

A New Island. DVD, 56 minutes, color, 2006. Photographed, produced, and edited by Dale Carpenter. Score by Kevin Croxton. Distributed by the Arkansas Educational Television Network. Phone 1-800-662-2386 for ordering information. US\$29.95 includes shipping and handling.

Micronesians Abroad. DVD, 72 minutes, color, 2006. Produced by Eugenia Samuel and Erik Steffen. Edited by Erik Steffen. Executive Producer: Francis X Hezel SJ. Distributed by the Micronesian Seminar. Available for viewing at <http://www.micsem.org/video/videotapes/49.htm>. Information on ordering and price can be obtained from <http://www.micsem.org>.

Forty years ago Micronesian communities were largely bounded by the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Today Micronesians abroad no longer consist of scattered individuals and small groups; they constitute significant communities with dense intra- and intercommunity interactions. Micronesian social space is now transnational.

Two recent video documentaries report on Micronesian migrant communities from the Freely Associated States—the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau—located in Guam, Saipan, Hawai‘i, and the US continent.

These videos have much in common. Both filmmakers are educators; Francis X Hezel (*Micronesians Abroad*) as a former teacher and director of the Jesuit school in Pohnpei, and Dale Carpenter (*A New Island*)

as a journalism professor at the University of Arkansas. Carpenter is the more experienced filmmaker, with several awards to his credit. Hezel has the advantage of having historical footage, a wealth of contemporary Micronesian music, and extensive knowledge of the islands to draw on. In both productions the camera work, editing, and scripting are accomplished. Most images show Micronesians at work, attending church, participating in community events, or giving interviews. Both filmmakers use visuals of the host communities to give a sense of place, although Hezel, covering more communities, relies more on iconic shots, such as surfers for Southern California, and a large wooden cowboy outside a Texas store.

Both give examples of the diverse motives for migration—better access to jobs, education, health care, or because of family matters. Both give attention to the problems of adaptation and the identity challenges facing youth, while telling a story of success in a new place that is often conceived of as continuity rather than rupture, in “a new island,” or “the new Micronesia.”

There are also differences between these documentaries in the intended audience, goals, narrative voice, and the geographical and historical extent of coverage.

Micronesians Abroad is a survey of movements leading to the formation of overseas communities and the fortunes of those who settled there. It begins with historical footage of people assembled at an Island airport to bid farewell to relatives and friends setting out on their journey. The nar-

rator, Fran Hezel, tells us that in the 1960s, few Micronesians traveled to the United States, and they were mostly visitors rather than settlers. The extension of Pell Grant eligibility in the 1970s encouraged Micronesians to travel to the US for college education. In the 1980s, the Compacts of Free Association allowed Islanders to live and work in the United States and its territories, and some moved to Guam and Saipan. Since 1995 and the reduction in compact funding, the pace has accelerated. From the Federated States of Micronesia about 2,000 people per year move abroad, while the Marshall Islands is losing about 1,000 per year, and Palau several hundred. Today approximately 30,000 FSM migrants are living abroad.

Hezel next covers the motives for migration, concluding that Micronesians have settled “nearly everywhere” in the United States. How are they doing? He acknowledges that a few have run into problems with the law, references a Government Accountability Office report that a majority of Micronesians in the United States are living in poverty, and mentions newspaper articles claiming that migrants have come to collect welfare, but argues that most have found jobs and are doing just fine.

Hezel then offers his evidence. He presents “exemplary” settlers in Hawai‘i, Guam, and Saipan, then moves to communities in a variety of places on the US continent—the West Coast, Florida, the South Central states. By “exemplary,” I note a bias in who receives attention. While Hezel includes Micronesians in low-wage occupations (eg, nursing home

employees), he tends to present stories of managers, professionals, and community leaders.

Hezel’s narrative voice is authoritative, offering conclusions. Micronesians abroad are making ends meet, even saving money and sending some home. From a household survey he projects that annual remittances to the Federated States are around \$17 million, or 10 percent of the FSM economy. One migrant remarks, “It’s getting so they really need us out here.”

Hezel expects viewers to know the meaning of “Trust Territory” and the relationships of the Islands to the United States. He argues that home governments and consulates should do more to support these migrants and to educate US bureaucrats and employers of the special status conferred by the compacts, which creates hurdles Micronesians must overcome to obtain jobs and other rights and benefits. Even if they reside abroad, in their hearts and customs they are still members of their home societies. Hezel makes a policy argument: Micronesians abroad are an asset to both home and settlement communities, deserving of recognition and support.

Carpenter’s documentary focuses specifically on Marshallese residing in Springdale, Arkansas. Who are these people? What are they doing here? Carpenter seeks answers for a US audience. The narrative is carried by the Marshallese voice of Carmen Chong-Gum, a Springdale resident. The narrative is less authoritative than Hezel’s, yet conveys a similar message: Despite problems, these immigrants

are adapting to the United States and contributing to the economy while maintaining their identity and connections to home.

