the same 500-word passage was used, a summary of Suter's (1975) research report of his study into the factors that affect pronunciation achievement in a foreign language. This text was expected to elicit a relatively impersonal, formal style of discourse. In the administration of the written retelling, the subjects were asked to study the passage for fifteen minutes after which the reading and any notes that had been made were collected by the examiner. They were then given twenty minutes to write down in a test booklet what they had read. In the administration of the oral retelling the subjects first listened to a videotaped lecture of the material, and were then given twenty minutes to retell it into a cassette recorder. These data were typewritten before being quantitatively analyzed for four measures of speaker or writer involvement with audience: reference to self, references to addressee, references to one's own mental processes, and monitoring of information flow. To facilitate group comparisons, ratios to the frequency of each of the measures were calculated. The procedure for deriving the ratios was to divide the number of times the particular measure occurred in the texts by the total number of words contained in them.

To test the second hypothesis concerning the frequency and correctness of complex, optional constructions in L2 spoken and written modalities, relative clauses were selected for the analysis. They have the requisite complexity and have been found to be susceptible to avoidance by learners in ESL texts (Schacter 1974). For determining the frequency of relative clauses in the English of the subjects, in addition to the spoken and written retellings described above, written essays were used. For determining correctness in L2 discourse of the structure, two speaking tasks were administered to the same subjects (Aural Comprehension Test and Picture Test) as well as two written tests (Sentence Combining and Grammatical Judgments).

The Aural Comprehension Test consists of two sets of sentences, each set containing two of each of nine relative clause sentence types. Subjects were tested individually and assigned randomly to either set. The students were required to act out the sentences they heard, using toy animals following Sheldon's (1974) procedure. Four different animals were used: cow, horse, dog, and pig. The verbs used were bumped, hit, kissed, and pushed (taking direct objects) and shouted to and whispered to (taking indirect objects). The taped sentences were each presented twice with a subsequent fifteen-second pause. As the subject manipulated the toy animals, the investigator recorded the responses on a coding sheet.
The Picture Test is the instrument developed by Hyltenstam (1984) for his study of the acquisition of Swedish relative clause structures by second-language learners. The material consists of six sets of eight pictures each, one set for each NP position on Keenan and Comrie's (1977) Accessibility Hierarchy. In each set there are two pictures of men, two of women, two of boys, and two of girls, and for each, two predicates could be used. The eight pictures are numbered 1 to 8, and the subjects' task is to identify orally the person in each numbered picture in answer to the question, "Who is Number X?" The subjects were tested individually and asked by the experimenter to identify six pictures in each set. Five responses were elicited in immediate succession. When all the sets were finished, one further response was elicited for each function and the expectation that the circumstances for the last response would give the learners less time and opportunity to operate on explicit rule knowledge. The interviews, which lasted from about ten to twenty-five minutes, were audiotaped and later coded by the experimenter.

The Sentence Combining instrument is the one used by Gass (1979) in her study of relative clause acquisition by adult ESL learners. Subjects were presented with twelve pairs of sentences and were instructed to combine each pair to form one English sentence. Each pair of sentences represented one step on the Accessibility Hierarchy, with six items in preverb (Subject) position and six in postverb (Object) position. The instruction attempted to preclude the writing of sentences other than ones containing relative clauses.

The Grammaticality Judgment task (Gass 1979) requires judgments of twenty-nine sentences of which thirteen are grammatical and sixteen ungrammatical. The ungrammatical sentences represent four error types: (1) relative clause marker omission, (2) pronoun retention, (3) relative clause marker morphology, and (4) adjacency. After reading each of the sentences, the subjects simply indicated whether they considered it to be grammatical or ungrammatical.

All data were collected during one semester in the English Language Institute. The written retellings were collected in September; the picture elicitation, grammatical judgments, and sentence combining data during October and November. The oral retellings were collected in December, as were the essays that were part of a final examination test battery.

Findings

First-Person References

A speaker's or writer's involvement with listeners or readers can be seen for one thing, in the frequency of reference to self. Some examples of such reference in the retelling data are:

1. I am trying to improve my pronunciation.
2. That is true for me because I am a foreign student.

Figures 1 and 2 show group comparisons of the frequencies of speaker reference to self in the oral and the written retellings. In tallying these, only those pronouns were counted (I, we, me, us), that seemed clearly to refer to the speaker/writer. The analysis shows that the South Pacific students use significantly more first-person references in both retellings than do the Asian students. For both the oral and the written data, the group differences are significant at the .001 level.

Second-Person References

A group comparison of the occurrence of speaker reference in the oral retelling to the person being addressed is given in Figure 3. For these second-person references, only those occurrences of you that seemed clearly to refer to audience were counted. Some examples from the retellings are:

3. I hope you will hear my speech clearly.
4. Thank you for giving this change to talk and let you hear.
Figure 1. Ratios of first-person reference in the oral retelling by culture

Figure 2. Ratios of first-person reference in the written retelling by culture
In addition to you, the tally includes formulaic utterances of greeting at the beginning of the text or of parting at the conclusion that were addressed to the reader/listener. Most characteristic of the South Pacific students' retellings, these formulaic expressions included the following: hello, good morning, thank you very much, mahalo (the Hawaiian word for thank you used in Hawaiian English), have a nice day, see you when I see you, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year (the oral retellings were given in December). The texts from the Asian students, on the other hand, included no opening expressions of greeting at all. When formulaic expressions were used in conclusion, they were generally impersonal, as in these examples from the Japanese and Chinese tests: that's all, that's about it, that's it, the end, finish.

The group differences in frequency of second person reference in oral retellings seen in Figure 3 are statistically significant at the .001 level. The Polynesian groups tend to refer to the imagined listener of their retellings significantly more often than do the Asian. In the written retellings, on the other hand, the group differences in reference to audience are not significant because of the very limited occurrence of second person reference in all of the texts. There are no such references at all in the Samoan, Chinese, and Korean data, and the ratio of occurrence to number of words for the Tongans is .0012, and for the Japanese .0005.

Speaker's/Writer's Mental Processes

References to one's mental processes is a third means at the disposal of a speaker/writer for manifesting involvement with his or her audience. Some examples from the spoken texts are:

5. I guess shy people are afraid of a wrong pronunciation.
6. I think natural ability is very important.

Figures 4 and 5 show the frequencies of references to speaker/writer mental processes in the oral and written retellings for each of the five groups. Notice that the two South Pacific groups, the Samoans and the Tongans, refer more than do the
Ratio = \frac{\text{No. of References to Own Mental Processes}}{\text{Number of Words}}

Figure 4. Ratios of references to speaker's own mental processes in the oral retelling by culture

Ratio = \frac{\text{No. of References to Own Mental Processes}}{\text{Number of Words}}

Figure 5. Ratios of references to writer's own mental processes in the written retelling by culture
Asians to their mental processes in both of the retellings. The significance level of the group differences for the oral data is .001, for the written .01.

**Monitoring of Information Flow**

As Chafe (1982) has pointed out,

> involvement includes monitoring by the speaker of the communication channel which exists with the listener, and attempts to make sure that the channel is functioning well. The speaker may do things to reassure him- or herself that the listener is assimilating what he or she is saying, or to prod the listener into noticing and acknowledging the flow of information (p. 47).

