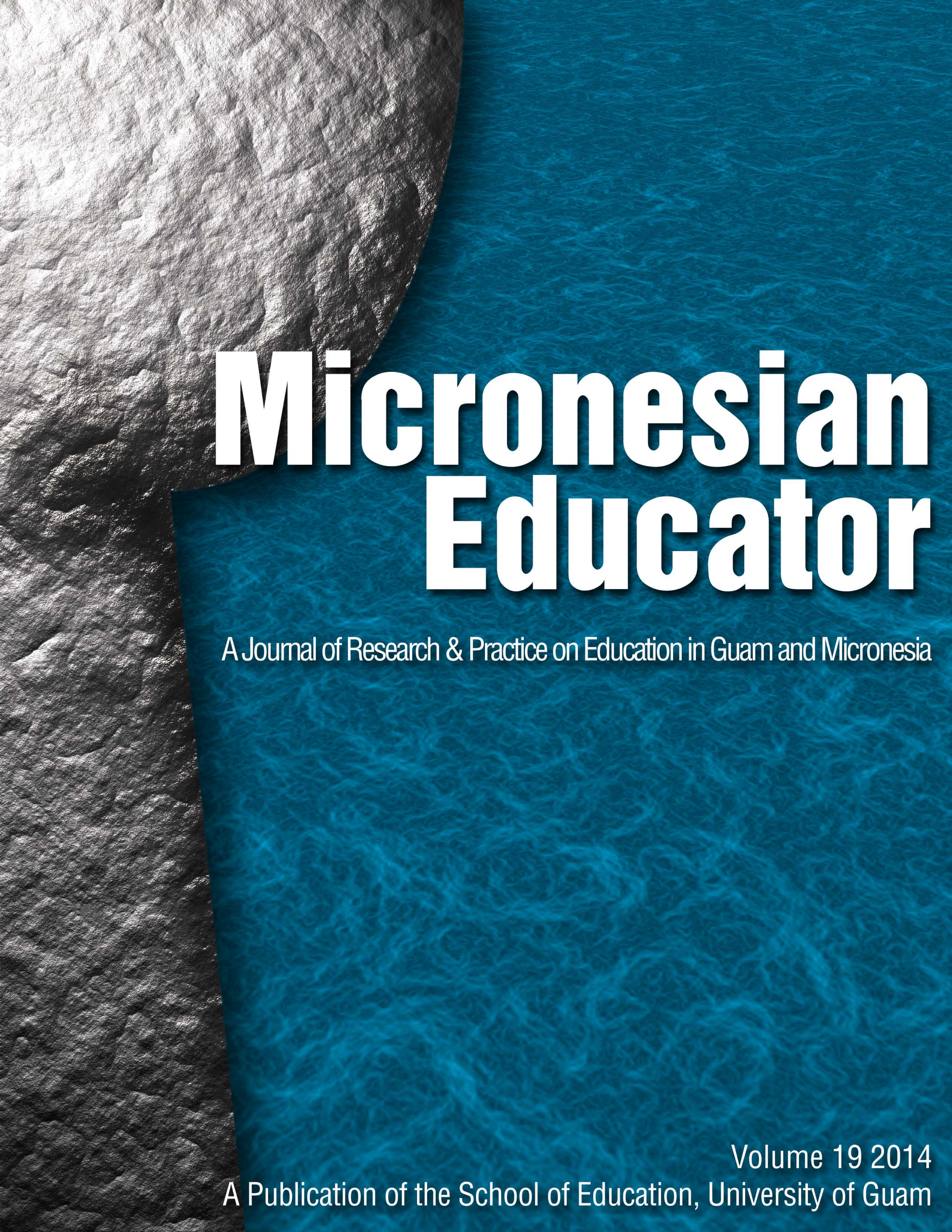

Micronesian Educator

A Journal of Research & Practice on Education in Guam and Micronesia

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Micronesian Educator

A Journal of Research & Practice on Education in Guam and Micronesia

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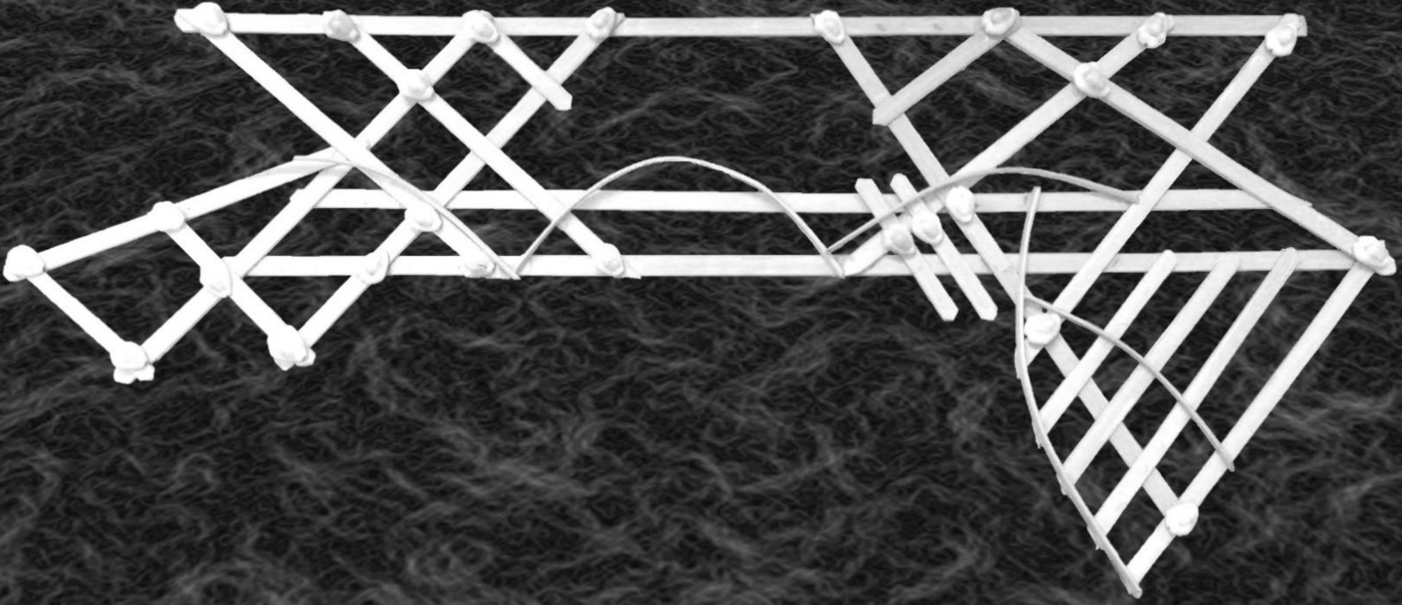
INTRODUCTION



Editor's Introduction

Culture and Curriculum in the 21st Century: Rethinking Ideology, Teaching, Learning & Research, is the title of Volume 19 of Micronesian Educator. This volume expands on the idea that education has different meanings in different cultures. This is due in part to differences in cosmology, epistemology and philosophical ideas and beliefs. In an increasingly diverse, integrated and complex world, educators and professionals are called to dialogue and action in terms of how multicultural perspectives of education are brought into the formal curriculum so as to enhance success for all.

There are, on the one hand, mainstream priorities by neo-liberal states with standardized testing and other related control mechanisms versus those who reject such narrow positivist approaches to education in favor of a balance to include diverse epistemologies, methodologies and ideologies of education.

It is in this context that we introduce this issue. The issue *has both empirical-based papers and theoretical/ position papers.* The issue also comes with an interview with Dr. Robert Underwood, President of the University of Guam, on the topic.

The issue has the following structure: Section 1 carries the first three articles, with the section titled "Language and Multiple Representations of Thought and Wisdom: Orality, Literacy, Social media and Textism". The articles highlight the continuum beginning with the discussion on orality as medium of thought and representation, to the importance of reading and writing, to the contemporary issue of the use of technology via social media and textism as ways to present and represent ideas and thought, as well as reality.

Article 1, "From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again: A Story of Story" is a powerful take on the humanism and power of inter-generational transmission of knowledge via orality as opposed to dependence on writing alone or technology. With eloquence and deep analysis, Professor of Pacific Literature, Pio Manoa (with an introduction by Communications Professor Lucy Ann Kerry) pursues the idea of the importance of engaging with orality and ensuring this is valued in the context of writing and technological advancement – he says: "It seems to me that the way to go forward in any satisfying literacy education program would be to give our past due recognition through a literacy that engages oral energies in its linguistic and cultural contexts while using available electronic technology to enhance the process, not diminish it…".

Article 2, "Survival of the Focused: Bernard Stiegler's Phenomenology of Attention Capture in the Era of Social Media", is an equally powerful and provocative account on the need to exercise caution in the use of social media. The article critiques the way technology has taken over and "captured" young people's attention today almost unquestioningly. Dr. Chris Schreiner, Professor of English and Applied Linguistics at the University of Guam, explicates that technological developments in education have to be critiqued hard, for with its advantages, via social media, for instance, it is insidious in its repercussions, especially if it is accepted wholesale and uncritically. He expounds on the work by Bernard Stiegler to present his thesis that attention, as it were, and deep thought and critical analysis are at risk today by an over exuberant clientele that is largely unquestioning of social media. He salutes Stiegler's works, saying: "French philosopher Bernard Stiegler is a rare educator and administrator who, book after book, soberly assesses the epistemological prospects of technical innovation for the human species". Schreiner pontificates further the strength of Stiegler's works on what he terms as "the battle for intelligence" in terms of what he sees as the struggle by young people to manage the "electronic infrastructure of today" who he says are struggling with intellectual autonomy to see beyond technological electronic gadgets and the transnational corporations and institutions of learning that push for such developments. Very often, he surmises, these are detrimental to human development, humanism, patience, waiting and the virtues one learns from reading and "the patience" that comes with the messages one gets from such cultural artifacts.

Article 3, "Textisms and Literacy in Adolescents: Revolt(ing) English" is a totally different take from Manoa and Schreiner in that Tabitha Espina argues for the benefits of textism as yet another pedagogical ploy to enhance communication and learning.

Section 2 is titled: “Pedagogical and Epistemological Diversities in Education, Politics and Life” and has three articles. These are broadly concerned with diversities in epistemology and pedagogy as these relate to communications, reflection and thought, and political representation and change.

In Article 4, “The Silence Which Has Woven My Life Together”, Professor of Theology at the University of St Clara Dr. Eduardo Fernandez reflects on his intercultural and interreligious experience as a Roman Catholic Latino born and raised in the United States and a member of a religious community, the Jesuits. He describes the powerful unitive and pedagogical role which silence has played in his life. Key insights gleaned from silent, humble participation in community, prayer, pilgrimage, sabbatical research and interreligious dialogue form the basis of the essay, at the same time giving examples of the necessity of silence in our classrooms. The work concludes with a caution around some destructive forms of silence and a reference to the Divine in the Hebrew Scriptures.

In Article 5, “Silent/Absence as Passive Resistance in Fiji: A Case Study of Indigenous Ecotourism Development in Taveuni”, Dr. Trisia Farrelly of the Development Studies Program at the Massey University of NZ documents the passive resistance that comes from sustained silences from within an ecotourism development project. She notes there are diverse ways of knowing and learning and that learning is best understood within an individual’s cultural milieu, which then informs the practice of teaching and learning. The spoken word is only one in a myriad ways in which opinions or desires can be expressed. In some cultures, the “loudest voice” is spoken in “silence”. In this paper, “silence/absence” as passive resistance to authority is explored in the context of efforts to implement indigenous ecotourism development in the Boumā National Heritage Park, Taveuni, Fiji. Implications of silence for pedagogy are then intimated.

In Article 6, “Sowing Representative Democracy in the Kingdom of Tonga: The 2010 Elections and Future Implications for Political Education”, Dr. Durutalo of the Pacific Studies program at Otago University in NZ and her colleagues, Drs. Nanau and Amosa and Ms. Latu, document the first ever democratic elections in the only surviving monarchy of the Pacific, Tonga. This election was an important milestone in Tonga’s political history as a number of political and legal changes were introduced to facilitate a gradual move towards the process of modern leadership democratization in the island kingdom, especially with the increased representation of commoners and the introduction of a political party system. Implications of political education and development are then suggested.

Section 3, titled “Diversities in Education Delivery for Different Contexts”, has three articles. Article 7, “Teacher Educators and Indigenous Rights in a Complex, Multicultural but Uncertain Future”, is penned by Dr. Zane Ma Rhea, Professor of International and Indigenous Education at Monash University in Australia. The article critically discusses teacher education in systems and nations where first peoples are dominated by migrants such as the US, Australia and NZ. She expounds on models and options of delivery. She writes: “Of central importance to this paper is the question of how teacher educators can manage the Indigenous rights challenge within a multicultural space of negotiation, while recognizing the colonial presence and legacy in their work”.

Article 8, “Perspectives of Gender Roles in a Selection of Oral Traditions: Folklore and its Implications on Multicultural Counseling” is penned by Beverly Alave and Dr. Margaret Artero. The article documents a selection of personal oral stories and traditional Chuukese legends which speak to gender roles in Chuukese culture and specifically the idea of the importance of the female role and strengths and aspects related to matrilineal power. Findings and ideas from the study have the potential to broaden the training of mental health and school counselors in building their multicultural competence when working with Micronesian cultures on Guam.

Article 9, “The Effect of Reading Curriculum and Ethnicity on Elementary School Students’ Reading Achievement” is written by Dr. Pretzel Baleto and Dr. Geri James of the University of Guam. The article reports a study which examined the relationship between reading curriculum program, ethnicity and student achievement among grade three students enrolled in the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) elementary schools. The researchers concluded that, in order for reading to be taught well and elementary students to successfully develop reading skills, a structured, scientific, research-based program is beneficial regardless of students’ ethnicity.

Section 4 is on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). ESD is pivotal as it is central to one of the UN Millennium Development Goals (Goal 7). It has two articles focusing on health as a pivotal element of sustainable development and environment as crucial to ESD.

Article 10, “Getting to the ‘Heart’ of the Matter: Health, Well-being & Education for Sustainability Introducing Health Promoting Schools in Fiji” is by Dr. Cresentia Frances Koya, Associate Dean of Research at the Faculty of Arts, Law and Education at the University of the South Pacific (USP). Koya details the need to critically improve health in the Pacific islands given the huge numbers of people with NCDs. Schools promoting health, she describes, are a good way to ensure health is centralized early in the lives of our Pacific peoples. She pontificates that we cannot have sustainable Pacific societies without good health.

Article 11, “A Brief Case Study -Report Going Green is a Focus in College Coursework” is by Dr. Inoue-Smith of the University of Guam and focuses on a case study of an environment sustainability infused class that produced “green lessons”. This mechanism, she argues, enhances environmental awareness and sustainability.