A New Island opens with shots of Springdale and of trucks carrying cages of chickens, invoking the role of Springdale as the headquarters of the largest US producer of packaged meat products and the major employer of Marshallese. The soundtrack introduces the exotic: a Marshallese voice chanting. Carpenter takes up the task of making the strange familiar, as the scene switches to Chong-Gum driving the streets of Springdale, a shot of her ranch-style tract home, her showing pictures of the Islands to her US-born children. We see a photo of her as a baby, sitting in a canoe her grandfather gave her for her first birthday. Her canoe, she tells us, has carried her far.

The video picks up with shots of Marshallese gathered for a first-birth celebration. Telling of relatives coming from the Islands with coolers of food, Chong-Gum introduces the topic of the compact that gives them the right to reside and work in the United States. She says that now one-tenth of Marshallese reside in northern Arkansas. (This figure is probably high; other estimates suggest 3 to 5 percent.)

This documentary emphasizes the work that is needed to adapt two communities to living and working in close contact. For example, the documentary recounts National Public Radio reporter Jaqueline Froehlich's discovery of the Marshallese in Arkansas, and her education by Chong-Gum on the history of US relations with the Marshall Islands, including nuclear

weapons testing, with footage of the explosions and the radiation burns suffered by children. This is followed by encounters in a medical clinic, and an interview with the clinic's director, who speculates about the effects of fallout on the immune system and the subsequent health burden on Marshallese. Interviews with Marshallese and their leaders show how this history informs perspectives on the relations of Islanders with the United States.

Next, Carpenter examines challenges facing Marshallese students and their teachers, somewhat through the voices of students, but more so through accounts of teachers who take a particular interest in bridging the divide between Marshallese and American cultures. These segments introduce the topics of migration for education, the fosterage of students by relatives, and the dilemmas of youth in deciding whether to pursue higher education. The video also looks at chiefly status as a mandate to serve one's people through the story of a female chief who coordinates the English as a Foreign Language program for Marshallese youth.

The importance of religious congregations in migrant communities as a means of mediating different forms of social control is indexed as Chong-Gum states that there are thirteen Marshallese churches in Springdale; one scene shows a service held in a strip-mall storefront. The pastor there says that he teaches that there are dangers in the apparent freedom to do what you would not do at home, which can lead to trouble with the law; we must show that we are responsible, he emphasizes.

Intercommunity ties and the importance of the Springdale community to the Marshall Islands are revealed in the context of a Constitution Day celebration, which brings groups from other migrant communities as well as government ministers and senators from the Islands. One participant recounts his childhood experience of the Bravo thermonuclear test, underscoring that the relationship of the Marshalls with the United States is basically a military one, and describing some of its fraught history.

Carpenter's documentary ends with Chong-Gum meeting a new immigrant at the airport, telling him how other migrants will help him adapt to this foreign setting, and welcoming him to a new, beautiful "island."

These documentaries are useful resources for class presentations and are accessible to undergraduates, but require contextualization and discussion. They provide limited accounts of the shifting relationships of Micronesians with outsiders, and ignore structural changes in the US economy that open jobs in various sectors to immigrants. I prefer *A New Island* for the richness of its case study approach and its direction toward a host-nation audience. Both videos can be useful in expanding the notion of "Peoples of the Pacific" and constructing lessons on transnationalism, migration, globalization, and economic development.

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Rock of Contention: Free French and Americans at War in New Caledonia, 1940–1945, by Kim Munholland. New York: Berghahn Books, 2005. ISBN cloth, 978-1-57181-682-5; paper, 978-1-84545-300-8; xi + 251 pages, notes, bibliography, index, illustrations. Cloth, US\$80.00; paper, US\$24.50.

Nouvelle-Calédonie 1945–1968: La Confiance Trahie, by Jean Le Borgne, preface by Pierre Chaunu. Paris: Harmattan, 2005. ISBN 978-274758-563-7; 600 pages, footnotes, bibliography. Paper, €45.00.

These two books offer important perspectives and details on aspects of modern New Caledonian history that had been relatively neglected, apart from Ismet Kurtovitch's excellent doctoral dissertation on the 1940–1953 period in local politics, which came out in print in French in 2000, or more briefly in the volume published on the French Pacific Islands by Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff back in 1971. Most publications in English about New Caledonia were inspired by the Kanak-French violence of the 1980s or its aftermath, but these two recent books probe into the wartime and postwar roots of the political tensions that ultimately led to that tragic explosion. Both studies are done by professional historians yet are also very readable for a wider audience.

Dr Kim Munholland teaches modern European and French history at the University of Minnesota. His book opens with the propagandistic cinematic image of Humphrey Bogart