In the present analysis, three colloquial expressions that seem to perform one or another of these functions were included: *well, I mean*, and *you know*. These were counted in the two retellings and the ratios calculated as for the other indices of personal involvement. No significant group differences were found, however. As Chafe (1982) has also reported for English native speakers, these expressions were totally absent in the writing of the subjects in the present study. In the oral retelling, the ratios of their occurrence to the total number of words were: Samoans .0027, Tongans .0014, Japanese .0026, Chinese .0011, and Korean .0014.

**Spoken and Written Modality Preferences: Frequency and Correctness of RCs**

The standardised scores in Figure 6 show, on the left side, relative clause performance on tasks in the spoken modality (Aural Comprehension, Picture Test, and Oral Retelling); on the right side, performance on tasks in the written modality (Written Retelling, Essay, Sentence Combining, and Grammatical Judgments). (For more detailed analyses and discussion of these relative-clause data see Hansen-Strain and Strain 1990). Notice the evidence here with regard to our second hypothesis. Although the five groups of second-language learners had been determined to be at the same English
proficiency level (as measured by the MTELP), their performance on the oral tasks indicates that, in this modality, the groups from oral cultural traditions (Samoan and Tongan) tend to understand relative clauses better (Aural Comprehension), form sentences containing relative clauses more accurately (Picture Test), and use relative clauses more frequently (Oral Retelling) than do the Asian students. These group differences are statistically significant at the .00001 level for the Aural Comprehension, (Samoans and Tongans difference from the Chinese at this level) and the .05 level for the Picture Test (Samoans differ from Asian groups at this level), and the Oral Retelling (Samoans differ from the Koreans) as determined by one-way ANOVAs by culture performed for each test, followed by post hoc Sheffes. For the four written instruments, on the other hand, the group differences in performance are not statistically significant.

Discussion

These findings contribute to our understanding of task variability in second-language performance. Ample evidence is available to show that second-language learners do perform variably on different tasks (Beebe 1980; Ellis 1987; Tarone 1988). That is, the learner's second language contains a number of competing rules at any given stage of development, with one rule guiding performance on one occasion and another rule on a different occasion. The present study suggests that the patterning of this task variability may differ significantly between groups of learners from different first-language backgrounds. Further, the particular configuration of the variability may be influenced by discourse patterns of the native language and culture.

Consequences of these group tendencies in L2 variability are evident in language test performance as well as in the patterns of discourse used in learning a second language. In the test performance of the subjects in the present study, instances were reported of apparent group bias associated with particular tests. The Polynesian students, for example, give the impression of greater command of relative clauses when tested in the spoken modality than in the written. Furthermore, these learners from traditional oral Pacific Island societies have more difficulty with tasks requiring the production of content focused essay-text prose than do the Asians from more literate cultural traditions. When formal styles of English are elicited, the Polynesians tend to bring high levels of interpersonal involvement into the language they produce, spoken or written.

The discourse of language-learning situations is also affected by cultural background. Ellis (1988), in the explication of his Discourse Hypothesis for second-language development, in a recent lecture made the point that "learners learn to learn in the kind of discourse they experience." This observation on the effects of second-language discourse experienced by learners contributes importantly to an understanding of group differences in classroom participation, and in students' assessments of the most effective L2 input for learning. The findings of the present study suggest, in addition, that the kinds of first-language discourse L2 learners have experienced also may influence their discourse strengths and preferences for second-language learning.

A model for representing the discourse variability in the mother tongues and target languages of groups of second-language learners is given in Figure 7. Previous researchers have postulated a number of relevant dimensions of discourse to account for such variability: attention to form (Tarone 1983, based on Labov 1980); modelled versus communicative (Ellis 1984, for classroom data); planned versus unplanned (Ellis 1984, based on Ochs 1979). The model proposed here couples the planned versus unplanned continuum of Ellis (on the horizontal axis) with the interpersonal involvement versus message content continuum from the orality-literacy literature (on the vertical axis). The modality of discourse is indicated by a "0" for speaking and a "v" for writing.

This model can be used to represent discourse types used within a particular speech community or target language group as is done in Figure 8. Here we see represented the Degree of Planning and the Focus characteristic of several styles of English. The
Figure 7. Discourse variability in English

Figure 8. Group discourse variability on the spoken and written retellings
framework provided here can bring into focus the types of discourse to be learned in a language. Furthermore, it can facilitate comparison of discourse types used in mother-tongue and second-language groups.

Figure 8 exemplifies a further application of the model, to represent the interlanguage discourse of individuals or groups of language learners. We see here represented the Focus on Interpersonal Involvement versus Content found in the oral and written retelling elicited in the present study. Notice that the placement of the performance of the five groups of ESL students on this oral/literate continuum is on a quantitative scale. For each group the placement on the continuum is determined by the mean of their group ratios reported earlier for the four measures of interpersonal involvement used in the study.

The relationship between modality of discourse and the oral/literate continuum represented on the model appears to be a complex one. Strategies that facilitate interpersonal involvement are used in both speaking and writing in various settings and discourse types as dictated by the norms of a particular culture. The fragmentation and involvement associated with speech can be found in such written communication as personal letters, for example. Strategies associated with literate tradition, on the other hand, have been conventionalized in Western cultures for oral presentations in public settings. Public presentations by skilled speakers in many oral cultures as well are analogous to the integration and detachment of formal writing.

The unmarked discourse forms appear to be speaking, unplanned discourse, and focus on interpersonal involvement. Generally speaking, the tendency in unplanned discourse in English (and presumably in other languages) is toward an emphasis on the interpersonal relationship between communicator and audience; in planned discourse an emphasis on the use of words to convey information. Just as unplanned discourse can be considered basic, so can the emphasis on interpersonal involvement and the speaking modality be thought of as primary. They are so from a chronological point of view (both for the individual and for the community) as well as from a functional perspective. Children first learn to participate in unplanned spoken interactions containing maximum interpersonal involvement. Functionally, the ability to take part in unplanned spoken discourse with high personal involvement is more important for most language learners than is the ability to use planned written discourse characterized by detachment from audience. Historically, the principles underlying planned written discourse have appeared in English only since about the early sixteenth century, when an autonomous English prose style constructed upon classical models was developed (Baugh and Cable 1978).

Through an examination of interpersonal involvement in the English discourse of Samoans and Tongans in Hawaii, the present study highlights a dimension of language use that appears to be particularly challenging for natives of oral cultures in the acquisition of essay text literacy in English. The model of discourse proposed here offers a theoretical framework for the further investigation of group differences in the acquisition and use of such formal detached styles.

* * *

The research reported in this paper was supported by a grant from the Institute for Polynesian Studies, to whom the author is grateful. In addition thanks are due to Clyde Robinson for assistance with the statistical analyses; to Song Xing-Jun for help with the coding and data entry; to teachers in the English Language Institute at Brigham Young University in Hawaii for their cooperation during data collection—Norm Evans, Mark James, Uinise Langi, and Earl Wyman; and to Mike Long for first suggesting to the writer a connection between group differences in orality-literacy and in second-language acquisition.
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Ethnic Images and Social Distance
Among Pacific Islanders in Hawaii
Dorri Nautu and Paul Spickard

Some people say Tongans are “hardworking and friendly,”2 others that they are “morose, dour, ... [and] quick tempered.” The problem with Samoans, according to some, is that they are “hot tempered, ferocious, and arrogant, difficult to get along with.” Some say they are “intimidating” or “irresponsible.” On the other hand, some see no problems with Samoans at all, and say they are “family oriented, friendly, ... [and] generous.”