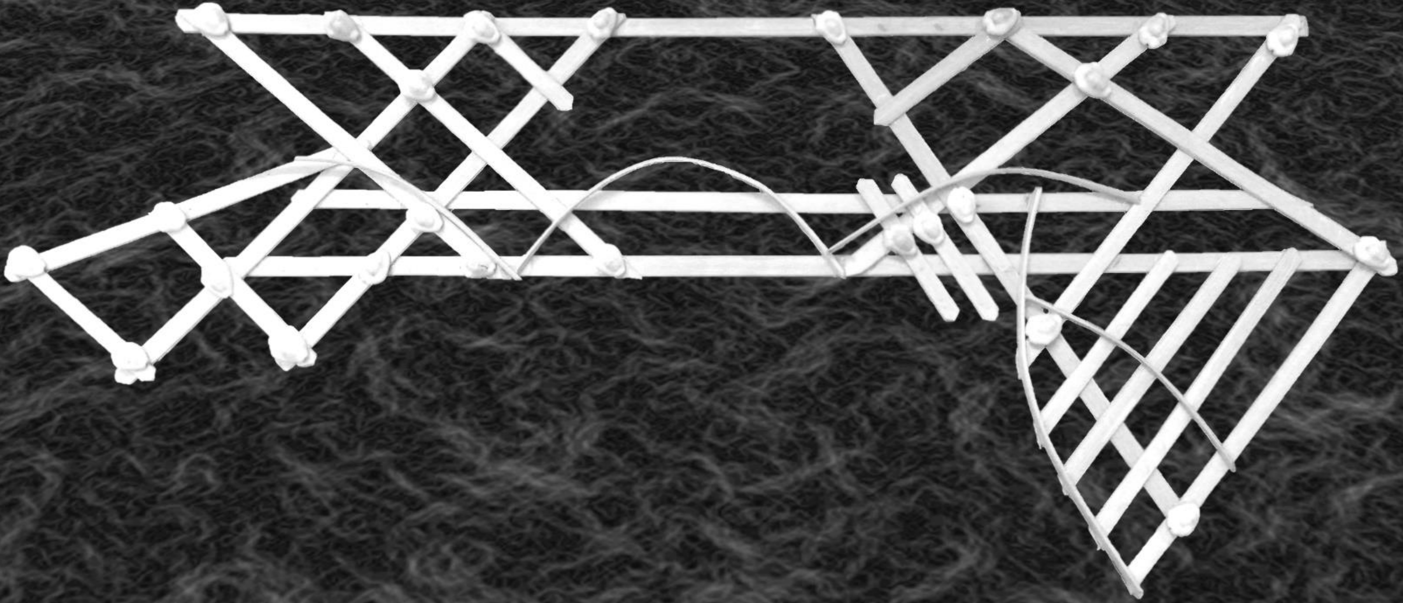
Section 5 is a section on critical essays. Article 12, “Continuing the Conversation: The Case for More Than “Deconstruction” in Micronesia” is by Fran Hezel. Hezel continues a conversation begun in Volume 18 (the last volume) where David Kupferman’s book: “Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific” was reviewed. In this article, Hezel encourages Kupferman to keep conversations on schooling in the Pacific open and to encourage further dialogue on the matter of focus to his book. Hezel cautions on the work of deconstruction and laments it might not produce much practically if reconstruction does not take place not only in theory but in some concrete form that Pacific peoples will benefit from.

Section 6, the last section on Talanoa (Dialogue), carries an interview (a *talanoa*) with Dr. Robert Underwood, current President of the University of Guam. He is interviewed by Dr. Don Rubinstein and the editor. The interview focuses on the area or theme of the volume on culture, education and diversity in Guam and Micronesia. The interview also intimates the role the University of Guam plays in promoting diversity and culturally competent education, as well as enhancing success of students.

Enjoy the Volume!

Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, Editor

LANGUAGING AND MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS OF THOUGHT AND WISDOM: SOCIAL MEDIA, ORALITY, LITERACY, AND TEXTISMS



From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again: A Story of Story

Pio Manoa

[with an Introduction by Lucyann Kerry]

Introduction

Perhaps 'Do not go gentle into that good night…of Literacy' could have been another title for Pio Manoa's 'From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again'. This article offers a journey that spans the millennia with a scope and wisdom from the ages, yet it is told from the specific perspective of a Pacific Islander. In an era in which media literacy seems to displace an older print-based literacy, Manoa's cautionary tale of shifting communication dominance and authority in the Pacific Islands leads the reader to rethink what could be lost or gained as our global population jumps on the digital bandwagon of the newest, fastest technology device or internet platform. He allows each of us to step into the footsteps of the islander's experience of orality and literacy, as he gleans from human experience universal truths and a celebration of our common humanity against unforeseen outcomes of change.

If indeed the world is changing rapidly to a new and different context of communication and human interaction, one perhaps that may bring us closer to a previous orality, we are far beyond the point of jumping a digital divide of 'haves' and 'have nots' in our global village; we have now entered unknown, unchartered territory-as unknown as the arrival of the printing press into the South Pacific that Pio Manoa's article describes. This article is a tale to prepare us for these unknown waters. Pio speaks to us…

- Lucyann Kerry

Ladies and Gentlemen

It must be a streak of madness in me to presume to stand here before people who have dedicated a fair portion of their young and middle-aged or not so middle-aged talents and energies to thinking and teaching about reading, and the practice of literacy, in or out of school.

But if you bear with me, I will talk a little on a number of issues that relate in some way to the matter of reading and literacy, issues that point to the societies of the Pacific islands before literacy, to the presence of the word (to use Walter Ong's term)[1] in these societies from European contact down to this moment. Please do not expect coherence in what I have to say for the field I wish to explore is as vast as the ocean that is all about us, but consider what I say as utterances, like the waves reaching out to you, some even, some frayed, some broken, and some even dissipating.

It might help us all perhaps if I explain my title for a start. I've named this talk "From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again: A Story of Story". If we took that title to refer simply to the progress of the technologizing of the word[2], i.e. from a time when people organized all their speech acts, verbal communication, word-arts -

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[1] In his *The Presence of the Word.* (1967). New Haven and London: Yale University Press. It will be clear how indebted I am to Walter Ong throughout this paper.

[2] This concept is also developed by Ong in his *The Presence of the Word,* and more specifically in *Orality and Literacy.* (1982). London: Methuen & Co Ltd.

songs, chants, riddles, proverbs, anecdotes, jokes, and all manner of story - in visual, oral-aural codes without hieroglyph or inscription or any form of writing at all; through the time when the technology of writing was invented and widely used as a way of organizing and exchanging thought and the passing on of information and the creation of literature; through the invention and use of the printing press, i.e. through all the development in the visualization of the word; through the marvels of radio, the wireless, the electronic media when the word and audience seemed to function as if we were back in the original state of orality; then it would not be so mysterious, even if the whole process recounts a history of wonderful inventions. That story has been very well told by a number of people already. [3]

But I'm interested in portions of that story, and especially in certain attitudes that go with asserting the greatness of inventions and what great good they will bring to people.

My particular focus is people and how relatively new technologies, like reading and writing, do empower them to take their place in a progressive globalizing environment; as well as, and particularly so, how these very empowering tools can impoverish, undermine some of the humanity that cultures without writing had developed over centuries.[4]

I realize of course that any change involves losing something. But it is quite another thing to imply through our educational or imperialist or globalizing programs that the old culture has really nothing to offer, except maybe a couple of stories and rituals that we could salvage to remind us in moments of success, or in moments of failure, that we had a past. I will touch on this issue of salvaging stories and rituals at the end.

If you called out and said, "Hey, what are you really trying to say?" I could of course reply and say, "Do I have to say anything? Lots of people give papers at conferences but say nothing, really".

But this is what I would really like you to hear. It seems to me that the way to go forward in any satisfying literacy education program would be to give our past due recognition through a literacy that engages oral energies in its linguistic and cultural contexts while using available electronic technology to enhance the process, not diminish it.

There you have the idea of the cycle implied in the title of this talk. The tag at the end of the title, "A Story of Story", focuses the issues over time in a kind of narrative, a story.

Story is of course a complex affair in itself especially when it is used as an analogous concept, applicable to a multitude of accounts we compose of events that relate to our manifold lives and at multiple levels. "Jumpy Mouse"[5], for example, is a story, which also has stories relating to its presences. I'm not referring to its variants only, but also to their manner of coming into being. And so for any story that you care to name.

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[3] For instance, Walter Ong himself, in the works already noted above, and in his subsequent exploration in *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology.* (1971). Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press; *Interfaces of the Word.* (1977). Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press; Marshall McLuhan (1962). *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press; Eric A. Havelock. (1986). *The Muse Learns to Write.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

[4] That preliterate people have often been regarded as less than human is clear from the history of European contact. Little attention is given to the fact that people had humanized themselves and their world without the benefit of writing for millennia before the invention of script.

[5] I name this story because I have enjoyed it so much, particularly the version as retold by Joel Rudinger, and his exploration of it in his article "Jumpy Mouse and the Ghosts within Us", *The National Storytelling Journal,* (Winter 1987), pp 7-11, and the fact that the story comes from Amerindian legend. Hyemeyohsts Storm's *Seven Arrows* (Harper & Row, 1972), pp 68-85, has another version, which comes from the Plains Indian People. The appropriation of the story by the modern white American as by others throughout the world, is surely a phenomenon worth reflecting on. Its original cultural context should also be of interest.

Implied in what I have been saying is the very important nexus between story in its ephemeral coming into being in the world of sound (i.e. in the telling and in its presence in the oral culture) and its chirographic or typographic presence[6] in the literate culture. It is the process that transmits story from one presence to the other that I want us also to meditate upon. It is a crucial issue in the context of our popular will to literacy. The way we bring about this shift determines where we stand as imperialists or globalizing agents, or as true educators of the people.

The Spoken Word and the Written Word

At the end of one of the dialogues of Plato, called *Phaedrus,* Socrates discusses with Phaedrus the comparative merits of speech and writing as vehicles for the communication of truth. Socrates introduces this discussion with a story:

> They say that there dwelt at Naucratis in Egypt one of the old gods of that country, to whom the bird they call Ibis was sacred, and the name of the god himself was Theuth. Among his inventions were number and calculation and geometry and astronomy, not to speak of various kinds of draughts and dice, and, above all, writing. The king of the whole country at that time was Thamus, who lived in the great city of Upper Egypt which the Greeks call Egyptian Thebes; the name they give to Thamus is Ammon. To him came Theuth and exhibited his inventions, claiming that they ought to be [made] known to the Egyptians in general. Thamus inquired into the use of each of them, and as Theuth went through them, expressed approval or disapproval, according as he judged Theuth's claims to be well or ill founded. It would take too long to go through all that Thamus is reported to have said for and against each of Theuth's inventions. But when it came to writing, Theuth declared: 'Here is an accomplishment, my lord the king, which will improve both the wisdom and the memory of the Egyptians. I have discovered a sure receipt for memory and wisdom.' 'Theuth, my paragon of inventors,' replied the king, 'the discoverer of an art is not the best judge of the good or harm which will accrue to those who practise it.
>
> So it is in this case; you who are the father of writing, have out of fondness for your offspring attributed to it quite the opposite of its real function. Those who acquire it will cease to exercise their memory and become forgetful; they will rely on writing to bring things to remembrance by external signs instead of on their own internal resources. What you have discovered is a receipt for recollection, not for memory. And as for wisdom, your pupils will have the reputation for it without the reality: they will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction, and in consequence be thought very knowledgeable when they are for the most part quite ignorant. And because they are filled with the conceit of wisdom instead of real wisdom they will be a burden to society'[7]

I cite this story for a number of reasons; I like the story, and feel it is saying something true, that in the pursuit of an integrated education for people, the oral word educates more profoundly. We all know this. It's happening in our lives. But it's something we take for granted, and perhaps at times deny. I suppose an oral education does not often seem important to some of us, but that may be because we have lost our masters and mistresses of the oral word. It's not for nothing that our first classrooms in these islands were referred to as *`valeniwilivola,* reading rooms, reading houses, and, by extension, or literally, libraries. I'm not implying in any way that our present literacy education program applaud book learning as the only goal. In fact we tend to mistrust people with only book learning. Somehow we sense that they lack life, lack participation in our lifeworld. And it is in this lifeworld that we experience the real word, the spoken word, the word as sound.

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[6] Walter Ong's influence again.

[7] Plato, *Phaedrus & Letters VII and VIII,* Penguin Classics. pp 95-96.

And this was how literacy was conceived in those days. It was connected with speech, oratory. Poor reading performance meant in large part poor oratorical performance. Reading had to be aloud, had to be sound-conscious. The practice did not just happen here; it was happening in the USA and elsewhere as well.[8] Silent reading had yet to come. So when I just now said that *valeniwilivola* meant 'library' I was not likening it to our present libraries, Which, like our very own University of the South Pacific (USP) library is a house of silence, except when young lovers choose to conduct their regular courtship sessions in it.

Sound literacy did not just happen a long time ago. It survives and lives on. When I went to school my teacher encouraged us to read aloud, and to read as if we were speaking. Years later, in the village, I read a whole book aloud. In fact I owe part of my sensitivity to language to that teacher's advice. And when I read a statement that says, "[T]he ability to write is closely connected with the ability to hear in one's imagination what a written text would sound like when read aloud"[9], I get confirmed in my conviction.

The moment our *valeniwilivola,* as agent of the new education, came into being was the moment also for our word makers to anticipate their own eclipse. Into eclipse went the long compositions, songs, stories. Memory, it seems, did - become shorter. The use of story as creator of language and meaning, the function of composers to keep purifying the 'dialect of the tribe' and to lead the mind to after sight and prophecy[10] were all gone into the *valeniwilivola.* And it's a mighty task to try to revitalize, reconstruct, recreate these vital parts of our lives, our language communities, our cultures, our heritage in our present classrooms. And I suppose as products of our present classrooms we know exactly what we are and what we can really do, and maybe what we cannot really do.

From orality to literacy. We have made progress! No doubt about that at all. But let me say something else regarding Socrates and the story he tells, and regarding Plato, who wrote the dialogue- Plato was writing at the time when Greece had attained a high level of literacy. He made Socrates assert the superiority of the spoken over the written word. He chose, moreover, to write in dialogue form, i.e. in a form which imitates speech. His philosophical dialectic had to be in this form. For him and for the body politic, however, it was goodbye forever to the oral culture and some of its irrational elements and products such as poets, the *rhapsodists,* and their poetry. I suspect there's something of Plato in the attitudes behind some of our literacy programs whose purveyors fear is not strictly rational and not clearly moral, moralising, moralistic. There is no room here of course for literature as such. There is no room here for the much misunderstood thing called *fiction.* You mustn't expose children to fiction.

Plato's attitude, reflected here, became explicit in his *Politics.* Yet in the dialogue we got our story from, the *Phaedrus,* Plato, it seems, was going through a process of coming to terms with the "presence of the word" in the pursuit of wisdom. And he was undertaking this at a point in time when literacy and orality were influencing each other as channels of communicating thought and teaching, the moral and political.

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[8] As William Holmes McGuffey did for literacy in the mid-18th century United States with his Readers, McGuffey's *Rhetorical Guide,* or *Fifth Reader.* Father Ong comments: "As in Shakespeare's day and throughout earlier history in the West, literacy was still thought of in nineteenth century America as somehow serving the needs of oratory, for education in the classical tradition had never been education in the 'three R's'- which come from post-classical, post-Renaissance schools' training for commerce and domestic economy - but had been education for the oral performance of the man in public affairs. Little wonder that Charles Dickens' platform readings from his novels met with such wild success in McGuffey's America." "Literacy and Orality in our Times". *ADE Bulletin,* 58 (September, 1978), 1-7. Reprinted in Norman Simms (ed.) 1982. *Oral and Traditional Literatures,* Hamilton, N.Z.: Outrigger Publishers.

[9] Joseph Collignon, "Why Leroy Can't Write." *College English,* 39 (1978) 852-859. Cited in Ong, "Literacy and Orality in our Times".

[10] Cf T.S. Eliot's "Little Gidding" II, *Four Quartets.*

We may also sense, here in these islands, a kindred situation, even if only partly so. The alphabet we have come to adopt has only been with us now for the last 150 years or so, and its effective and widespread presence is much shorter than that. But what a presence! It has become so much yearned for, worked for, labored at, used to browbeat with, and so much more for the possessor, a sign of accomplishment, that we have come to regard the written word as the real word. Without a mastery of it there is no possible adventure.

My colleague, Dr. Tupeni Baba tells of how his father taught him the alphabet. He was six, a big boy and going to school. He also liked spear-fishing, which meant adventure and discovery. And his village was on this little bay towards the north-eastern point of Vanua Levu [in Fiji].

His father had fashioned bush-knife handles from the buttresses of the great chestnut tree. He wrote the alphabet on one of these handles, handed it to his son and said "Son, you shall not go spear-fishing beyond these two points of the bay until you have learnt off your alphabet front to back and back to front." Tupeni says he's never learned anything as fast as he did that alphabet written on a piece of the great chestnut tree.[11]

We may recall other methods of learning the alphabet, like singing or chanting it, front to back and back to front. But that's how important this mastery of the chirographic art had become. It would open up worlds, access worlds beyond the small bay. At least that was the promise.

One hundred and ten years before, a printing press landed on Lakeba in the Lau islands to the south east [of Fiji]. The missionaries had begun part of their work, the programmed assault of the oral culture and its manifold articulateness and orientations. And one effective instrument was this printing press. And this is how the missionaries themselves described that machine at that productive auspicious moment:

> Great was the astonishment and delight of the people as they saw the marvels of the Mission press. The Heathen at once declared it to be a god. And mightier far than their mightiest and most revered deities was that engine at which they wondered. In the midst of the barbarous people it stood, a fit representative of the high culture and triumphant skill of the land whence it came; and, blessed by the prayers of multitudes across the seas, and of the faithful ones who directed its might, that mission press began, with silent power, its great and infallible work, which was destined to deliver beautiful Fiji from its old and galling bonds, to cleanse away its filthy stains of crime, to confer upon its many homes the blessings of civilization, and enrich its many hearts with the wealth of the Gospel of Jesus.[12]

The new story, the new myth, the new ideology, had arrived. This historical moment is also the emblematic moment. It might even be appropriate to regard it as the sacramental moment that brought into being a new integrated system, of belief, of culture, of validation, of noetic packaging. There was nothing neutral at all in the presence of a printing press, just as there is nothing at all neutral in the technology of writing. They assume a totally new way of organizing knowledge and of communicating it. They are culture bound in earnest, in other words.

The primary oral culture (to use Walter Ong's phrase again),[13] before the coming of this new system, was also an integrated system with its own way of organizing and communicating knowledge, information, values. The oral word had been tuned and cadenced to a high level of subtlety both for practical, social, religious, ceremonial, and for aesthetic purposes.

This total communicative achievement had to be belittled so that the literate order could enter. If you didn't know your alphabet, did not know how to write or could not read, then you were dumb, no matter how skilled you were in your own verbal world. The chirographic, the typographic arts required that you be born again, crawl, and toddle, and toddle for a very long while.

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[11] Personal communication.

[12] James Calvert. (1858). *Fiji and the Fijians* Vol II, Mission History, 221-222.

[13] In *The Presence of the Word,* and elsewhere.

How much information and what quality of discourse you could make these arts communicate was another matter. Your brain, your psyche even, had to be reconfigured. Word became silent, visual, but it was access to the world that brought the technology.

An Encounter with Literacy

It would be interesting to witness the moment when individuals confronted written communication for the very first time, even just to bring home the fact that orality is a phenomenon essentially different from that of literacy. Or to discover what motivated people to literacy, and their perception of the art.

There is a dramatic moment depicting this encounter in William Mariner's account of the Tonga Islands as recorded by John Martin.

It is about thirty years before the printing press got to work in Lakeba, Fiji. Mariner had written a letter in English "with a solution of gunpowder and a little mucilage for ink, on some paper which one of the natives had had for a long time in his possession."[14] He had meant this letter for any ship captain that landed in Tonga, advising European ships to prefer Ha'apai to the island of Tongatapu for taking on supplies of food and water:

> advising, at the same time, not to suffer many of the natives to be on board at once, lest they should meet with the same fate as the Port au Prince; but, if possible, to make some chiefs prisoners, and keep them as hostages, till Mr. Mariner and his companions were delivered up.[15]

The letter had been given to one of the chiefs to keep and deliver when the opportunity arose. But a traitor, a Hawaiian, told Finau, the powerful warrior king, about this letter. Finau had the letter sent for. And here I quote from Dr. Martin's book:

> When it was put into his hands, he looked at it on all sides; but not being able to make anything of it, he gave it to Jeremiah Higgins, who was at hand, and ordered him to say what it meant. Mr Mariner was not present. Higgins took the letter, and translating part of it into the Tonga language, judiciously represented it to be merely a request to any English captain that might arrive to interfere with Finow for the liberty of Mr Mariner and his countrymen; stating, that they had been kindly treated by the natives, but, nevertheless, wished to return, if possible to their native country. This was not indeed the true substance of the letter, but it was what was least likely to give offence; and the chief accordingly remarked, that it was very natural for these poor fellows to wish to go back to their native country and friends.[16]

If you'll bear with me I'll quote at length from this fascinating account of 'curiosity and astonishment' at this marvelous invention of the chirographic art:

> This mode of communicating sentiments was an inexplicable puzzle to Finow; he took the letter again and examined it, but it afforded him no information. He considered the matter a little within himself; but his thoughts reflected no light upon the subject. At length he sent for Mr Mariner, and desired him to write down something; the latter asked what he

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[14] John Martin. (1817). *Tonga Islands: William Mariner's Account.* 5th edition, Nuku'alofa: Vava'u Press Limited. (1991). p 91.

[15] *Tonga Islands: William Mariner's Account,* Footnote, p 92.

[16] *Tonga Islands,* p92.

would choose to have written; he replied, put down me; he accordingly wrote 'Feenow' (spelling it after the strict English orthography); the chief then sent for another Englishman who had not been present, and commanded Mr Mariner to turn his back and look the other way, he gave the man the paper, and desired him to tell what that was: he accordingly pronounced aloud the name of the king, upon which Finow snatched the paper from his hand, and with astonishment, looked at it, turned it round and examined it in all directions; at length he exclaimed This is neither like myself nor anybody else! where are my legs? how do you know it to be .1? and then, without stopping for an attempt at an explanation, he impatiently ordered Mr Mariner to write something else, and thus employed him for three or four hours in putting down the names of different persons, places, and things, and making the other man read them. This afforded extraordinary diversion to Finow, and to all the women and men present, particularly as he now and then whispered a little love anecdote, which was strictly written down, and audibly read by the other, not a little to the confusion of one or other of the ladies present It was all taken in good humor; however, for curiosity and astonishment were the prevailing passions. How their names and circumstances could be communicated through so mysterious a channel, was altogether past their comprehension.

Finow had long ago formed his opinion of books and papers, and this as much resembled witchcraft as anything he had ever seen or heard of. Mr Mariner in vain attempted to explain. He had yet too slender a knowledge of their language to make himself clearly understood: and, indeed, it would not have been an easy matter to have explained the composition of elementary sounds, and of arbitrary signs expressive of them, to a people whose minds were already formed to other modes of thinking and whose language had few expressions but what concerned the ordinary affairs of life.[17] Finow, at length, thought he had got a notion of it, and explained to those about him that it was very possible to put down a mark or sign of something that had been seen both by the writer and reader, and which should be mutually understood by them; but Mr Mariner immediately informed him, that he could write down anything that he had never seen. The king directly whispered to him to put Toogoo Ahoo (the king of Tonga, whom he and Toobo Nuha had assassinated many years before Mr Mariner's arrival). This was accordingly done, and the other read it; when Finow was yet more astonished. He then desired him to write 'Tarky,' (the chief of the garrison of Bea, whom Mr Mariner and his companions had not yet seen; this chief was blind in one eye). When 'Tarky' was read, Finow inquired whether he was blind or not. This was putting writing to an unfair test! and Mr Mariner told him, that he had only written down the sign standing for the sound of his name, and not for the description of his person. He was then ordered in a whisper to write, Tarky, blind in his left eye,' which was done, and read by the other man to the increased astonishment of everybody. Mr Mariner then told him that, in several parts of the world, messages were sent to great distances through the same medium, and being folded and fastened up, the bearer could know nothing of the contents; and that the histories of whole nations were thus handed down to posterity, without spoiling by being kept (as he chose to 11
express himself). Finow acknowledged this to be a most noble invention, but added, that it would not at all do for the Tonga Islands; that there would be nothing but disturbances and conspiracies, and he should not be sure of his life, perhaps, another month. He said, however, jocularly, that he should like to know it himself and for all the women to know it, that he might

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[17] It is encouraging that Mariner recognized that there was a difference in the Tongan mind which, he says, had been formed by other ways of knowing and seeing, but he makes the common erroneous assessment that this limited their language and their expression. It never occurred to people who make these evaluative judgments that "natives" communicate with visitors on the competence level of the latter.

> make love with less risk of discovery, and not so much chance of incurring the vengeance of their husbands.[18]

I am sure there were tests and lessons of this sort in similar encounters between orality and literacy. And we can be sure, moreover, that similar emotions of wonder were expressed at `the noble invention', at what it was capable of communicating, just as there would have been inaccurate perceptions of what it was capable of doing.

There was also the judgment made on the limitations of the indigenous language, and this by someone who acknowledges in the very same breath his own poor understanding of it. It was quite revealing also that he notes that the native mind had been formed by other modes of thinking. This would in itself be a great undertaking to explore in the context of an oral culture. And I suppose I am including all that when I mention orality, particularly primary orality.

There is also the implication of what Finau expects writing to do. He wanted writing to function as icon. When you wrote down 'Finau' it would have to be him. Writing should become him. Person, flesh, is to be made word. Finau expected that when Mariner wrote Takai's name, this would include the detail that Takai was blind in the left eye. Symbol in this mode of perception would be instantiation, not abstraction. The symbolized becomes/comes to be within the symbol. This is in fact an important component of word in the oral culture. A person's name makes present the identity of that person, and by sounding the name you gain a certain control over that person. You have some power over the person. Something of this is also meant when people say that word is power. The uttered word is thing, that is living, energized, real, active.

The literate concept of word is not quite like that. Mariner had trouble trying to make Finau understand the written word as the symbol of what was sounded. Thus there is in this language I am using now an essential connection between symbol and sound. Indeed the Latin *verbum,* a word, already implies action. Note that the term verb comes directly from it. Now *verbum* itself derives from a root meaning *to speak.*[19]

Now I am not saying that writing always imitates speech or tries to. All I want to say is that writing has an intimate relatedness to sound. And I am hoping that when stories become written they can also have this relatedness, and can speak.

There is another important observation we can make on the Finau and writing account. This is the issue of the power of word. We can meditate on this on a number of levels. The first obvious one is on the level of what writing does with articulate sound, and this reverberates throughout the history of writing, the history of putting down oral utterances or performances in writing, the history of recording in writing, traditions, stories, songs, chants, speeches, histories, and so on. In many ways, for the literate with a past, all this constitutes much of what they know, these reproductions, re-presentations, editions, reconstructions, or "diminishments".[20]

All these products, these hoards of words, accounts, etc. are not neutral however. Just because they have become the written word or the printed word does not mean they should rule over others that still belong in the oral world. To have them do so is to confuse instrument, the technology, and the word. Related to both instrument and word is the notion of quality. I mean the transcription of a story can be badly done. Low quality work went into its production. And stories too don't write themselves, just as no event can become a story by itself. It needs someone to tell of the event. And no one is neutral or objective. What is told, written, produced, is a complex result of choices, inclusions and exclusions. There is needed a lively critical sense among literacy clients and purveyors.

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[18] *Tonga Islands,* pp 92-94.

[19] Cf. *The Gresham Comprehensive English Dictionary,* p 983. Also Ong: "[V]erbum, the general Latin term for word, is used... to designate the predicate rather than the subject (it gives us our term, verb). The verb is a word---that is, it is something spoken---in a more intense fashion than is a subject." *The Presence of the Word.* p 158.

[20] With apologies to Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Milieu Divin.*

The power of the written word in terms of its capacity and capabilities is undoubted. But in terms of what I've been hinting at already and in terms of what I'm going to hint at, that power is often regarded in an exaggerated way. In relation to speech it is not able to carry with any ease all that speech carries. It cannot with ease retell a story, re-chant a chant, reproduce voice and tone, and cadence and all manner of gestures. The oral word that is modulated by a gesture has to become a different word or more words in the written version. If liveliness is a quality of the story, then the written has to keep pace or approach the context of interacting sounds and voices.