People who live and work in Laie, Hauula, and Kahuku, three villages on the Windward coast of the island of Oahu, thirty-five miles from Honolulu, hear phrases like these spoken almost daily. Their communities are cauldrons of mixed Pacific Islander ethnicity. These three towns are dominated demographically and culturally by Hawaiians, Samoans, Tongans, Fijians, Maoris, and other Pacific peoples, along with a smaller number of people from the United States mainland and from Asia.

The present study constitutes an attempt to understand some things about that mix of Pacific peoples. Specifically, the interest of the moment is in the images that various Pacific Islanders in Hawaii have of one another, and of the affinity for or distance from each other they feel. A team of researchers went house to house through the three towns, talking with people, passing out questionnaires, collecting them, and then tabulating them. The results are presented here.

Social Distance. The questionnaire employs a modified form of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale to test respondents’ perceptions of social distance between themselves and other ethnic groups. The Bogardus Scale is a venerable tool of sociologists and social psychologists, developed by Emory S. Bogardus of the University of Southern California over four decades, for measuring and comparing attitudes toward various minorities in the United States.3 The Bogardus Scale traditionally asks six questions (changed to seven for this survey), to determine the degree of intimacy or distance the respondents feel between themselves and the group about whom they are being questioned. The questions used in this survey are:

1. Would you marry a ______?
2. Would you have a ______ for a close friend?
3. Would you have several ______ families live in your neighborhood?
4. Would you work beside a ______ in an office or classroom?
5. Would you have a ______ casual acquaintance?
6. Would you allow a ______ to be a citizen of your country?
7. Would you allow a ______ to visit your country?

If a person answers yes to all seven questions, she receives a score of one. If that person says, no, she would not marry someone from that group, but yes, she would admit that person to all the other types of relationship, then her score is two. If she would not have a person from that group for a mate or a close friend, but would accept such a person as a neighbor, co-worker, and the rest, then the score is three. And so on down the list.

Ethnic Groups. The questionnaire asked the respondents to rate and describe twelve ethnic groups that are present in this part of Hawaii in at least small numbers. They are not the only groups here, but they include all the major groups and a sample of the rest. The groups about which respondents were asked are: Hawaiians, Koreans, Tongans, Caucasians, Fijians, Japanese, Samoans, Filipinos, Maoris, Blacks, Tahitians, and Chinese.

Images. The second part of the questionnaire tried to understand what lay behind the ethnic social distances expressed in
It did this by employing an adjectival test to elicit images that the respondents had of each of the groups included in the questionnaire. That is, for each ethnic group, the respondents were asked, “Can you give me a few descriptive words that generally are true of ______?"

It is important that the reader understand the investigators’ purpose in seeking out these images. Such a technique tends to call up stereotypes about the groups in question, not rational analyses of their character. The investigators did not ask people to call up these images because they are true. Stereotypes come from odd places and are frequently vicious. They testify more to power relationships between groups than to actual character qualities that members of a group may share. But nearly all people hold stereotypes about other groups of people, be they Tahitians or politicians or hockey players. Positive or negative, those stereotypes are the subtexts that undergird and shape our encounters, the lenses through which we see the people we meet, at least initially. It is important to know clearly what stereotypes people of various ethnic groups have of each other.

Note, too, that this study does not focus on White Americans’ views of Pacific Islanders, nor vice versa. It focuses primarily on the three largest groups of Pacific Islander Americans—Hawaiians, Samoans, and Tongans—and their images of other groups, in particular their perceptions of each other. Pacific Islander Americans are a diverse collections of peoples who deserve to be studied in their own right, not simply as foils for White Americans. From time to time in what follows the paper will comment on Pacific Islanders’ views of non-Islanders, and on non-Islanders’ views of Hawaiians, Samoans, Tongans, or other Pacific Islanders. But the main focus here is on these three Island groups and their interaction.

The Sample. The survey totalled 495 responses. One hundred thirty-six of the respondents identified themselves as Haoles (that is, Whites), 104 as Samoans, 124 as Hawaiians, forty-four as Tongans, forty-one as Asians of various sorts, and twelve as other kinds of Polynesians. One hundred four of those who identified themselves as one sort of Pacific Islander or another also listed themselves as having a second or third identity on the basis of ancestry and inclination. At certain points in the analysis, that group is treated separately as Mixed Polynesians. 4

Patterns in Social Distance Perceptions

Nearly all the people in this survey, of whatever ethnic group, expressed more positive attitudes toward all other groups than did people who have taken part in other social distance surveys in other places and times. The social distance numbers are distinctly lower (that is, they show less social distance between groups) in this study than in previous studies by other investigators—about 2.1 on the average, as opposed to about 3.0 in the other surveys. 5 Except for Haoles (Whites) and some Samoans, it was very unusual for anyone in this survey to say anything really negative or stereotypical about any other group. Haoles were frequently more forthcoming with negative and stereotypical comments than the other people surveyed here. The reasons for these characteristics of the present study are a bit obscure, although it may be that Pacific Islander Americans are not given over to expressing negative prejudices as freely as are people from other groups. It may also be that the predominant ethos of the Hawaiian Islands, which stresses public expressions of interethnic harmony, may constrain people to say nice things. Finally, the lack of negative responses in this survey may also be related to the high percentage of Mormons among both researchers and respondents. It may be that members of this interracial religious community actually have fewer prejudices than do other sorts of people, or it may be that they are just less willing to express the prejudices they have.

Table 1 shows the social distance that the main groups surveyed expressed, on the average, toward all groups. Some groups—Whites and people of Mixed Polynesian descent—ranked almost every group highly. Other groups—Asians—ranked almost
everyone fairly low. This pattern may testify to a generally open and accepting attitude on the part of Whites, or a consciousness of commonality with many peoples on the part of Mixed Polynesians, or a general sense of being cut off on the part of the Asian groups in these communities.

On the other hand, the degree of social closeness may simply relate to the degree of a person’s or a group’s acculturation to America. Table 2 gives the birthplaces of the majority of our respondents, by their ethnic self-identification. Table 3 gives their citizenship. What leaps out immediately from these tables is that those groups who consistently rate other groups the closest—Whites, Mixed Polynesians, and Hawaiians—are most thoroughly American. Nearly all the Whites and all the Hawaiians are American-born, and 88 percent are U.S. citizens. Samoans in the sample, who rank in the middle on their overall social distance rating of others, are 49 percent American-born and 75 percent U.S. citizens. The Tongans surveyed, by contrast, expressed greater average social distance from all the other groups. Just 26 percent of the Tongan are American-born, and only 35 percent are U.S. citizens. A reasonable interpretation of these data might be that those groups who have interacted the longest and most thoroughly with outsiders feel the least social distance in general. Tongans, like Asians, are toward the other end of the spectrum in the sample—not high acculturated, and rather high on social distance from other groups.6
These conclusions are reflected in the adjectives Tongan respondents used to describe various sorts of non-Tongans. Tongans described Maoris as “good” and “nice looking and kind,” but also said, “I do not like their accent.” Tongans described Hawaiians, the other high-ranking group, as “generous,” “kind-hearted,” “happy and very creative, also friendly.” All this suggests warmth and fellow-feeling for these two groups of Pacific Islanders.

The middle-level groups received slightly less enthusiastic Tongan endorsements. Of Fijians, one Tongan commented, “They do not care how they smell, but they are good people.” Another said they were “funny”; another, “friendly and hard working”; another, “warrior and healthy.” But another said of Fijians that they are “very loyal people, but always look down [on] my people.” One Tongan liked Samoans a lot. She wrote: “They’re happy and friendly people, and I prefer them in many ways [to] my own people.” Another Tongan, however, said that Samoans “are nice people only when they want to [be].” Others said Samoans are “wild, dangerous,” and “cause too much trouble.”