The popular will to literacy strives to make books available to as many as possible. To fulfil this goal there will sometimes be an indiscriminate supply produced and made available. There comes a time when we become more discriminating, when quality becomes important, not only in the look of the book, but also in the range and richness of the writing. If the word is not enriching, then children will shy away from words, go for the icons instead, or make do with a very limited word hoard, and lose interest in many things in human existence that are explored and explorable through words. They will no doubt be capable of what Finau wanted for himself and the ladies, and what the preacher wants them to read and memorise, or what advertisers want them to buy, but will not get to appreciate what major or any good writers explore, or get to sense the irony of losing the mastery of the verbal arts from their language communities. For if one has not discovered an interest in word from the traditional culture, then one would find it a little difficult to find it elsewhere. This is unless there was a literacy program that recognized the situation and was sensitive to the word.

And by a literate inadvertence children will be excluded. Finau thought that his people should not become literate for fear of the secret power writing would give them. It was a kind of censorship of the medium for the mass. But it was not an exclusion that was seriously meant, and not an exclusion that a literate inadvertence would generate. This is a more insidious cause for exclusion because it will deny the formative and even the performative identities and means of those subject to the literacy program.

Focus and Ambience of Orality

Orality is of the order of our human lifeworld, closest to it for our survival, closest to it for our personal development, closest to it for maintaining the bonds that keep us human. And any technology should be there only to mediate and keep us together. We can only understand each other and be personally and mutually' committed in oral interaction. We may not always like to be that close, but when we feel that need, then no amount of chirographic or typographic mediation can quite satisfy.

Walter Ong explains this linking of orality to the human lifeworld:

> In the absence of elaborate analytic categories that depend on writing to structure knowledge at a distance from lived experience, oral cultures must conceptualize and verbalize all their knowledge with more or less close reference to the human lifeworld, assimilating the alien, objective world to the more immediate familiar interaction of human beings. A chirographic (writing) culture and even more a typographic (print) cultures can distance and in a way denature even the human, itemizing such things as the names of leaders and political divisions in an abstract, neutral list entirely devoid of a human action context

I have been speaking of oral culture as if we still inhabited that zone of our existence without literacy. You will remember that the history of the "presence of word" has gone as far, if not beyond the electronic media zone. And here in the islands we have been introduced to, enmeshed in, fascinated by, hooked on, submerged under, most of those technologies of the word. And as I mentioned earlier we have arrived, thanks to these, at a "secondary orality" zone. We listen, we watch, somewhat as our people used to do before radio, before television, before satellites and computers. Yet our modes of thinking and of using language and valuating discourse are still very much sounded and cadenced and projected by the older habits of orality. This may all be very well if we are aware of it. But it becomes the source of our confusions if we are not. The people who hear us, educate us, rule us, advise us, who come to enlighten us, read us as if we were texts configured wholly by the typographic culture. They expect us to behave, react the same way as they, with the common assumption that we are all human beings, and our cultural and linguistic specifications are merely contingent affairs, readily erasable for the imprint of the real word, the written and imperialist word.

I get a little worried also when some people tout and chant the word "multiculturalism" a little too loudly, and too often. While this sounds comforting, it can often mean that we don't have to do anything about it. Or, it may mean that no one should behave too conspicuously like themselves. Which comes down to the real position that by touting multiculturalism some people are saying let's just behave the behavior that is common to us all. Erase the differences. Or keep your specificities to yourself. And then we are all absolved of the need to understand each other. I've heard this stated particularly in the context of this university (USP), for instance. We come here to learn. Let's get down to the business of learning, the pursuit of knowledge. This is no place for tracing tribal allegiances. And we forget, conveniently for most, perhaps, that our language and cultural specificities have formed and cadenced the way we think, feel, evaluate, learn.

Again we absolve ourselves from the task of really exploring the facts of our various selves, and being truly humanized in the process.

A Burden for Literacy

Literacy in our islands, and I know I am speaking to the people already facing the challenge, would have to strive to bear the burden of orality. What can I possibly mean by this apparent contradiction?

We know that orality truly speaks. It speaks with its own rhythms, inflections, cadences, silences, "the rise, the roll, the carol, the creation" (to use one of Hopkins' lines)[21], its social and verbal complement (which sometimes takes the form of compliments, additions, echoing, reinforcing sounds of approval, disgust. wonder) from an interacting audience, a participatory audience. The telling of a story, in other words, becomes a celebration.

Any oral performance, as a dance, for instance, shares this kind of celebratory presence. Word in these contexts of celebration could be very minimal, or copious, depending on whether we delimit word as text, or word as an inclusive, totalizing presence. If the latter, then we say that word is this total communicative event, a complex narrative whole.

Now, this is a concrete fact, this communicative event. I can also project it to become the symbol of orality and all that it stands for in its cultural and linguistic contexts. And the question that I have often posed is: How do you textualize an event in its throbbing reality? And some of you may wonder whether it should be done at all. Why should you have to do it?

This of course introduces the whole question of recording, putting down stories, reducing stories, chants, songs, and so on, to written texts. (It's interesting that our language is honest here. Note "putting down", "reduce to writing"). And this is what I want to turn to briefly.

It is somewhat ironic that when the missionaries arrived in the Pacific they were keen, some of them, to record certain traditions of the people, certain stories, partly for helping them understand the people, partly for a collection of curiosities to amuse their public back home, and partly for preserving what they saw as rapidly disappearing.

The history of interest and work in this field shows no new way of approaching the traditional word arts of the people. We must be grateful, nevertheless, to those people who spent time recording the stories of the people, their poetry, dance chants and songs, and other genres of tradition. We wouldn't have texts to talk about if those few missionaries and colonial administrators, and, later, social scientists, anthropologists and sociologists, had not taken an interest in these verbal productions of the people.

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[21] G.M. Hopkins, "To R.B."

And I have observed that same interest using the very same methods of textualizing, by dictation, from recall, as a retell, or from written texts by teachers, or pupils and others who had become literate. It appears that the model for textualization was the missionary model, or the little more improved models of the social scientists and colonial administrators. Their texts stand and appear as final, objective and neutral entities. They have no history, no parentage, no people, but plenty of authority.

The problem with all this, from the point of view of literate modelling, and literary production, is the erasure of orality from all the texts (well, there are exceptions, and some residual orality does infiltrate the written text). If we accept my use of orality as a totalizing concept, then we can say that most of the texts that we have, and that we read from, and perpetuate as texts of stories from our cultural heritage, are incomplete. And they're not only incomplete, they misrepresent tradition, misrepresent an important art of the people. Where is the art of storytelling? It would appear that storytellers had no creativity at all, that all traditional stories were generated in common and retold in much the same form. And that form was really the form of the textualized version. Talk, as it were, had become mimetic of the typographic form. You had now to speak as if you were a stiff column of written text.

You can understand what I'm advocating, that our writing must bear the burden of orality. Our literacy must be configured by a creative orality. This is a tall order because what must underlie our approach is a genuine concern to account for the arts of the people, the richness of their language, and the threat of the erasing of these by an inadvertent literacy program. The mastery of the technology is one thing. That should be a liberating act. But it can happen that liberation becomes the other side of enslavement. You raise the lowly only to swell the numbers of those that become shackled to the globalizing forces. The goal of the one world is fine if that world belongs to us all and we all have reasonable access to it. But we know that the world does not really belong to us all; it really belongs to only a few.

If we believe that our traditions do have truly humanizing agents, then it is our task to revitalize those agents, and we can make a start by working to understand them in their context. This is not an archaeological project, nor a museum display of past achievements, though these may be used. No, this is a program of creative adaptations, a project that explores what we are heirs to, what would enrich and enhance the humanity of our lives, and which would make us stand tall in the greater assembly of peoples. It is now clear, at least that's the intention, that this interest in orality as a totalizing and regenerative factor is at the same time an interest in orature which had been overlooked, unheard, by all manner of researchers, scholars, anthropologists, missionaries, colonial civil servants. To see this orature/literature becoming reinstated by a genuine interest in storytelling and other verbal art events should give us good heart that we are going the most satisfying way.

We have arrived at orality again, admittedly by a somewhat rough and tortuous passage, but the idea has arrived, nonetheless.

I wonder if I can end on a note that brings back Socrates and his assertion of the spoken word as superior to the written. This is the end of the second letter of John:

> There are several things I have to tell you, but I have thought it best not to trust them to paper and ink. I hope instead to visit you and talk to you personally, so that our joy may be complete.'[22]

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[22] John *"The Jerusalem Bible"*.

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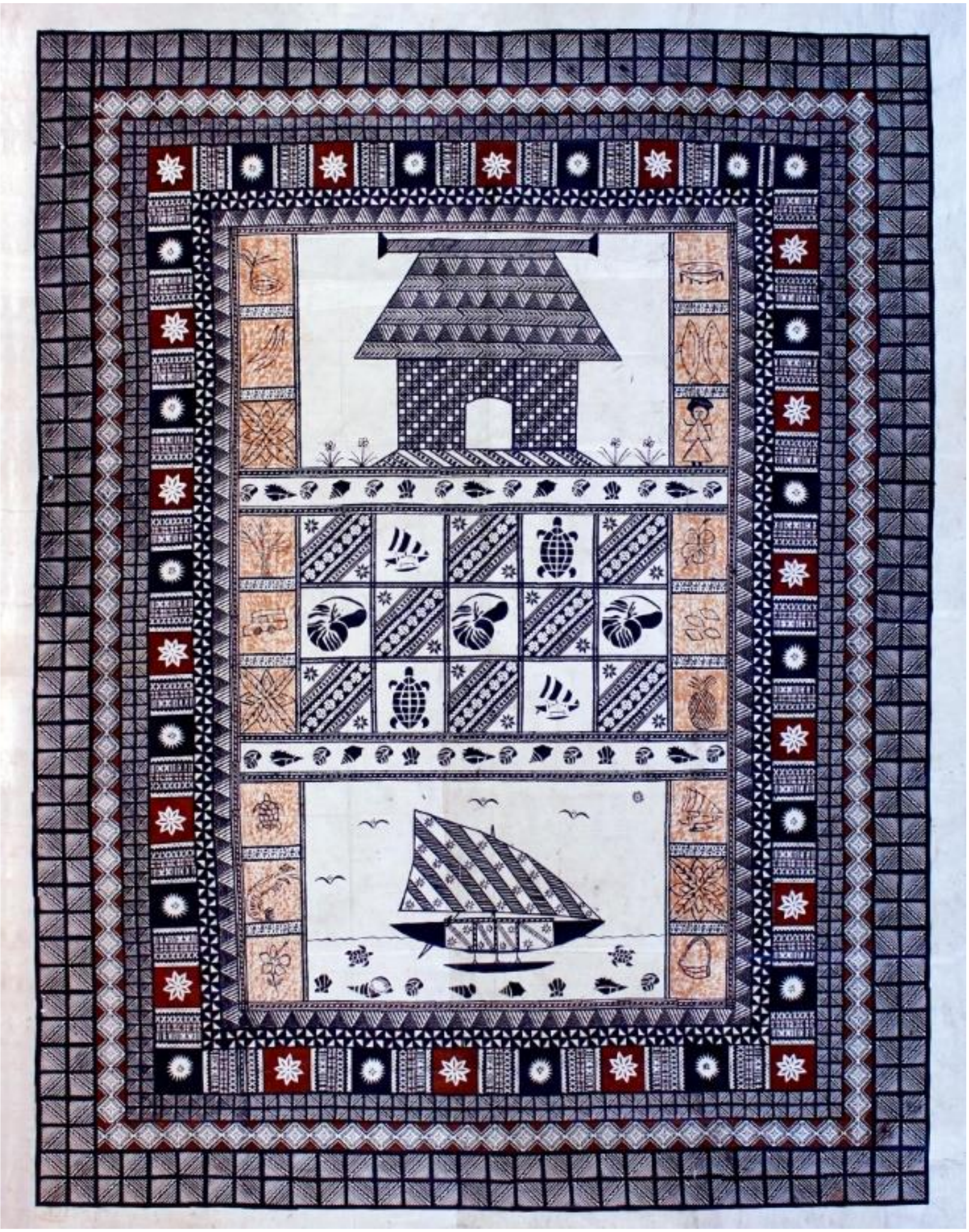

Suka Lesu by Selau Buasal – Hand printed Masi with traditional dyes

Survival of the Focused: Bernard Stiegler's Phenomenology of Attention Capture in the Era of Social Media

Chris S. Schreiner

Introduction

It is commonly known that the technical innovations that have accompanied the rise of the internet have found a welcoming atmosphere on campuses, and that the reception and adoption of new technologies has been supported by students, faculty members, and administrators. A few weeks ago in Boston, I overheard an education major refer to himself not as a teacher or educator, but as a person skilled in *knowledge management technologies*. He said this weighty string of nouns more accurately represents his marketable expertise and his preparedness for the 21st-Century classroom, and that "teacher" sounds old-fashioned. His professional instincts are accurate if unromantic. The grants that make young scholars look engaged and cutting-edge are often linked to technology companies or the integration of new technical applications. Government support will increasingly flow in the same direction. The web site *EdSurge* reports that the Obama administration has submitted a budget request for 2015 which includes $200M earmarked "to support professional learning for educators who are transforming their practice through technology."[23] Given such developments, it is almost heretical to argue as does Rodney Brooks, a Professor of Robotics at MIT, that technologies in the classroom are intensifying distraction and hindering learning, and that the internet induces "Information-Provoked Attention Deficit Disorder."[24] The French philosopher Bernard Stiegler has arguably written more persuasively than anyone else on the psychosocial consequences of such distraction, and it is to his book, *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* (2010) that I wish to return in a moment.

Individuals who actually question technology acquisition or application on campuses are rare, or merely subdued as a silent minority, aware that their opinion is unpopular and not worth publicizing. Conversely, the scholars who have opportunistically geared their pedagogy to technical applications and settings appear to most onlookers as the keenest emissaries of the *New Culture of Learning*. I am not making that phrase up. It is in fact the title of a book that epitomizes the new technical opportunism in academia. The recommended tools of learning include Wikipedia, Google, Facebook, YouTube, Ask.fm, and online games. Learning "takes place without books, without teachers, and without classrooms." The infrastructure of the New Culture of Learning is "a massive information network that provides almost unlimited access and resources to learn about anything." The learning community is described as "a collective, a community of similar-minded people…Perhaps the most important aspect of all..." is the users' ability to comment on projects they liked by clicking a 'Love it?" button."[25]

By now this sort of progressive discourse presupposing the benefits of educational technologies seems riddled with clichés and lacking sobriety. The massive information network is an inestimable asset, but also a headache or personal chaos for those who lack the critical skills and self-discipline to manage information overload and its distractions. Many educators know by now that if their students are on Facebook in class, they are probably not learning but arranging where to meet their BFFs for lunch. The social media culture of "like it" and "love it" is now seen by some educators as uncritical and infantile. (Immaturity, as we will see, is described by Bernard Stiegler one of the most common outcomes of undisciplined exposure to the new media and wired world.) But it is nevertheless true that while many educators have been disabused of the learning paradise that was initially associated with internet applications in education, university administrators continue to revel in corporatized visions of technical progress and manage their budgets accordingly.

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[23] See "Obama Proposes $200 M for Edtech," (March 4, 2014); https://www.edsurge.com/n/2014-03-04-obama-proposes-200m-for-edtech.

[24] "The Internet is stealing our attention. It competes for it with everything else we do. A lot of what it offers is high-quality competition. But unfortunately, a lot of what it offers is merely good at capturing our attention and provides us with little of long-term impoet—sugar-filled carbonated sodas for our mind." See Rodney Brooks essay, "Information-Provoked Attention Deficit Disorder" in *Is The Internet Changing The Way You Think?*, ed. John Brockman (New York: HarperCollins, 2011), 363.

[25] Douglas Thomas and John Seely Brown, *A New Culture of Learning* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Initiative, 2011), 18.

Bernard Stiegler therefore is a rare educator and administrator who, book after book, soberly assesses the epistemological prospects of technical innovation for the human species. His *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* is a thoughtful, consistently stimulating work that connects research paths in education, cultural studies and the social sciences.[26] Stiegler currently heads the Department of Cultural Development at the Pompidou Center of Paris; he also started a school of philosophy at Épineuil-le-Fleuriel. *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* is one among several recent books by Stiegler to be published and translated into English. There is the highly personal and succinct *Acting Out* (2009; *Passer à l'acte*, 2003), which is an account of Stiegler's intellectual development, including the role of philosophy in his life when he served time in a correctional facility. His *For a New Critique of Political Economy* (2010; *Pour une nouvelle critique de l'économie politique*, 2009) calls for radical social change in the wake of the global market collapse in 2008. Polity Press recently published Stiegler's *Uncontrollable Societies of Disaffected Individuals* (2013).

The Battle for Intelligence

Bernard Stiegler's method is a phenomenological sociology of new media with a focus on the related problems of attention, memory, and critical inference (including comprehension of figurative language and symbols) in the context of learning. A single essay like this one cannot do justice to the intricacy of reasoning and spirited humanism in *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* which conducts a "battle for intelligence" (20). Stiegler's focus is on the changes in human memory--and hence, identity--caused by electronic infrastructure, the media content and the gadgets of transmission whose *attention capture techniques* dissolve intellectual autonomy in young people worldwide. According to Stiegler there is a titanic contest for souls between systems of coercion that compete for our attention. The *psychotechnics* for attention capture are deployed by a global *telecracy* of multinational corporate enterprises and educational institutions (53). These systems "fundamentally restructure the intergenerational connection constituting intelligence as the structuring and restructuring of the retentions and protentions from which attention is constructed" (33).

Stiegler's terminology harks back to Edmund Husserl's lectures on internal time-consciousness that were edited by his research assistant, Martin Heidegger.[27] In spite of the existential focus that came to distinguish Heidegger's philosophy from that of his mentor, they both described temporality as projective, with memory serving an *active* role in the constitution of reality. In his treatise, *What is Called Thinking?* Heidegger describes memory as "the keeping" that "harbors and conceals what gives us food for thought," but also "*gives* freely what is to-be-thought."[28] The italicization of *gives* is meant to emphasize the active sense of memory in mental operations which can by no means be reduced to storage and retrieval. Memory sets the agenda for us insofar as it is the sum total of our *thought allegiances*, the matters we recall and to which we attend, that we *care* for, *plan* for, and that constitute the basis for our sense of belonging. In short, what one habitually attends to, selects, distinguishes, interprets, and retains in memory determines what one anticipates of the future and visualizes as a horizon of potential cultural activity. If you are a reader of stories and fairy tales as your parents were, it is likely you will read these to your own children. And if, like over twenty-five percent of the U.S. population, you have not read a book in the past year, you will probably not read to your children but park them in front of a television or give them an iPad.[29] The streaming present of online sources is entertaining but not *meaningful* insofar as meaning is historical, graspable, interpretable, and capable of being archived; the streaming present is instead a sort of *Lethe*, river of forgetfulness.

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[26] Bernard Stiegler, *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations*, trans. Stephen Barker (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010). [*Prendre soin de la jeunesse et des générations*. Flammarion, 2008.] All numerical page references in my essay will refer solely to this text of Stiegler's, and only to the English translation

[27] Edmund Husserl, *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*, ed. Martin Heidegger, trans. James S. Churchill (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1964).

[28] Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 151.

Intergenerational Enculturation

From these brief observations it should be clear that Bernard Stiegler is less concerned with cognition as typically represented, i.e., according to a processing model derived from computing, than with the stylized, personal surplus of meaning produced in the interpretation of cultural artifacts and transferred between generations. Such activity is distinctively human and beyond machine codification. The looming nightmare for Stiegler is a holiday reunion at which the young people sit wearing earphones, playing with their iPads and smart phones, while the grandparents sit in silence playing chess or cards in front of the fireplace. There is an absence--a silence--of transferable cultivation, and the negative repercussions of this situation will be felt for generations. When a grandmother in Sendai tells her grandchild a local folk tale, she transmits content but also her interpretation, her witty emphases, the very modulation of her voice, and this kind of communication is absorbed by the child with the combination of receptiveness and spontaneity—including questions and answers—that *cultivates* his or her cleverness and understanding. In subtle ways, the teller and the listener *take care* of the material through *co-ownership* while retaining its content for subsequent communication and reflection. Wisdom and the contents of folklore are not the only things transferred between grandparents and successive generations. So too are the *habits of patient attention* that sustain the practices of reading and writing.

Our elder role models teach us how to read, listen, and *how to wait*—that is, pay attention. This is the reason Plutarch speaks of “the habit of patient attention” in his text “On Listening to Lectures.”[30] The French meaning of the verb *attendre* comes into play here for Stiegler’s thesis on taking care. To attend to a matter is to pay attention to it *and* wait for it to crystallize in thought, to meet the challenge posed to understanding. Distraction is a threat to the act of attention conceived as *patiently attending to the matter at stake*. Such patience and critical attention are conveyed across generations, as when a grandchild helps his grandfather construct a beautiful chair of maple in the woodshop; or when a daughter observes her mother practice *Cha-no-yu* (Japanese tea ceremony), learning focused patience in the succession of gestures: putting the *matcha* (pulverized tea) in the *chawan* or tea bowl, pouring hot water into it, and then delicately stirring with the *chasen* (a bamboo whisk). It is a memorable experience of delayed gratification when the child learns that drinking the frothy, pungent liquid is the last gesture in this ancient ceremony that many Japanese perform as a *shikitari* or cultural practice. This is a similar lesson to that learned by the child who accompanies his father fly-fishing at dusk in a Vermont stream. The child is at first incredulous that such an inordinate amount of time is spent preparing the equipment, locating the best angle of access, and then fishing, only to have the fish released back into the water as dictated by the practice of “catch-and-release” fishing.

We can see that these “lessons” are not only initiations in cultural practices but into forms of *attentive life*. Hence the decline of interest in such hobbies among the young, who spend an average of seven hours per day on the internet, is of greater consequence that at first seems to be the case. The “patient spirit” learned in hobbies and fine arts is indistinguishable from attention, and becomes manifest in the care we take in personally attending to matters in our own *Lebenswelt* (Lifeworld) to ensure our actual (awakened) thoughts and concerns are integral to the order of things, and that we are not careless about the *Folgewelt*, the world of our successors. “By cultivating objects,” George Simmel said, “that is by increasing their value beyond the performance of their natural constitution, we cultivate ourselves: it is the same value-increasing process developing out of us and returning back to us…”[31] It is my impression that in this remark Simmel evinces a phenomenological viewpoint in common with Stiegler. For phenomenology, thought is exegesis (*Auslegung*), but also sense bestowal (*Sinngebung*): we critically interpret phenomena and add value to them. When the tourist spots beautiful coral while snorkeling, it first appears *as* a souvenir to break off and possess; but the tourist exercises a critical capacity to suspend the careless prejudgment that inheres in the *tourist way of seeing nature as a souvenir shop to plunder*, pulls his arm back from breaking off a piece, and considers the sustainability of coral gardens in a high-density tourist location. This feeling for nature is often learned from one's ancestors, but one would hardly call it critical thinking. Improbable as it sounds, tourists are as capable of critical thinking as students and professors. In a literature class, we not only come to understand a text on its own merits by suspending our prejudices and delicately setting it back into its own world, from which it speaks to us across decades and centuries, but we also add value to the text by seeing how it speaks to our current lives—what possible lessons it holds for us, what examples of virtue or heroism. This is not so different from what a grandmother does with her grandchild when sharing folktales.

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[29] Jordan Weissmann, “The Decline of the American Book Lover , *The Atlantic* (Jan. 21, 2014) www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/01/the-decline-of-the-american-book-lover/283222/

[30] Plutarch, “On Listening to Lectures,” in *Moralia: Volume I*, trans. Frank Cole Babbit (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, Loeb Classical Library, 1927), 237.

[31] David Frisby and Mike Featherstone, eds., *Simmel on Culture* (London: Sage Publishers, 1997), 37.

The Role of Critical Attention

Bernard Stiegler's painstaking analyses of what we might call communicative epistemology, the inner relation between human knowing and technical conduits and interfaces, or apps, question the unquestioned prosthetic adoption of handheld devices and web apps inside and outside the classroom, which are more often distracting than not, disempowering critical attention. His most abiding concern is what he terms "the pathogenesis of attention destruction" (91). Genuine learning, Stiegler argues, depends on critical attention. Critical thinking, therefore, is not a new skill set or methodology that is added to a student's education when the administration gets around to mandating it as a required Student Learning Objective in all courses. According to Stiegler, all classroom thinking that merits the name of "thinking" involves critical attention. Unlike other recent studies that document the cognitive distraction of "wired" students and their decline in academic performance, such as *The Dumbest Generation*, *Distraction*, and *The Shallows*, Stiegler does not blame students, but describes with growing alacrity the complicity of educational, commercial, and governmental initiatives in fostering informational consumers instead of critical minds. Students are individuated *en masse* through technically induced attention patterns into careless information consumers, not autonomous individuals who take care to exercise critical attention. Another way to describe this phenomenon is *collective individuation,* a concept that originated in the writings of Gilbert Simondon, whose ideas add a Marxian edge to Stiegler's otherwise phenomenological approach (61). Even our body postures have been collectively individuated through cell phone usage. Stiegler cites Giorgio Agamben's personal observation of cell phone usage in Italy: "I live in Italy, a country where the gestures and behaviors of individuals have been reshaped from top to toe by the cellular telephone (which the Italians dub the *telephonio*). I have developed an implacable hatred for this apparatus, which has made the relationship between people all the more abstract" (227).

While student personae reflect a wide range of cultural variables and emotional affects, they often *hide their own differences* in order to fit in while their *attention patterns become uniform*, linked to the same web sites, spending habits, devices, and apps. Meanwhile, the consequences of this global development are commonly known to school teachers and professors: student impatience with long or complicated texts due to shortened attention spans; restlessness *or* drowsiness during lessons; ineffectual multitasking that lessens the quality of performance outcomes; stubborn requests for the cinematic versions of masterpieces, or the grounding of literary discussions in literal aspects of a novel--such as authorial biography or geography--to avoid interpreting the symbolic meaning latent in the text. The latter tendency, by which students find figurative and symbolic texts impenetrable, is described by Stiegler as *desymbolization*, as we will explain more fully in a moment. These and other consequences have been documented by studies and surveys conducted by the Kaiser Foundation and NIH, to which Stiegler refers; but such studies do not take the extra step of attributing their findings to aggressive *social industrialization of students* by mass media, and to the uncritical (surely naïve) complicity of educational institutions with electronic and pharmaceutical giants in exacerbating widespread attention deficit disorder by moving hurriedly to multimodal (audiovisual) classrooms not infrequently funded by computer companies.

The Problem of Immaturity in Attention Automatons

The outcome of psychosocial developments that integrate and homogenize *cognitive style and consumer compulsion*, according to Stiegler, is lifelong *immaturity* for those who go along with what is trending instead of critically assessing the suitability of apps and consumer innovations for their personal needs and ambitions, taking ownership only when appropriate and not as soon as a new product or social media app enthralls its audience consisting of millions of dedicated if not devoted users. People no longer make their own choices, and this passivity or lack of critical engagement retards their maturation. The problem is not so much that attention is ceaselessly commanded, but that desire is already distributed in advance and spoken *for* by commercial interests, supplanting the initiative of the *hypersolicited consumer*. Stiegler is concerned with this substitution of subjectivity that usurps the force and focus of individual attention. A student *already knows* that *Hermes* is a quality fashion brand, but *has no idea* of the mythic origin of this name given to the messenger of the gods, or that *hermeneutics* is systematic exegesis that facilitates literary understanding. We respect and covet a fashion brand whose value we have already been inculcated to appreciate via a specific form of awareness that has been enchanted by the worldwide allure of the fashion brand. Hence Stiegler speaks of today's students and working professionals as "attention automatons" (100). Media stars receive the same ubiquitous "trending" coverage as Chanel and Gucci: students know much more about Miley Cyrus than Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, and Goethe. The seeming miracle of technical gadgetry, which is invoked as a panacea by educators, masks its stupefying influence that Stiegler describes as a psychotechnical *pharmakon*. He means that a technology that could serve as a cure for literacy if used with careful discretion becomes an addictive fetish that gobbles up hours at a time in online surfing. It is already a cliché to say the internet is either a valuable tool for learning or a toxic drug to stupefy consciousness, but we have not gotten past the cliché.

Since Stiegler does not teach writing, his study overlooks the effects of collective or uniform habits of attention on modes of expression. Anyone who has taught college composition for a decade or longer, regardless of geographic location, has observed the narrowing in the diversity of expression and verbal felicity, simplification of diction, phraseology, punctuation, sentence patterns, and cultural allusion (as when citing an example), into a common pool of discourse whose range and flexibility seems stunted and homogeneous. It is often the case that such writings do not accurately reflect the intelligence of the writers, but rather the uniformity of a discursive *milieu* (a word favored by Stiegler) that preconditions perception and understanding on a global basis. This can easily be observed in the case of students (for instance, from the U.S. mainland, Japan, and Guam) who write a brief review of popular films that have been merchandised, such as *Harry Potter* and *Twilight*, where it is not uncommon to find the trending adjectives "awesome" and "epic," used by a strikingly high percentage of students, or more general adjectives such as "great" or "spectacular"; whereas in reviewing a lesser known or older film, such as Tarkovsky's *Stalker* or Bergman's *Seventh Seal* (about the return of weary knights from the Crusades during the plague years) the most common evaluative phrases are "too long," "boring," or "old-fashioned." When colleagues of mine respond to this state of affairs by pointing out that every generation finds older films more boring than new films, they overlook the more disturbing pattern of predictability of response in critical language to make their "obvious" (yet arguable) point about generational norms of *aesthetic* taste. Any conspicuous predictability or uniformity in patterns of *critical* response, *critical* thinking, and *critical* discourse (from diction to punctuation) invites scrutiny in so far as criticism is supposed to be an *autonomous* intellectual effort, however frowned upon in an era of social media and curricular standardization. Our remark reflects a Kantian bias, as will be explained shortly. The fact remains that there is no intrinsic relation between curricular standardization and critical performance. It does not, or should not, necessarily follow that a cohort of students that reads the same set of literary masterpieces will respond to those works in nearly identical patterns of critical argument, aesthetic judgment, and exegesis. Any conformity in such assumedly *critical* activities, apart from the laudable retention of a specialized stock of knowledge (*Wissenvorrat*), as in the Praxis exams, signals a disturbing neutralization of critical capacity.