It was when they got down to Caucasians that Tongan respondents’ comments began to slip into solidly negative territory. One Tongan called Haoles “very tight people.” Another said that Whites “don’t know when to mind their own business.” A third

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**Table 4**  
Ethnic Social Distance:  
How Tongans Rank These Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongan</td>
<td>1.273</td>
<td>0.872</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nearby</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>1.805</td>
<td>1.167</td>
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<td>Maori</td>
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<td>1.501</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fijian</td>
<td>2.100</td>
<td>1.411</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>2.154</td>
<td>1.725</td>
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<td>Tahitian</td>
<td>2.256</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>1.868</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2.410</td>
<td>1.965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>2.725</td>
<td>1.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
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<td>2.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3.184</td>
<td>2.264</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average social distance = 2.294  
$n = 44$

Tongans’ perceptions of their neighbors

Table 4 shows the ethnic distance that the Tongans surveyed felt toward various groups. The survey suggests that Tongans living in these communities feel a strong kinship for Maoris and Hawaiians, and something approaching disaffection for Asians. Other groups—Fijians, Samoans, Blacks, Tahitians, and Whites—fall somewhere in between.
Said that Whites "think they know better than others." A fourth called Whites "selfish and moneyhead." The Tongan respondents ranked the Japanese distant, but admired them for being "clean and smart," "rich," "innovative, hard-working, dependable," although several regarded the Japanese as "sneaky." To one person, Koreans were just "all right, but I don't really get along with Orientals." To others, however, Koreans were "respectful," "hard-working," "humble," and "one of the most polite people I know." The predominant image of Chinese was common not only to several Tongan commentors, but to respondents of other ethnicities as well. That image described Chinese as "hardworking [and] intelligent," but also "tight" and "sneaky [and] smart," as good at business, but "not giving" and "not appreciative." This last, the accusation of failing at generosity, is perhaps the unkindest cut a Tongan can administer to another human being. Altogether, this set of images and social distance choices suggests that Tongans in Hawaii feel considerable affinity for certain other Pacific Islander groups such as Maoris and Hawaiians; that they feel somewhat removed from other Pacific Islanders such as Samoans and Fijians; and that they feel quite distant from Whites and Asians.

Samoans' Perceptions of Their Neighbors

Table 5 shows the ethnic distance that the Samoans surveyed felt toward various groups. Hawaiians, Tahitians, and Tongans are the groups to which Samoans felt the closest. The Samoan respondents described Tahitians as "very easy people to get along with," "nice, friendly," and "good people." While there is not much clarity of definition in such an amorphously positive evaluation, it is worth noting that Samoans did not describe Tahitians with any of the sexual imagery that Whites used.

Samoans seemed to like and admire Tongans. A couple labeled them "aggressive," but far more used words like "humble," "hard working," "proud," "have a lot of love for others," and "culturally strong" that suggest admiration and fellow-feeling. That fellow-feeling went so far that some said Tongans "are just like Samoans." Only a few repeated a joke among local Samoans that Tongans "eat dogs and horses.

Samoans had some of the same things to say about Hawaiians. To one, they are "no different from Samoans." Other responses stressed the "spirit of aloha," and the recent Hawaiian cultural renaissance, saying Hawaiians are "trying to find their indentity" and are "proud of their ancestry." Several Samoans respondents described Hawaiians as "caring [and] kind-hearted." But others said they have "no ambition" and "think... highly of themselves."
This accusation of selfishness is common in Samoans’ estimations of the groups who appear lower down on their social distance scale. Maoris were characterized as “too high maka maka—they act like Whites.” Samoans admired Maoris for being “strong in their culture” and “family oriented,” but resented them too, calling them “nosey, stuck up” and “judgemental of others.” Whites were “intelligent [but] conceited, arrogant,” “aggressive, snobbish.” They are “forever trying to change things,” “don’t know when to mind their own business,” and “tend to discriminate.” Perhaps the worst accusation, given the emphasis on family ties in Pacific Island cultures, was the statement that among Whites the “importance of family is not always stressed.” It was an unusual Samoan respondent who reminded herself that Whites “are human beings, too.”

Despite their low placement on the social distance scale, Fijians held the respect of Samoans in ways that Whites did not. They were represented to be “very friendly,” “quiet people,” who “get along with other people [and are] cool and mellow.” One went so far as to say that “if they need help they can be citizens of Western Samoa.” Like Tongans, Samoans had little specific to say about African Americans. They repeatedly admired what they took to be superior Black athletic prowess, and also depicted Blacks as “straightforward, down to earth,” and “oppressed.”

Chinese were described many times as “smart,” “hard workers,” and “good business people.” They were supposed to be “tight with money . . . disciplined.” Japanese were, in stereotype, all the things that Chinese were, plus “rich”—the possessors of “too much money.” Samoans had little to say about Filipinos except that they were “short” and “hard-workers.” Samoans depicted Koreans in the same terms they used to describe Chinese and Japanese, except that several respondents added that Koreans “make great barbecue”—a common food in Hawaii.

This pattern of adjectives suggests that Samoans see most other Pacific Island peoples as similar to themselves and nice to have around. They see Asians as quite different from themselves, as much more able and energetic in academic life and business. But they show little resentment toward Asians. Their resentment is re-

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
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<td>Tahitian</td>
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<td>0.970</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nearby</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1.521</td>
<td>1.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>1.667</td>
<td>1.443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>1.982</td>
<td>1.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2.009</td>
<td>1.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>2.009</td>
<td>1.592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongan</td>
<td>2.017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fijian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>2.112</td>
<td>1.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>2.113</td>
<td>1.599</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average social distance = 1.840
n = 124

served primarily for Whites and, secondarily, for that group of Polynesians—Maoris—which the Samoans perceive as being the most like Whites.

Hawaiians’ Perception of Their Neighbors

The social distance choices and patterns of images expressed by the Hawaiian respondents were similar at several points to those of Tongans and Samoans. Table 6 shows the ethnic distance that the Hawaiians surveyed felt toward various groups.

Hawaiians repeatedly stressed beauty when discussing Tahitians, although they did not combine that estimation with the sexual associations that so fascinated Whites. Hawaiians also de-
Unlike other groups of respondents, several Hawaiians drew a distinction between Japanese from Japan and Japanese from America or from Hawaii. Both were likely to be characterized as “polite and honest,” “hard working,” and “smart.” But Japanese from Japan were likely to be called “rich and greedy,” “workaholics,” and “very pushy,” while Japanese Americans were more frequently thought of as “friendly” and “nice.” This doubtless reflects the fact that nearly all the Hawaiians surveyed grew up in Hawaii surrounded by Japanese Americans of the third and fourth generations, and could draw a distinction between Japanese Americans and Japanese from Japan. By contrast, many Samoans and most Tongans came to Hawaii as adults and knew Japanese only as foreign business people and tourists.

Unlike the Samoans, the Hawaiian respondents admired Maoris, for the most part. They said Maoris “have a lot of pride,” a “strong sense of pride in their heritage.” This may be related to the consciousness of many in Hawaii that Maoris in New Zealand have in recent years achieved a degree of political self-determination and cultural rejuvenation which Hawaiians would like to replicate. Maoris also were presented as “very articulate, sharp with the tongue,” “verbal, blunt.” The Hawaiian respondents listed Fijians rather far away on the social distance scale, but they did not think ill of them. They described Fijians as “family-oriented” and “energetic.” The only negative adjective they used to describe Fijians was “primitive.”