This is the inflection point where, if Stiegler read my casual observations about student writing, he would infer a lack of maturity in student writers—and in learners in general. His thesis about widespread immaturity developed in *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* reflects a Kantian viewpoint in so far as critical consumers and students (identities which have tragically converged) would ideally practice autonomous decision making. For Stiegler and Kant, mature critical thinking requires the *autonomy of the thinker*. This viewpoint can be retraced to Kant's essay, "What is Enlightenment?" where he echoes Horace's motto *Sapere aude* or "Dare to know!"--"Have courage to use your own reason!"[32] Be this as it may, one can arrive at the same perspective without Kant by grasping the etymology of "criticism" and its modern French cognate, *critique*. (Kant would not disagree, and would be averse to taking philosophical credit for a mere etymological truth.) If we abbreviate this issue as a lexical matter, *criticism*--and critical thinking--means "cutting" through or discerning certain words, images, and ideas, standing apart from them, and making distinctions and decisions (judgments) that may be *logical* (based on reason, grammar, etc.), *aesthetic* (based on sentiments and artistic taste), and/or *moral* (based on ethical norms).

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[32] Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" in *Kant on History*, ed. Lewis White Beck; trans. Lewis White Beck, Robert Anchor, and Emil Fackenheim (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1963), 3.

Stiegler's critique of widespread conformity and immaturity *induced commercially and educationally* (because these vectors have converged) remains controversial in the era of social media where group thinking has become popular, and feminism has faulted Kantian autonomy for being prejudiced against community-based models of living and learning. We have not had this sort of encompassing cultural diagnosis since Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism*. Interestingly, Stiegler does not concur with Lasch's influential findings, hence disagreeing with the initial wave of criticism directed at social media for instilling narcissism in youth. Instead Stiegler describes the *destruction of primary narcissism*, diagnosing *disindividuation* and incapacity for both love and self-love as the psychosocial outcomes of attention capture in the organization of certain human beings. Alluding to mass shootings in public spaces, Stiegler argues that the evidence traced to perpetrators via diaries, blogs, and interviews suggests not that they love themselves, but they lose all sense of themselves as integral egos with distinctive identity traits since there is *no integral self to love*. A test case for Stiegler to which he often refers is that of Richard Durn, who committed a mass shooting in France. Durn's diary, published in *Le Monde*, revealed that when he glanced in the mirror he saw nothing; he had the feeling of *not existing*. He assassinated a group of municipal officials to "do evil at least once" and "have the feeling of existing."[33] It is misleading to extrapolate from one case. It is feasible that *some* killers commit their horrendous crimes to once and for all establish a self, a public persona that did not previously exist or that had been neutralized. In the Internet era, a diagnosis of such psychosis could in some cases reveal a selfhood disaggregated between the multiple screens and images of online surfing, a condition that differs from the pre-internet narcissism of someone like the myopic murderer of John Lennon. After reading Stiegler, one is tempted to speculate that the plurality of victims in recent mass shootings corresponds to the psychic commotion and self-imagery of the user caught *between screens*--like a hall of mirrors, or constantly shuffled pack of cards--in the mind of shooters today, compared with the solipsism of disturbed killers before the internet era.

The Philosophical Origins of the Concept of Care

Before we say anything else about the problem of wired selfhood, it will prove helpful to clarify Stiegler's title, whose phrase "taking care" derives from two philosophical sources. The first source is the existential "taking care" (*Sorge*) discussed by Heidegger in *Being and Time* (1927), by which a human existent (*Dasein*) recuperates or repossesses its own time, its lifetime (*Lebenszeit*) from anonymous dispossession by world-time (*Weltzeit*), the social order of time that objectively regulates workplace and cultural conformity (a.k.a. collective individuation in Simondon). This type of existential care accomplishes temporal individuation, awakening the concrete salience and urgency of "my own" (*Jemeinigkeit*) lifetime due to the fact that my death is singular, *the* singularizing fact of mortal existence. The second source of the "taking care" in Stiegler's title refers to Foucault's final lectures, begun at the University of Vermont in 1981 and continued at the Sorbonne until his death in 1984, which focused on the *care of the self* as an educational practice that Foucault retraces to *epimeleia heautou*, spiritual exercises and techniques of ancient Greek and Roman philosophical cultures.[34] Education should require us to ask, *ti esti to hautou epimeleisthai*, or "What is it to take care of oneself?" This careful practice of self-discipline as a set of spiritual exercises conducted on a daily basis involved consistent self-questioning ("What can I do to be more punctual at work?"); textual exegesis (book reviewing, translation, or the explication of a lovely poem that has always mystified me); the writing of essays, letters, and diaries; acts of memorization (that lovely poem is finally retained!); the pursuit of eloquence; and dialogues with oneself and interlocutors such as teachers, friends, and fellow students.

It is obvious how Foucault's hermeneutic retrieval of the *epimeleia heautou* or spiritual exercises dovetails with Heidegger's temporal concept of care, as one must *take the time* or *make the time* to take care of oneself. These exercises are not performed to divide or distract myself, but to harmonize and sharpen my selfhood according to my lifeline, my unique axis of interests and obligations. In this context "taking care" primarily means establishing one's autonomy as a critical agent via cultivation and intellectual development into maturity, pertaining to both the autodidact (self-taught person) and those who attend a learning institution. Ah, but this does not sound like selfless volunteer work at the local Salvation Army? The point of these forms of taking care is that if individuals cultivate themselves, the community to which they belong will be enriched in countless ways since most of the personal exercises are fundamentally cultural. Ironically, the outcome of self-discipline is often *the production of objective cultural forms* (painting, music, poetry, linguistic fluency, scientific discovery). Furthermore, through such exercises one *creates oneself* as a cultivated citizen who by her personal rigor and cheerful interactions raises standards and quietly ennobles the institution to which she belongs.

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[33] Bernard Stiegler, *Acting Out*, trans. David Barison, Daniel Moss, and Patrick Crogan (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2009), 39.

[34] See in particular Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collége de France 1981-1982*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2005).

Symbolic Misery and the Cultivating Role of Exegesis

When students read an article or story, they are prone to summarize and condense the material as so much information, but such work is not *cultivating* and can be done by a machine or by crowd sourcing. Teaching that merely inculcates learning as information retrieval and exchange encourages "informational consumerism" and the "desymbolization" of intelligence, Stiegler describes as disarming students of one of their most precious powers, exegesis, the way we make sense of materials whose semantic potential exceeds their literal sense (81). To prepare for an exegesis requires *critical attention* paid to language, psychology (including biography), history and folklore, myth and archetypes, ideology, genre conventions and various other factors that co-constitute meaning in a text. To perform an exegesis requires *critique* in the Kantian sense, i.e., a decision as to which of the factors listed above should be privileged over others as one undertakes a critical study, depending on the challenges posed by the text; setting limits to one's study; and clarifying one's methodology. If *critical attention* (synonym for the "critical thinking" inconsistently taught on campuses) is not exercised regularly, it slackens to a dullness of mind that Stiegler calls *symbolic misery*. (*De la misere symbolique* is the title of a book by Stiegler not yet translated into English.) In a nutshell, a student feels symbolic misery when he or she draws a blank upon encountering an allusion or image in a text that is indispensable to its comprehension. Even an apparently straightforward poem such as Robert Frost's "Dust of Snow" provokes such misery in students if they lack the minimal knowledge needed to infer the basic meaning of the poem.

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.[35]

After several years of asking students to interpret this poem, it has come to my attention that there are typically three lexical and/or symbolical snags that obstruct student understanding: "crow," "hemlock," and "rued." The crow, whether Rook, Carrion Crow, or Jungle Crow (as it is called in some parts of Asia), or Mariana Crow, now an endangered species on Guam, is generally known as clever and mischievous. There are usually a few--very few--students who identify these traits in Frost's crow. As we will see in a moment, it is helpful to know the behavior of crows, since Frost's first line refers to "the *way* a crow" shakes snow on the narrator.

In folklore the crow is a symbol of augury—the pattern of a flight of crows signified a particular destiny interpreted by the augur—the diviner. To grasp this archaic meaning is by itself not particularly helpful until one realizes the poem is forward looking, based as it is on a rather mundane (yet life-saving) conversion experience. As for the hemlock tree in Frost's poem, students seldom grasp that the "hemlock" of the hemlock tree under which the speaker lingers is associated with poison, and symbolizes the philosophical suicide of Socrates. In my years teaching this poem, the *only* students who identify the significance of hemlock are those who have taken a philosophy course in which they read Plato. Now, the presence of the hemlock tree does not mean hemlock *in fact* symbolizes suicide in Frost's poem, but taken as an allusion to the death of Socrates, it suggests as much, and poetry thrives on suggestion. Students ask, "But why make this *serious* inference about a mere tree?" Well, the poet can insert any type of tree into his poem, such as a poplar, ash, or maple, but he selects the hemlock, to which he adds the rueful day of the narrator. To respect the artistic integrity of the poetic craft, we as readers take each such decision, each word seriously. There is nothing random in a poem as tight as "Dust of Snow." The poet's artistic discernment becomes for the reader a challenge to distinguish poetic choices of diction, which must be linked to other choices, such as the verb *rue,* in a comprehensible totality of meaning. The speaker has had a *rueful* or regrettable day, perhaps having lost his job, or argued with his spouse, or failed to make a deadline. We infer that he walks into the forest (as people in Frost poems tend to do) and ends up pausing under a hemlock tree. His or her mood is depressive enough to consider suicide. As for the crow, it shakes snow on the speaker from a branch above, transfiguring his or her dark mood to whimsical nonchalance. "Cold…brrrr… What was I thinking a moment ago…silly me! Mischievous bird! I am taking myself too seriously. Life is good; life is sometimes dark, sometimes goofy; back home I go, to hug my wife and kids!" We can see why it is helpful to know that crows are mischievous. The speaker realizes that nature has by chance played a practical joke*;* the event is somehow more than a mere accident by attribution of *corvine intentionality*. It is for some reason easier to laugh off an experience if we see it as a practical joke and not pure chance. Hence, by the crow's whimsical intervention, Frost's speaker can *laugh at himself* and look forward to a brighter future. As in fairy tales, nature in "Dust of Snow" affords an opportunity for a seemingly chance encounter that enables a transformation of mood and identity. It is arguable that in these circumstances, based on what is known of Robert Frost's fondness for the writings of William James,[36] the crow and cold snow incite a frigid, crystalline *conversion experience*, and by doing so saved the speaker's day and his life.

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[35] Edward C. Lathem and Lawrence Thompson, eds. *Robert Frost: Poetry and Prose* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), 89.

Someone will argue that the remedy for symbolic misery is precisely the internet—universal access to information. With access to an online search engine students will be able to investigate the philosophical meaning of hemlock, and folklore about crows. But books offer the same quick remedy, albeit lacking the search capacity of Google (which is already overkill for Frost's poem). The fact remains that students have been on the internet for many years by the time they reach college, and they are no closer to the hemlock of Socrates or the crows of augury. They are not doing exegetical research when they are engaged with social media. In general, their activity is in the living present of Facebook, Skype and so on. If meaning is historical, it is arguable that the contemporaneous "streaming" and exchange of contents between consumers of information and imagery is not yielding a treasure-trove of meaning retained for intergenerational sharing. The streaming contents are entertaining, fascinating, titillating, persuasive, but they rarely cultivate historical consciousness, nor are they mnemonically retained as such for later recall. The final point I would make here is that even if the nouns "crow" and "hemlock," and the verb "rue" are identified by students on the internet, the allegorical (or symbolic) meaning of a *conversion experience* might not become salient in their searching. The poem could remain a poem about a change of mood if students are not more familiar with the role of nature in romantic poetry from Wordsworth to Frost. This *literal* reading would be the starkest manifestation of symbolic misery.

For Bernard Stiegler, the exegesis of poetry is a matter of *taking care* of (exercising and treasuring) our own cultivation by understanding the symbolic depth of our cultural treasures such as the Romantic tradition in poetry. Most of us realize that when students summarize their class visit to an art exhibit, it is not the same as critically interpreting it; the former reduces the material to information, and the latter produces meaning (by making subtle distinctions and judgments, by highlighting hitherto obscure nuances of brush stroke) that comprises a human contribution to our understanding of art. In short, exegesis is inherently cultivating for the exegete and her audience.

All effective teaching and learning is exegetical insofar as learning materials are not merely exchanged or consumed, but are questioned, explained, and revalued. A novel or video game that has won the highest praise from various commentators is found by my class to be over-rated due to its sloppy use of language and inaccurate historical depictions. In this revaluation of a cultural artifact, critical thinking is demonstrated. Likewise, a story by Anthony Trollope from 1861 that my students at first find to be cumbersome owing to erudite diction that presupposed keen literacy of its Victorian readers, becomes, after due diligence in exegesis, an allegory of the incomparability of a provincial young woman who refuses to marry a wealthy man from London, demonstrating her noble stature regardless of bloodline or socioeconomic status.[37] When one grasps the significance of exegesis for education, the pigeonholing of the humanities as impractical becomes absurd and catastrophic, for it is the practice of critical interpretation, honed in humanities courses, that safeguards our being replaced by machines. Here literacy is also a powerful force of autonomy to Stiegler, who as we said follows Foucault's study of "cares of the self" in seeing reading as a Stoic practice that individuates the self and brings it to maturity. "In this process," Stiegler observes, "the ego becomes itself a *self* that is always already supraegoic, spiritual" (155). Readers, writers, and teachers form a mnemonic archive of documents and memories. These "tertiary retentions" serve as an intergenerational spiritual community that directs attention to ensuring the continuity of culture as both preservation and innovation, "the grounding condition for the creation of objects of knowledge" (159).