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As with the other Pacific Islander respondents, Hawaiians tended to draw similar portraits of Koreans and Chinese as they did of Japanese: “quiet, industrious, business oriented,” “smart,” “studious,” and “they know how to make money.” Hawaiians’ descriptions of Blacks added skill at music and dancing to other Polynesians’ admiration of athletic ability, and a few echoed the concern for Blacks’ oppression.

Several Hawaiians referred to each of the other groups as “skinny” and “short.” Each, that is, except Tongans and Samoans. These they described as “big and strong.” But in other respects, Hawaiians drew a contrast between the two other major Pacific Islander groups. Several Hawaiians said Tongans were “more humble and smarter than Samoans.” Others described Tongans as “friendly and [the ultimate Polynesian compliment] willing to give anything.” A few Hawaiians did not like Tongans much, calling them “not trustworthy,” and “ignorant,” but these were the minority.

Contrast this relatively benign view of Tongans (and the relatively small social distance the Hawaiians expressed toward Tongans) with the somewhat greater social distance and much more negative images Hawaiians expressed toward Samoans. To the Hawaiian respondents, Samoans were “loud,” “bossy,” “headstrong, temperamental,” “aggressive, intimidating.” A few characterized Samoans as “generous” and “fun but lazy.” One made a specific reference to community politics when she said that Samoans “think they own Laie, and can run all the Hawaiians out of this once beautiful community.” Another called Samoans “troublemakers, proud, messy, dirty.”

The Hawaiians surveyed, then, admired and felt kinship with Tahitians, Maoris, and Tongans. They respected but felt rather distant from the Asian groups. They expressed formal social closeness with Whites, compared to rather extreme social distance from Samoans. But they spoke vehemently against both these latter groups.

What Does It All Mean?

This study offers a rough measure of social distance, plus a catalogue of images. It suggests patterns of interrelationships between Tongans, Samoans, Hawaiians, and other groups. It does not, how-
ever, offer definitive explanations for how these attitudes came to be.

Tongans who live in Hawaii seem to view Maoris and Hawaiians as close kin, or at least as pleasant and compatible people. Other Pacific Islanders—Fijians, Samoans, Tahitians—they put at a somewhat more distant remove. They seem to perceive a rather significant barrier between themselves and Whites and Asians. About those groups, they do not have much that is good to say.

Samoans feel close to Tongans and other Pacific Islanders, with the exception of Maoris. They feel more distant from Asians, although they express little resentment toward Asians. Their resentments toward Whites, by contrast, are quite pronounced.

Hawaiians resent Whites too, but they resent Samoans fully as much, and they feel great social distance from Samoans. They express a similar pattern of admiring social distance from Asians to that described by Samoans. Hawaiians rank the other Pacific Islander groups except Fijians as more or less close and friendly.

An anomaly that appears in these data is the difference between the social distance expressed by each of these Pacific Islander groups toward Whites and the specific images of Caucasians they described. All three ranked Whites near the middle or higher on the social distance scale, yet all reserved their sharpest verbal barbs for Caucasians. It may be that the preponderant power of Whites, even in multiethnic Hawaii, leads Pacific Islanders to express strong resentments against what they see as domineering White attitudes. At the same time, when asked if one would marry a White person or have a White friend that same sense of White power may act as an attractant. One may say, in effect, “I don’t much like the Haoles as a group, but if I could find one I liked, I might marry one.”

Finally, a few words must be said about the Samoan perception of Tongans and Hawaiians as something like close kin. The Hawaiians and Tongans in the sample did not have as recipro-

What may be the sources of these apparent disparities in mutual perceptions cannot be determined from the present survey, although hypotheses are easy to come by. For example, there is some suggestion in the data that local politics may have exacerbated Hawaiian resentment of Samoans. At least some Hawaiians in these Windward Oahu towns expressed a sense that their land and community had been invaded by more numerous and aggressive Samoans. If that be an accurate interpretation of Hawaiians’ negative feelings toward Samoans, it is still unclear why the situation has not created a reciprocal Samoan feeling against Hawaiians. An inquiry into the sources of friction and of differences of perception between these Pacific Islander groups in Hawaii must await a future study.

Notes

1. The research for this article was undertaken with the assistance of Blossom Fonoimoana, Inoke Funaki, Karina Kahananui Green, Finau Hafoka, David Hall, Debbie Hippolite Wright, and Ina Nautu. The authors are also indebted to Ruth Latukefu, Keith Roberts, Franklin Ng, and Max Stanton for comments on an earlier version of the article.

2. All quotations are from the questionnaires described below.

Asian groups felt such considerable social distance. The Asian birthplace and citizenship data fell between the Samoans and Mixed Polynesians.

One colleague has suggested that the Samoan-Tongan relationship may be a bit like the United States-Canada relationship. The larger, more powerful group may see the smaller (and, in the Tongan case, more recent to arrive on the scene) group as essentially "just like us." At the same time, the smaller group may draw rather more sharply their own distinction between themselves and their larger neighbor. Outsiders, in either the Canadian/American or the Tongan/Samoan case, may not be able to tell the groups apart and may wonder what all the fuss is about. While this analogy to North America has some attraction to it for explaining the mutual difference of perceptions between Tongans and Samoans, it does nothing at all to help us understand a similar—even sharper—difference of perceptions between Hawaiians and Samoans.

4One hundred ten said they were men, 172 women. Two hundred eleven held U.S. citizenship. Fifteen were Tongan citizens, eight New Zealanders, seventeen Samoans, and the rest were citizens of various other nations or did not indicate their citizenship. One hundred six were born in Hawaii, another ninety-four on the U.S. mainland, forty-nine in the Pacific Islands, and the rest at various other points on the globe. Seventy-seven had not graduated from high school, twenty-eight graduated from high school and then did not go on to further schooling, one hundred attended some college, and seventy graduated from a college or university.

5See footnote 3.

It should be noted that, while this may be a reasonable interpretation of the Tongan situation, it does not explain why the
Laʻie: Land and People in Transition
William Kauaiwiulaokalani Wallace III

My name is Kauaiwiulaokalani. It was given to me by my paternal grandmother, Wahinehelelaokai'ona, and it means the “red bones of the Heavens.” My 'aina hanau, or birth land, is the island of Moloka‘i and I am of Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan, Tahitian, English, Scottish, Irish, German, and Chinese koko, or blood. I grew up working on our family homestead at Hoʻolehua taking my turn caring for our puaʻa (pigs), pipi (cows), moa (chickens), mai’a (banana), kalo (taro), uala (sweet potatoes), and other staples. As a teenager, I worked in the pineapple fields, for both Del Monte and Libby McNeil and Libby’s at Kualapu‘u and Maunaloa along side of my Japanese, Filipino, Portuguese, Puerto Rican, and Hawaiian friends. Growing up on Moloka‘i exposed me at an early age to the great diversity of my little island and I now recall with great fondness, the special sharing and interaction of my youth and the fact that my life thus far has been, as we say in Hawai‘i, “a mixed plate” experience.

This article is an extension of that “mixed plate” experience. It focuses on a small village on the island of O‘ahu called Laʻie. In this article I examine Laʻie as a “site,” a place, an ‘aina or land deeply connected with Hawaiian values which have sustained life in its many forms from before European contact up to the present. Laʻie is of great interest to me, as it is the ‘aina hanau or birth land of my mother and of my four children and is the repository of the iwi or bones of many of my kupuna or ancestors. Someday, it will also be where my iwi will be laid to rest in the bosom of mother earth.

The moʻolelo (history) of the land where people make their home is an important ingredient in shaping the present and future worth of communities. Surely changes will come, as they did in Laʻie; however, changes can be better understood and implemented when placed in proper historical context. How many people have taken the time to consider the significance, or to some, perhaps, the insignificance, of the name of the city or town in which they live? How many have experienced changes within their own communities based on the fact that their town or city carries a certain name? Whether we talk about towns, cities, schools, governments, or private buildings, streets, roads, or airports, the name associated with each of these sites consciously or unconsciously affects each of us.

Therefore, it becomes significant for us to engage in activities which allow us to expand our own personal knowledge of the place or site where we live or which we call home. We can do this best by sharing our man'o or thoughts with each other often and by studying more about where we live and the importance of that place name and its history.

Let me share some of what I have found about Laʻie, the place where I live. Laʻie is a small, quaint village located on the Windward side of the island of O‘ahu in Hawai‘i. It has been home for myself, for my family, and for my ancestors since 1865, with only brief interruptions. They left to go to Utah in 1889, and returned in 1917, when my grandfather John Edwin Broad, his wife Maggie Kenison Broad, and their young children arrived from Salt Lake City. Though both my grandfather and grandmother were Polynesians (Grandfather was Hawaiian-Irish and Grandma was Samoan-English), they had lived in Utah from childhood. They returned to Hawai‘i and went to live in Laʻie in 1917 to help build the Hawai‘i Temple for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter, the Church) as volunteer laborers.1 By the time my grandparents returned to Laʻie in 1917, the Church had already been in Laʻie for fifty-two years2 and Laʻie was quite a busy little community. My grandparents were strong in their devotion to their Church and their Church became a part of their daily life.
This article centers around a number of questions. What was life like in Laʻie before the Church arrived? What kind of people lived there before 1865? Were there any environmental, ecological, or cultural changes in Laʻie which came about prior to 1865? If so, what were some of these changes? And then, how did each change that took place after the coming of the Mormon Church affect the land and the lives of the people of Laʻie?

Laʻie Before 1865

The name Laʻie is said to derive its origin from two Hawaiian words, the first being lau, meaning “leaf” and the second being ie, referring to the ie vine of the red-spiked climbing pandanus tree which wreaths forest trees of the uplands or mauka regions of the Koolau mountain range which stands behind the community of Laʻie. In Hawaiian mythology, this red-spiked climbing pandanus is sacred to Kane, god of the earth, god of life, and god of the forests as well as to Laka, the patron goddess of the hula.3

The name Laʻie becomes more environmentally significant through the Hawaiian oral history entitled Laie-i-ka-wai. In this history, the term i-ka-wai, which means “in the water” also belongs to the food-producing tree called ka-lala-i-ka-wai. The ka-lala-i-ka-wai tree was planted in a place called Pali-ula’s garden, which is closely associated with the spiritual home, after her birth and relocation, of Laie-i-ka-wai. According to Hawaiian oral traditions, the planting of the Ka-lala-i-ka-wai tree in the garden of Pali-ula is symbolic of the reproductive energy of male and female, which union in turn fills the land with offspring.4 From its close association with nature through its name, and through its oral traditions and history, the community of Laʻie takes upon itself a keen identification and a responsibility in perpetuating life and in preserving all life forms.

Before the coming of British explorer Captain James Cook Hawaiians lived by a strict code of environmental ethics, which an increasing number of Hawaiians are now coming to embrace once again. This code is concerned with more than just the human world, but also a spiritual world through which humans living in a community interrelate peacefully with each other.5 Therefore, when a Hawaiian speaks of environmental ethics, he or she speaks of a community shared by other sentient “individuals of the environment: the soil, water, plants, and animals.”6 It was understood by the Hawaiian people that when they did their part to assist nature in becoming fertile and productive, it became the “ethical obligation of gods and nature to similarly care for man.”7

Sometimes, the land itself provided sanctuary for the Hawaiian people. Laʻie was such a place. The earliest information about Laʻie states that it was a small, sparsely-populated village with a major distinction: “it was a City of Refuge.” Within this city of refuge there were located at least two heiau or traditional Hawaiian temples, of which very little remains today.

Pu’uhonua is the Hawaiian word for a sacred sanctuary or refuge, “holy ground...offered...to fugitives.” Pu’uhonua, or cities of refuge, have been described as enclosures which were specially contracted and consecrated as holy ground for sanctuary for fugitives. Fugitives of all kinds—“men, women and children in war time, manslayers, thieves, and offenders against tapu [kapu] were allowed to enter the sacred enclosure, and once in, were safe.” While in the pu’uhonua, it was unlawful for the fugitive’s pursuers to harm or injure him or her. During time of war, spears with white flags attached were set up at each end of the City of refuge and warriors pursuing fugitives, if they attempted to pass these limits, were killed by the priests living within. Fugitives seeking sanctuary in a city of refuge were not forced to live within the confines of the walls permanently. Instead, they were given two choices. In some cases, after a certain length of time (ranging from a couple of weeks to several years), fugitives could enter the service of the priests and assist in the daily affairs of the pu’uhonua’a. A second was that after a certain length of time the fugitives would be free to leave and re-enter the world unmolested.8

These traditional cities of refuge were abolished in 1819, when Liholiho-Kamehameha II, under the influence of the Kuhuna...
Nui, Queen Ka'a Humanu, abolished the traditional Hawaiian kapu system or old system of Hawaiian laws which provided for such sanctuaries. There is no further evidence that La'ie was ever used again as a city of refuge until some forty to fifty years after the abolition of the kapu system by Liholiho-Kamehameha II, when La'ie was purchased by the Church. Under an entirely different culture, Laie once more became a place of refuge, a sanctuary for people in desperate need.\(^9\)

In 1846–1848, the traditional Hawaiian feudal ownership of land by the King, the ali'i nui, and his leading chiefs or konohiki was changed through the mahele or major land division. Originally the idea was to divide the land three ways: “one-third each for the King, the Chiefs, and the commoners.”\(^10\) The result of the mahele was not in compliance with the original intent of Kamehameha III. The result was that the chiefs received about one and a half million acres, the king kept about one million acres which were called crown lands, and about one million acres were set aside as government lands. The interesting thing about the mahele was that the land itself was cut up into parcels, much like the traditional Hawaiian land divisions, centering around the ahupua'a which followed a fairly uniform pattern. Each parcel was roughly shaped like a piece of pie with the tip in the mountains, the middle section in the foothills and coastal plain, and the broad base along the ocean front and the sea. The size and shape of the ahupua'a varied. However, the purpose of these remained the same. The pie-shaped land division allowed the inhabitants of the area to hunt wild game and to collect timber from the mountains, to farm in the midlands and down to the beach, and to fish in the ocean, as well as to use the sea for recreation, travel, and exploration.\(^11\)

The village of La'ie is located in the ahupua'a of La'ie. As such, La'ie followed the general pattern of life in the ahupua'a, but only the valleys in the foothills had ample water. There were ten streams that flowed through the ahupua'a of La'ie before 1865 (see 1865 map). Their names were: Kahoolenapea, Kaluakaula, Kahawaihui, Kahihihi, Kawaiipapa, Kawauwai, Wailele, Koloa, Akakii, and Kokololoio. There were more streams flowing through
the ahupua'a of La'ie than through any of the other surrounding ahupua'a. Surrounding ahupua'a include Kaipapau and Hauula to the southeast and Malaekahana, Keana, and Kahuku to the northwest.12