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[36] See for example W. David Shaw, "The Poetics of Pragmatism: Robert Frost and William James, *The New England Quarterly* Vol. 59, No. 2 (Jun., 1986), 159-188.

Conclusion: The Politics of Memory and Attention Automatization

As for the future, generational absorption in the present moment on Facebook and Instagram silences the challenge of utopianism, the "principle of renewal in both institutions and peoples."[38] Adorno discussed this catastrophic decline in utopian thinking in a conversation with his colleague, Horkheimer: "The general stultification today is the direct result of cutting out utopia. When you reject utopia, thought itself withers away."[39] For Stiegler, the horizon of anticipation (or desire) in young people is not so much halted as commandeered by commercial enterprises and search engines--"search engines as attention automatization" (102). It is such engines that lead them on…in a vicious circle… but to what end? Stiegler says that in his forthcoming work, *Technics and Time 4: Symbols and Diabols*, *or the War of the Mind*, he will address and analyze the generational malaise so disastrous for young desire and the symbolic imaginary. It is clear that Bernard Stiegler is doing everything in his power to engage in the *politics of memory and attention* for the sake of educational integrity in order to resist or check the rise of attention automatons (gadget-heavy zombies) whose fashionable ubiquity poses a direct threat to his own children and grandchildren.

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[37] See Anthony Trollope, "The Parson's Daughter of Oxney Colme," in *Great English Short Stories*, ed. Paul Negri (New York: Dover Books, 2005), 39-61.

[38] E. M. Cioran, *History and Utopia*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Seaver Books, 1987), 10.

[39] Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Towards a New Manifesto*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso Books, 2011), 5.

Textisms and Literacy in Adolescents: Revolt(ing) English

Tabitha Espina Velasco

Abstract

Textisms are being deemed the next evolution in the English language. Nevertheless, apprehension is intermingled with admiration and praises of efficiency are found amidst denunciations of irregular expressions. Underlying these conflicting views are concerns over the future of literacy among children and adolescents, who encounter and utilize this language the most, according to research. Although some consider textisms a revolting manipulation of language, this paper will explore a new generation's use of textisms as a revolt against standard American English for the purpose of expedient self-expression. This presentation includes a discussion on the spectrum of views surrounding this phenomenon, the communicative and expressive functions of textisms, the proliferation of textisms with the advancing technological age, and the positive correlations with literacy.

Keywords: *textism, literacy, adolescent, English*

Introduction

Consider the following sentence: "*Wut wud U thnk F D rest F dis paper wuz riten lyk dis?! ;P"* A response to this question would probably be guided by interpretation and perception of textisms, which are variations of standard English within text messages. Some may view such textisms as inappropriate, unscholarly, or betraying a lack of intelligence because of their unconventionality and perceived ungrammaticality. David Crystal, prominent linguist, author, and vice president of the Society for Editors and Proofreaders, asks:

> Is there any good to come from this modern scourge? In the evolution of language, are we witnessing a major change akin to that brought about by Geoffrey Chaucer, the 14th-century author who wrote in vernacular English language, rather than French or Latin? (3)

Textisms are being deemed the next evolution in the English language. However, apprehension intermingled with admiration and praises of efficiency are found amidst denunciations of irregular expressions. In their psychology textbook for adolescents, Ellen Pastorino and Susann Doyle-Postillo describe textisms as one of the most creative ways to express oneself in 140-160 characters (282). Underlying these conflicting views are concerns over the future of literacy among children and adolescents, who encounter and utilize this language the most. This linguistic phenomenon has aroused curiosity, suspicion, fear, confusion, antagonism, fascination, excitement and enthusiasm all at once – even though slightly more than a decade ago, it was hardly ever heard of. Although considered by some as a revolting manipulation of language, this paper will explore a new generation's use of textisms as a revolt against the English language. A discussion on the spectrum of views surrounding this phenomenon, the communicative and expressive functions of textisms, their proliferation within the advancing technological age, and their positive correlations with literacy will provide evidence of textisms revolting against standard English for the purpose of expedient self-expression.

Definition

Textisms are typically defined by their irregular characteristics. According to Crystal's prolific study, *Txting: The Gr8 Db8,* textisms are also known as textese, slanguage, high-tech lingo, or hybrid shorthand and include a vast majority of nonstandard abbreviations and some substandard (187). They are often likened to 19th century telegraph messages in their ability to disseminate information across distances and their tendency to contain shortened messages to reduce costs (Crystal 5). Textisms are transmitted through Short Message Service (SMS), commonly known as a text message, which allows for up to 140 bytes (1,120 bits) of data (Crystal 5-6). They utilize abbreviations and other techniques within these 140 bytes of data to transcribe a variety of messages, as well as emotions. Textisms essentially allow for phatic communion, the social function of language used to show rapport between people or establish a pleasant atmosphere (Crystal 184). According to Steve Vosloo of the Shuttleworth Foundation, the primary characteristic of textisms is its deviation from the standard rules of English grammar and usual word spellings, which are so pervasive that some regard it as an emergent language in its own right (2). Thus, for the purpose of this paper, textisms are defined as a deviation from the standard rules of English grammar and spelling in SMS text messages. This deviation, though characteristic, is responsible for both the appreciation and apprehension associated with textisms.

J.E.L. Coe and J.V. Oakhill of the School of Psychology at the University of Sussex believe that the rapid evolution and disappearance of variations has caused a lack of a master lexicon of abbreviations, reducing the familiarity of some textism variations (12). This lack of a codified lexicon supposedly emphasizes the nonstandard nature of textisms. They are so varied and unconventional that those who utilize them are sometimes considered bilingual for using a completely different language (Crystal 13). The novelty and unfamiliarity of some textisms, however, does not appear to affect their increasing usage. The public continues to utilize this innovative form of communication as an integral part of everyday communication.

Proliferation

The growth in the use of textisms can be attributed to the widespread usage of mobile phones throughout the world. In 2011, the International Telecommunication Union reported that there were approximately 6 billion mobile cellular subscriptions in the world (sec. A1). Earlier in 2005, the mobile cellular business generated 70 billion dollars of revenue and is expected to be increasingly lucrative (Crystal 3). These high commercial values indicate that textism use is a significant commodity in today's technological society.

According to the International Association for the Wireless Telecommunications Industry (CTIA), approximately 2.30 trillion texts were sent in the United States alone in 2011 (sec. 11). Cell phone ownership is nearly ubiquitous among teens and young adults and much of the growth of teen cell phone ownership is driven by the youngest teens, according to a report by the Pew Internet and American Life Project (3). The Pew Internet and American Life Project also found that texting has become an essential tool of social teen life, with 75% of all American teens ages 12-17 owning a cell phone and 85% engaging in at least one form of electronic communication (9-10). For this young, technologically adept generation, textisms are not only a form of language but also an essential component of everyday life. Vosloo believes that textisms are the written lingua franca of many youth today (2). The increased use of mobile phones, especially within this age group, has resulted in the development of different textism forms, depending on the variety of contexts and diversity of users. Although there is a lack of uniformity among variations, textisms are not completely haphazard and can be loosely organized into categories depending on their structure and function.

Communicative Functions

Despite the oft-quoted denunciation by John Sutherland, professor of Modern English Literature at University College London, that their use "masks dyslexia, poor spelling and mental laziness" and "is penmanship for illiterates" (qtd. in Crystal 13), textisms have an inherently complex structure indicative of their communicative and expressive functions. Coe and Oakhill have determined several category distinctions within textisms: letter (e.g. "R U" for "are you"), number homophones (e.g. "4" for "for"), combinations of letters and numbers (e.g. "B4" for "before"), clippings (e.g. "hav" for "have"), g-clippings (e.g. "goin" for "going"), acronyms or initialisms (e.g. "LOL" for "laugh out loud"), shortenings (e.g. "nd" for "and"), contractions (e.g. "bk" for "back"), and accent stylizations (e.g. "gona" for "going to") (5). These conventions are used for expeditiousness and efficiency of transmission. To this end, Crispin Thurlow of the Department of Communication at the University of Washington conducted a discursive analysis of qualitative data to examine the linguistic forms and communicative functions in a corpus of

544 actual text-messages by older teenagers. In "Generation Txt? The Sociolinguistics of Young People's Text-Messaging," Thurlow describes textisms using eight communication orientations and themes: Informational-Practical Orientation, Informational-Relational Orientation, Practical Arrangement Orientation, Salutatory Orientation, Friendship Maintenance Orientation, Romantic Orientation, Sexual Orientation, and Chain Messages (sec 3.3). Three of these orientations serve practical functions to exchange information or requests. The Informational-Practical Orientation is the exchange of practical ideas or straightforward request for information; the Informational-Relational Orientation involves the request for personal favors; and the Practical Arrangement Orientation involves plans to meet or the coordination of household-related expeditions (Thurlow, "Generation Txt," sec. 3.3). The remaining five orientations serve more relational functions. The Salutatory Orientation contains non-specific, brief greetings; the Friendship Maintenance Orientation involves apologies, support, and thanks; the Romantic Orientation deals with expressions of love, intimacy, and affection; the Sexual Orientation involves explicit sexual overtones; and lastly, the Chain Messages category contains epigrams, jokes, or word plays that are passed among users (Thurlow, "Generation Txt," sec. 3.3). This vast array of communicative functions emphasizes the practical function of textisms in electronically conveying a variety of messages.

Expressive Functions

In addition to its communicative properties, textisms also have distinctly expressive properties. Coe and Oakhill note that many text devices share characteristics of invented spellings with intact phonological relationships between letters and sounds, suggesting that misspellings are an intentional form of self-expression through language (5). C. Wood and other researchers of Coventry University also found that textism types commonly used were phonologically based and tended to be alternative phonetic spellings of words (29), much like "*riten*" for "*written*" mentioned at the beginning of this paper. Expressive forms of textisms also include the frequent use of slang and phonetic abbreviations and the use of repeated letters, capitalization, and punctuation to express intonation (Coe and Oakhill 12).

Furthermore, K. Durkin, G. Conti-Ramsden, and A.J. Walker of the School of Psychological Sciences and Health at the University of Strathclyde believe that text language has been subjected to creative manipulation by young people, resulting in a conversational style known as "youth code," wherein relaxed and informal spelling and grammar may actually be encouraged (49-50). Another angle is taken by Beverly Plester, Clare Wood, and Victoria Bell of Coventry University who argue that textisms are set apart from spoken language through the phenomenon of hyper-personal communication, which allows management of impression and message to a greater extent than real-time conversation (137-138). Dialogue through textisms is thus profusely expressive within a relatively short time span. Young people's playful use of words can also be seen as both socially and emotionally beneficial by allowing them to explore and convey their emotions across distances.

Many researchers have adopted the perspective that this manipulation of language for creative expression is both liberating and productive for youth. The asynchronous feature of textisms afford the user time to read, write, and edit messages if necessary, make communication informal, and allow for routine typographical errors, misspellings, and other errors (Durkin, Conti-Ramsden, and Walker 49). Children's engagement with language through textisms motivate them to become literate in order to communicate with their friends rapidly and effectively, in a way that they feel in control of (Plester, Wood, and Joshi 156). There is less judgment attached to text messaging and young people can write as conventionally or unconventionally as they wish, with or without punctuation of capitalization, and all the spellings are legitimate as long as the recipient is able to understand it (Plester, Wood, and Joshi 156).

Of the 85% of American teens aged 12-17 who engage in electronic personal communication, 60% do not think of these electronic texts as "writing". Thus, they no longer feel the imperative to comply with the constraints of proper grammar and orthography. (Pew Internet and American Life Project 9-10). The use of textisms is empowering for young people and promotes literacy by enabling young people to freely manipulate language forms and functions for their unique purposes. Despite popular usage, public perception of textisms remains largely divided.

Public Perception

Views on textisms are as widespread as their use and span a spectrum from aversion to optimism. Most of the criticism of textisms has developed from the public's personal observations, influence from the media, and general criticism of change. In his groundbreaking study, "From Statistical Panic to Moral Panic: The Metadiscursive Construction and Popular Exaggeration of New Media Language in the Print Media," Thurlow compiles an international corpus of 101 print-media accounts from 2001 to 2005 on language use in technology (sec. 1). Thurlows work illuminates the discussion on textisms by describing "popular but influential (mis)representations [that] typically exaggerate…, misconstrue the 'evolutionary' trajectory of language change, and belie the cultural embeddedness [of textisms]" (Thurlow, "Statistical Panic," sec. 1).

Thurlow developed five themes around the views of textisms. One view of textisms is that of "Linguistic Revolution," wherein they are considered a language all their own, distinct but equivalent (i.e. a form of bilingualism), and of economic interest (Thurlow, "Statistical Panic," sec. 3). The second view concerns a "Statistical Panic" over the rise and spread of textisms through superlative claims of use and commercial value (Thurlow, "Statistical Panic," sec. 3). The third and most widely expressed view is that of "Moral Panic," related to the deleterious impact on standard English, declining standards of literacy, and the slow death of language (Thurlow, "Statistical Panic," sec. 3). The fourth view is that of "Fetishization," presenting simplified and caricatured examples of textisms, and the final view is that of "Scholarly Commentary," which mediates between the extremes of each view and presents unequivocally positive evaluations (Thurlow, "Statistical Panic," sec. 3). These highly varied, sometimes contradictory views are indicative of this preeminent debate within modern English. Opinions of textisms are complex and adhere to one or more of these views.

The apprehension surrounding textisms is not unlike that surrounding other changes that have revolutionized the English language and communication throughout history. The printing press, for example, was thought to have been an invention of the devil that puts false opinions in people's minds and the telegraph, the telephone, and broadcasting each generated short-lived fears that the fabric of society was under threat (Crystal 9). Public discourse about language is marked by attempts to control language by proscribing disfavored forms and prescribing familiar forms (Thurlow, "Statistical Panic," sec. 2). Moreover, public discourse about emerging technologies are typically polarized as "all good" or "all bad" and any perceived threats to conventional or standard language practices are inevitably met with the same anxiety people have about all language change; technology often becomes the focus of debates about declining standards of "good" language use (Thurlow, "Statistical Panic," sec. 2). Negative perceptions are probably partly attributed to a lack of familiarity and understanding of this emergent form of language. There is a widespread folk belief that "whatever texting is, it must be a bad thing" (Crystal 8). This sweeping rejection is an inevitable consequence of textism's promising revolutionary change.