Kahooleinaapea is the first stream reached in La'ie as you leave the ahupua'a of Malaekahana. From about 1927 to the mid 1930s, the taro terraces which were located close to the Kahooleinaapea stream were still in use. There were also taro terraces along the lower areas of the Kahawainui stream in a place called Wailei. These terraces were supplied with water from a large spring located in the area. Further up the Kahawainui stream, toward the mountains, were many terraces used for taro and other food cultivation. About 2.5 miles up Wailele stream there is more evidence of old taro terraces. Along the Koloa stream about 2 miles inland along its twisting course, there are abandoned groups of terraces at intervals, many now hidden by overgrowth. Just below the old water gates along the Koloa stream, on the south side of the stream, there is a group of about fifteen small terraces, all with stone facings, and nearer to the gates, on the north side of the stream, a smaller group of five or six terraces. The Koloa stream is filled with extensive evidence of cultivation and habitation. In all, over thirty-five terraces (large and small) used for taro and other crops, over fifteen old huge mango trees and eight or more breadfruit trees were found along the Koloa stream in the late 1920s and early 1930s. All these findings indicate that this area, La'ie, may have had a dense population at one time, that there were many agricultural terraces, house platforms, fruit trees, and an abundant supply of water to accommodate the needs of the taro farmers and their families (ohana) living in the area.13

E.S. Craighill Handy interviewed a Mr. Kekuku of La'ie, who was seventy-five years old at the time of the interview in the 1920s. Mr. Kekuku said that one of the largest single areas formerly under taro cultivation was the land, which totalled over sixty acres in extent, located behind the present Mormon temple. This area was known as kapuna, meaning the spring, because it was watered by one large and several lesser springs. In addition, the flat lowland on the Hauula side of the Mormon temple was "formerly a famous taro land. The old Hawaiian name for the land is now lost, and it is known as Kanaana, an adaption of Canaan, the Land of Promise of the Israelites. In with the taro were extremely large fish.... About this taro land the old Hawaiian settlement was located."14

From the evidence thus far, La'ie had a lot of water in the old times, much agriculture was being done with the land, and life seems to have thrived throughout the area. Several large taro terraces that were famous anciently and have survived only in memory in the area are: Naue-loli (move-[and]-change), Kuamo'o (backbone), Mahanu (rest-[and]-breathe), Makali'i (Pleiades), Po'o-haili (head-recalls). All of these areas were closely tied to water, to the springs, and to the land at La'ie. Inland there was also a large horseshoe-shaped pond named Paeo which was famous for the large fish raised in it. The Paeo pond is no longer found in La'ie. An old-time resident, Walter Tashiro, recalls that the Paeo pond was located on the Kahuku side of the Kahawainui stream between the now existing Kamehameha Highway and the Cackle Fresh Egg Farm in a central area which at one time was used as a dump site.15

What happened to all the people who lived in this thriving area? What caused them to leave? In Captain Cook's time it was reported that "nothing can exceed the verdure of the hills, the variety of wood and lawn, and the rich cultivated valleys which the whole face of the country [on this northern end of O'ahu] displayed." Thirteen years later another explorer, Captain George Vancouver, wrote of Kahuku and the surrounding area, including La'ie: "Our examination confirmed the remark of Captain King [demographer on Cook's ship] excepting that in point of cultivation or fertility, the country did not appear in so flourishing a state, nor to be so numerous inhabited, as he represented it to have been at the time, occasioned most probably by the constant hostilities that had existed since that period." There is a similar discrepancy between the descriptions of other areas in the 1780s and later accounts insofar as cultivation is concerned; but there is no discrepancy as to the verdure of the region.16
What catastrophe of the elements, slow or swift, brought about such drastic change to this region? By 1865, La‘ie and its surrounding areas fell victim to the effects of urbanization, foreign diseases, new religions, and a shift from a subsistence form of economy to a money economy. Many people simply headed to the city to find jobs to make money. Many became part of the labor force on different sugar plantations scattered around the island. In the 1830s, it was reported that the population of Laie was only about 400 people. In 1853, twelve years before the Mormon Church purchased La‘ie, the population of La‘ie had only increased slightly to about 450 people.¹⁷

1865 Purchase of La‘ie and Its Aftermath

The land of La‘ie was bought by the Church in January, 1865, to be used as a gathering place for Church members. The land was bought from a Thomas Dougherty, who had only recently purchased the land but was very anxious to resell. The property when purchased consisted of some six thousand acres, of which about 1,500 acres were good arable land. Included with the land were 500 head of cattle, 500 sheep, 200 goats, 26 horses, and some farm implements. Included also was a large frame house, called The Mansion, and several smaller auxiliary buildings. Elder Hammond negotiated the purchase for the Church and was able to purchase the above for $14,000. Since that time, the Church has used La‘ie as a gathering place, not only for members of the Church, but also for students, visitors, strangers, and in some cases even fugitives.¹⁸

Title to the land purchased in La‘ie was originally held by George Nebeker, who served as president of the local mission of the Church as well as manager of the plantation from 1865 to 1873. In 1879 the title for the land in La‘ie was transferred to the president of the Church in Utah, who held the property in trust along with other Church properties.¹⁹

In 1868, part of the land in La‘ie was planted with sugarcane and a plantation was started to provide employment for the Church members moving into La‘ie. It took about thirty years, un-
til 1898, before the first large water pump was installed on the plantation on an artesian well. The installation of the water pump came long after many of the struggles of the early Mormon families had taken their toll. Many of the members of the Church living in La’ie became discouraged. Joseph F. Smith, a member of the First Presidency of the Church, who had served as a missionary in Hawai‘i on three occasions, addressed the complaints of the members by saying: “Be patient, for the day is coming when this land will become a most beautiful land. Water shall spring forth in abundance, and upon the barren land you now see, the Saints will build homes, taro will be planted, and there will be plenty to eat and drink.” He further stated that “Many trees will be planted and this place will become verdant, the fragrance of flowers will fill the air, and ... because of the great beauty of the land, birds will come here and sing their songs.”

With the installation of a larger water pump in 1898, the sugar production of the Church plantation in La‘ie became far too large for La‘ie’s milling capacity. In 1931 all the sugar production in La‘ie was turned over to the Kahuku Sugar Plantation. Sugar became the economic mainstay of La‘ie for many years. It produced revenues to help build the community and the Church in La‘ie as well as in other areas of Hawai‘i.

Between 1895 and 1917, the sugar output in La‘ie was increased tenfold. On June 1, 1915, the site for a Mormon temple was dedicated in La‘ie. Ground-breaking took place a year later. The temple was dedicated on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1919. For the Mormon Church, La‘ie became the spiritual center of the Church in Hawai‘i, indeed, in the whole Pacific. La‘ie had again become a sanctuary, a city of refuge, to many people, Mormon and non-Mormon alike.

In 1920 the La‘ie Plantation went deeply into debt. In 1927 the plantation manager sold a large strip of beach-front property to reduce the debt. With rising cost and shrinking profits, the Laie Plantation closed down in 1931. The population of La‘ie by 1931 had increased to about 521 people. La‘ie experienced some
rough times during the Depression, as well as through World War II, but the people of La‘ie were very supportive of one another. In addition to mutual support among the people, the ‘aina, or land itself, had a healing effect upon the people who lived here and the people found sanctuary and peace therein.

In addition to the strong spiritual commitment of the members of the Church and its leaders, in 1955 and in 1963 two major new entities became part of La‘ie. In 1955, The Church College of Hawaii (hereafter CCH) opened its doors with 153 students, almost all local people from Hawaii. In 1958, the first Asian students arrived. In 1966 the enrollment reached over 1000 students, and by 1977–78 that figure had nearly doubled. In 1974, Church College of Hawaii became affiliated with Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and became Brigham Young University-Hawaii Campus.²⁵

In 1963, the Polynesian Cultural Center opened its doors to the world. The Polynesian Cultural Center (hereafter PCC) was built for the following reasons: “[T]o study and preserve Polynesian arts, crafts, and cultures. To provide work for students. And to provide community employment.” Initially, critics of the PCC stated that it would never work because it was too far outside Waikiki and Honolulu, and visitors would not drive the thirty miles to La‘ie to watch the kind of Polynesian shows they could see in Waikiki. The critics were wrong. In 1964, one year after the PCC opened its gates, 48,600 visitors traveled to La‘ie to visit the PCC and to meet the students from the college. In 1971, less than ten years after it opened, 475,000 visitors went to the PCC. In 1978, over one million visitors went to the PCC. The PCC has been very successful since it opened its gates in 1963 and it has been a major source of economic assistance to La‘ie and to Hawai‘i. It has also provided employment and cultural experiences to thousands of students from all over the world.²⁶

With the growth and development of the Church, of the university, and of the Polynesian Cultural Center, the population of La‘ie has increased over those same years and more stablyty has
With the steady increase in population over the years, La'ie, as a city of refuge, faced many problems. The purpose of this paper is not to resolve these problems but to simply identify some of them for future research purposes. Several general proposed master plans have been reviewed by the community and different church and governmental agencies for implementation. The process is continuing.

What Is the Future Direction of La'ie?

Some of the major problems facing La'ie now are: housing shortages; overcrowded classes in the elementary school; substandard roads, pathways, walkways, water distribution system, drainage system; and worst of all, an inadequate sewage treatment facility. In light of the above problems in La'ie, John L. Hill, a former student at BYU-Hawaii, and Group 70 Limited, a private planning and consulting firm, submitted proposed master plans for La'ie in recent years.

Hill's proposed master plan for La'ie was submitted in 1978. Therein he stated: "the proposed master plan of La'ie must plan the population growth to protect the social, economic, and physical needs of the people." Hill’s projections and conclusions were that BYU-Hawai‘i could be expanded to an enrollment of 10,000 students and that the community of La'ie could be expanded to a population of 25,000. Hill argued for an amendment to the State’s zoning, on the ground that La'ie had already utilized all of its urban zoned land for urban purposes by 1978. He proposed that agricultural land not in production be converted to urban use. Hill argued that since World War II the government’s planning office had not kept pace with the rapidly changing conditions, not only of La'ie, but also of the entire state. 28

Hill recommended that the three main creek beds surrounding La'ie be opened up and that drainage lakes and canals be constructed for aquaculture and flood control. In recent years, especially since 1986, La'ie has been hit by several major floods. Hill also recommended construction of a lake system throughout the ahupua‘a of La'ie leaving islands or wetlands scattered throughout the community to serve as natural bird sanctuaries. He also suggested that the banks of these lakes be left and designated and landscaped into parks to serve as green belts between the university campus and the residential area. He further recommended that a reforestation program be implemented to prevent further erosion of the foothill areas around La'ie. The islands off-shore of La'ie should be preserved as bird sanctuaries, and coral reefs in the area as fish sanctuaries. His plan also called for a full geological and archeological survey of the area to locate, verify, catalogue, and restore the significant traditional Hawaiian sites in La'ie. 29

The other master plan was completed in proposal form in 1990 by Group 70 Limited. This firm was hired by Zions Securities Corporation, agents for a Church entity called Deseret Title Holding Corporation, which was based in Salt Lake City, Utah. The charge to Group 70 was to review the needs of the community of La'ie. Group 70’s work primarily covered the area mauka, or toward the mountains, from Kamehameha Highway, the main highway which runs along the beach. This master plan has gone through several stages of review and is presently being handled by committees set up by the La’ie Community Association, a community-based group which has been actively involved in trying to resolve the three major problems of this community. These problems are: (1) upgrading of the existing sewage treatment plant; (2) installation of more adequate storm drains and continued maintenance of existing systems; and (3) resolution of the severe housing shortage in this community.
Conclusion

In the process of writing this article, my opinion as to what should be done to improve the quality of life in the ahupua'a of La'ie has changed many times. Initially, I felt that the Church had not done enough to assist the people of La'ie, nor did I believe that they had done enough to assist the Hawaiian families who had kuleana land interests—ancient land claims—in La'ie. However, as I found more information on pre-1865 La'ie, it became evident that many of the original inhabitants of this ahupua'a had moved out of this area long before the Church purchased La'ie.

In 1865 when the Church purchased La'ie, there were no major settlements in the flat lowland area between the mountain and the sea (see 1865 map). There were many kuleana parcels located on the Kahuku side of La'ie, close to the Malaekahana boundary, a ranch house, and the wetlands. Ten years after the purchase there were signs of a community beginning to develop. In 1885, La'ie had a sugar mill, a church, a school, and there were other houses built closer to the beach area on the Kahuku side of Laie (1885 map).

By 1919, La'ie had become primarily a sugar plantation town (1919 map). In addition to the members of the Church living in La'ie, plantation camps for Portuguese, Filipino, and Japanese laborers had been built. By this time the Mormon Temple had been built and new streets and houses had been added. Sugarcane and taro were being planted side by side in La'ie. By 1930, La'ie has become a fairly good-sized community. Many streets existed amongst the pasture land, the taro patches, and the kuleana lands. By 1939, a train track for hauling the sugarcane and for other use by the sugar plantation was making regular runs through La'ie, and the community continued to grow. By 1976, La'ie had grown into a fairly large community (1976 map). La'ie now had the university, the Polynesian Cultural Center, married student housing, a resort hotel, and many new residential dwellings. Later a shopping center was added. During the 1980s and the 1990s, future development of La'ie became a hot issue.

La'ie is an unusual community. La'ie is still considered to be a small town, but it is filled with fairly solid institutions centered around religion, education, family, and cultural diversity. The proposed master plan, which is currently being reviewed by the community, by government, and by permit agencies, requests that certain agricultural lands should be rezoned to residential and in some areas to commercial use.

Whatever decisions are made about the future of La'ie, all plans must take into account the necessity to balance the requirements of all life forms here within this ahupua'a. We must understand the deep historical meaning and purpose of this land called La'ie and make sure it remains a sanctuary for those who desire peace.

Notes


4Ibid., 532.


6David W. Cummings, Centennial History of Laie (La'ie, Hawai'i: Laie Centennial Committee, 1965), 4.


13 Handy, *Hawaiian Planter*, I:89–90. Kakela Kalua, long since deceased, is quoted by Handy, saying that “formerly many terraces” were located farther up Kahawainui stream. This supports other statements this writer has heard on many occasions from the old people in Laie that “taro patches at one time dotted the region and could be found along the stream banks and up in the mountains”. The reference to the old water gates along the Koloa stream refers to water gates which were put into irrigation canals and flumes used by the sugar plantation during the 1920s and 1930s.

14 Ibid., 90.


16 Handy, *Areas of Habitation*, 462.


19 Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom, 1854–1874*, 104.