Despite its popularity among young people, or perhaps because of it, there has been widespread concern in the media about the impact that textisms can have on children's literacy development (Wood et al. 28; Coe and Oakhill 4). Some social commentators and educators have claimed that texting is keeping students from learning proper spelling, grammar, and writing skills (Pastorino and Doyle-Postillo 282). According to Crystal, textisms are viewed as a highly distinctive graphic style full of abbreviations and deviant uses of language, used by a young generation that does not care about standards (7). This new generation of language users have a disregard for language rules, have a growing sense of laissez-faire when it comes to language consistency, and thus will be increasingly unable to understand one another, to paraphrase Baron's work, "'Whatever.': A New Language Model?" (sec. 3-5).

The media and popular discourse is wrought with "doom-laden prophecies" foretelling the breakdown of English, the invasion of textisms into formal school register language, and the resultant erosion and undermining of young people's reading and writing abilities (Crystal 151; Brincat and Caruana 68; National Literacy Trust; Paton; Vosloo 2). The concern for literacy, particularly that of young people who engage in texting the most, foregrounds the negative view in the debate surrounding textisms.

The counter- argument in this debate is that the fear of the negative influence surrounding textisms is completely unfounded and unjustified. These arguments are largely exaggerated and unsupported by scientific data (Pastorino and Doyle-Postillo 282). Another stance notes that the widely mixed opinions are partly attributed to the lack of research in this area, especially on the direct relationship between the use and quality of textisms and measures of literacy skills (Coe and Oakhill 6). Another angle is pointed out by Lara Brincat and Sandro Caruana in a study of computer-mediated language where they note that the latest available research is focused on the positive opportunities that textisms and technology have to offer language and literacy, even if public discourse remains pessimistic (68). In the same vein, Plester, Wood, and Joshi emphasize the importance of positive perceptions of textisms in the media, stating that influential writings on the subject can be used to inform educational policy decisions in the absence of empirical evidence (146). One benefit of negative criticism however is the growing imperative to explore the foundation of differing beliefs through empirical analysis. While research continues to develop, existing research however negates common misconceptions surrounding textisms and should be considered within public discourse for a more accurate portrayal of possibilities, rather than detriments.

Empirical Evidence

Misconceptions of the unrestricted, rampant invasion of textisms into everyday English are dispelled by research from Crystal, Thurlow, Pastorino and Doyle-Postillo, and Brincat and Caruana. Despite the apparent prevalence of textisms, they do not make up the bulk of language used in texting and SMS are instead largely composed of conventional words and phrases peppered with textisms (Pastorino and Doyle-Postillo 282). Moreover, although trillions of texts are sent worldwide each year, it pales in comparison to the number of conventional, grammatically correct communications produced each year (Pastorino and Doyle-Postillo 282). Crystal thus asserts that rather than being seen as completely separate from standard English, textisms combine with standard English results in an enjoyment of breaking rules with the preservation of certain standard properties to ensure understanding (17). Standard punctuation, such as apostrophes, is actually used quite frequently for clarity and for a familiar appearance of orthography that is easier to read (Thurlow, “Generation Txt,” sec. 3.2). The inclusion of apostrophes and conventional words are indicative of the fact that textisms are not completely exclusive of standard English grammar and are actually inter-working with standard English within text messages. Textisms are rather conditioned by the subjects’ phonological awareness and the use of abbreviated or non-standard spelling is dependent upon perceived appropriateness within the context (Brincat and Caruana 69). Use of textisms is therefore contingent upon numerous factors, including familiarity and context, and requires the user to adhere to their phonological awareness and regularity.

A summary of the most prominent research regarding textisms and literacy indicates insignificant to positive correlations with literacy, dispelling misconceptions of language degradation. Studies have shown positive relationships between the degree of textism use and performance on standardized tests of reading, spelling, and vocabulary (Wood et al. 28; Pastorino and Doyle-Postillo 282). Moreover, there are currently no studies that conclusively document negative effects of textisms on literacy. As correlation does not establish causation, continued empirical research is required to ascertain the direct effects of textisms on literacy. Available research nevertheless concludes that textisms, as Mark Abley states in *The Prodigal Tongue: Dispatches from the Future of English,* are not a ruinous devastation of English grammar but rather “an expansive new linguistic renaissance” (172).

Studies conducted by Coe and Oakhill of the University of Sussex, Thurlow of the University of Washington, Durkin, Conti-Ramsden, and Walker of the University of Strathclyde, and Wood, Jackson, Hart, Plester, Wilde, Joshi, and Bell of Coventry University are commonly cited in the discussion of textisms and literacy. The results of these studies dispel the misconception that textisms compromise adolescents’ reading and spelling abilities. Coe and Oakhill’s study of 10- to 11-year olds found that poorer readers reportedly spent more time texting and speaking on their mobile phone each day compared with better readers, but the better readers used significantly more textisms within their messages (11). Coe and Oakhill thus conclude that better readers and spellers use more textisms because of their greater phonological awareness and ability to better manipulate letters and sounds to reduce the number characters, while still retaining the intended meaning (12). Similarly, a 2011 study by Durkin, Conti-Ramsden, and Walker examining ninety-four 17-year-olds found that regardless of specific language impairments, there are significant positive relationships among textism density, amount of types of textisms used, and measures of literacy in these adolescents (49). Positive correlations in cases with subjects both with and without specific language impairments indicate the profound effects of textisms. Durkin, Conti-Ramsden, and Walker and Wood et al. thus suggest a bidirectional causal relationship, in which better literacy skills may not only influence the ability to use textisms but frequent use of textisms may develop literacy skills, such as reading efficiency (55).

Yet again, in their dual studies on 11- and 12-year olds, Plester, Wood, and Bell assert that there is no compelling evidence that texting damages standard English and that faculty with textisms are associated with higher achievement in literacy outcomes (143). Perhaps the most revealing of textisms' lack of adverse effects on literacy is the study conducted by Wood et al. on 9- to 10-year-olds who had never owned a mobile phone. Wood et al. found that children who were given access to mobile phones for the purpose of text messaging did not perform differently on tests of literacy development compared to children who were not given mobile phones (33-34). Moreover, Plester, Wood, and Joshi's study of 10- to 12-year olds not only found that textisms were only positively associated with word reading ability but also found that exposure to misspellings in textisms did not compromise their learning of correct spelling (155). The subjects' textisms revealed an understanding of conventional letter-sound correspondences and preserved orthographic rules, even though resultant spellings were viewed as unconventional (155-56). These findings contradict the assumption that textisms are detrimental to literacy skills and instead indicate a positive relationship between textisms proficiency and reading and spelling skills.

Furthermore, these findings negate another common fear that textisms will infiltrate adolescents' formal writing and speaking and distort their perceptions of standard English. After examining the content and communicative form in over 500 teenagers' text messages, Thurlow concludes that the messages demonstrate adept and creative communicative abilities and not the language corruption widely portrayed in the media. Although textisms are misspellings in a conventional sense, they are phonologically and orthographically acceptable forms of written English that do not interfere with the learning of conventional written English (Plester, Wood, and Joshi 146). Through textisms, adolescents demonstrate their phonological awareness and an understanding of the practicality of brevity (Plester, Wood, and Bell 134). They are furthermore aware of the conditions surrounding the appropriate use of textisms and standard English and are linguistically able to freely and aptly alternate between these two registers (Plester, Wood, Joshi 145). Contrary to popular media and public discourse, adolescents display competence in their ability to distinguish the appropriate use of textisms. Their use of textisms is not lackadaisical or haphazard, but rather they are reveling in the idiosyncrasies of language and their ease and proficiency underlie their intentional subversion of conventional forms. In order to manipulate language they first demonstrate an understanding of it.

Conclusion

After reviewing the definition, proliferation, communicative and expressive functions, public perception, and empirical evidence of textisms, one is encouraged to argue that the possibilities of the medium conceivably outweigh the detrimental effects propagated by the media and public. The definition of textisms illustrates their growing complexity and versatility in enabling communication at various levels. The proliferation of textisms indicates that their usage will continue to pervade our increasingly technological society, especially among young people who are progressively more proficient. Further technology development is expected to decrease the age of first mobile phone ownership and create a generation that develops their text abilities alongside their reading and writing skills (Coe and Oakhill 6). Perhaps young people's adeptness at using textisms may prove to be beneficial in expanding their range of interaction and allowing them access to a culture of information and technology in the same way a second language enables access into and navigation of its cultural knowledge and customs.

The diversity of communicative functions validate the use of textisms as an effective form of interaction among different users for different purposes. Textism users are easily able to manipulate language for expediency and convenience. Language is thus viewed as relative and useful, rather than stringent and restraining. Could textisms perhaps be seen as a form of language liberation, encouraging more complex usage among younger generations? The expressive functions of textisms highlight the numerous messages and emotions that can be transmitted. Textisms enable a freedom and liberation through language that is undoubtedly appealing to young users desperate for self-expression and effective social interaction.

The contrasting views surrounding textisms necessitate further discussion and research through empirical evidence. Much available research disproves notions of language degradation and adolescents' unawareness of appropriateness. Furthermore, research unequivocally shows insignificant to positive correlations and bidirectional benefits, with textisms benefitting from literacy and literacy being enhanced by textisms. There has yet to be research that clearly proves negative effects of textisms on reading, writing, or spelling skills. This research remains poignant in discussions of education policy, which may take full advantage of textisms to further develop literacy among the young people who highly value it. Textisms may heighten the importance of literacy among adolescents by portraying it as a prerequisite for effective communication and social interaction through textisms.

There are nevertheless aspects of this influential phenomenon that should be further explored. For instance, it would be interesting to evaluate the use of textisms as a component of multitasking. Textisms allow people to be engaged in both physical and virtual communication simultaneously, conducting parallel discussions. A young person could be speaking in the presence of an adult while engaging in a completely unrelated, and perhaps even undecipherable, discussion with a peer via textisms on their mobile phone. Additionally, it would also be interesting to research the use of emoticons in accentuating the conveyance of emotions through text. These considerations are just some of many that may develop the understanding of textisms as a revolutionary form of language, rather than a revolting one.

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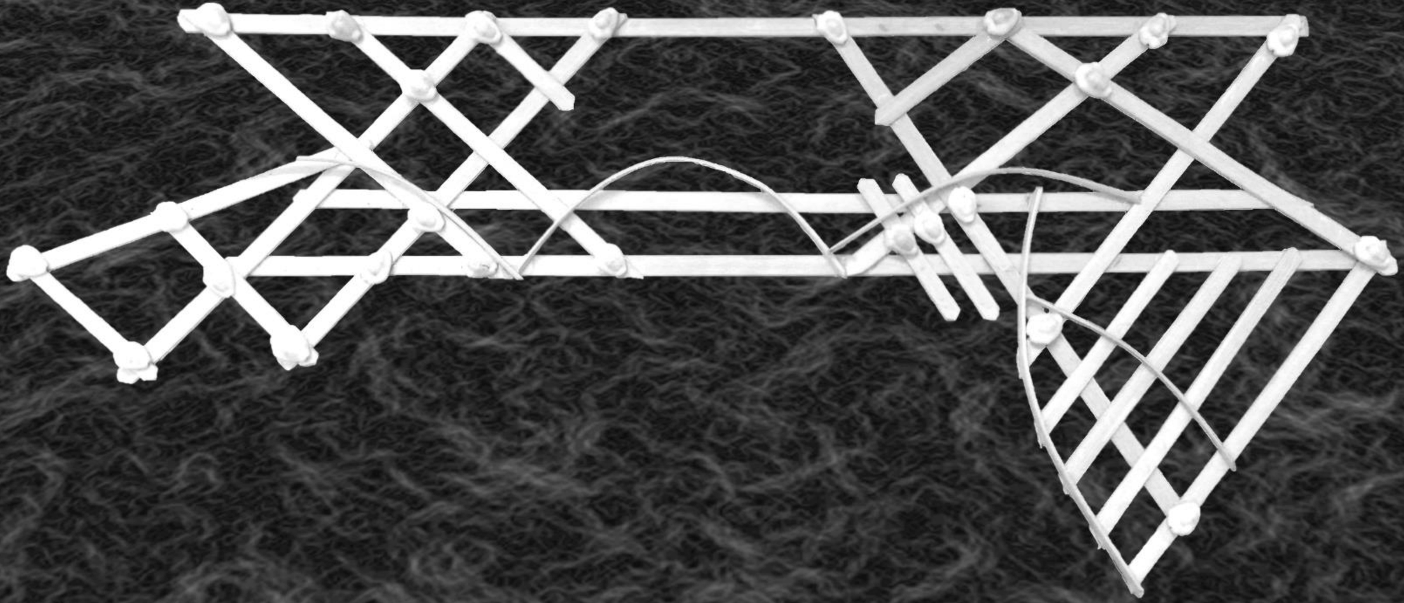
PEDAGOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL DIVERSITIES IN EDUCATION, POLITICS, AND LIFE



The Silence which has Woven My Life Together

Eduardo C. Fernández

Abstract

Reflecting on his intercultural and interreligious experience as a Roman Catholic Latino born and raised in the United States and a member of a religious community, the Jesuits, the author describes the powerful unitive and pedagogical role which silence has played in his life. Key insights gleaned from silent, humble participation in community, prayer, pilgrimage, sabbatical research, and interreligious dialogue form the basis of the essay, at the same time giving examples of the necessity of silence in our classrooms. The work concludes with a caution around some destructive forms of silence and a reference to the Divine in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Keywords: *silence, culture, religion, classroom*

Introduction

Some years back, together with a friend, I was getting ready to cross beautiful Lake Atitlan in Guatemala, a mysterious body of water whose source is said to be unknown, and is surrounded by quaint small towns and massive volcanos. We did not have many days in the area and I had feared that we would not be able to visit it. Yet, there we were about to cross its mirror perfection. As the driver of the little boat set our course in the direction of the other side, from Panajachel to San Lucas Tolimán, I, guidebook in hand, asked my companion if he wanted to hear what the travel writer had written about the physical properties of this legendary lake. Much to my surprise, he curtly answered, “no.” Taken aback at why he would not want to learn more about this geographical marvel, I nonetheless respected his wish and remained silent. I then proceeded to watch his face as he gazed on this gleaming aspect of God’s creation. It was as if his face was a gentle spotlight on what we were experiencing and that any words, albeit informational ones, would only get in the way of our ability to ‘see’, to ‘experience’, to ‘taste’, this sacred site.

We are often incapable of ‘seeing’ on our own and need others, like my friend that day, to help us contemplate the richness of life and all that it has to offer. Similarly impressed by Nabobo-Baba’s (2006)[40] Cultural taxonomy of silence in her Fijian culture, and especially the section on silence of indigenous spirituality(ies), I felt invited to spend some time looking at the language of silence in my own, Roman Catholic, Latino world, especially as a member of a religious community, the Jesuits, who are known for a certain school of prayer, known as the Spiritual Exercises, one which relies heavily on the use of silence, a method introduced by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Order’s founder, more than four centuries ago. Drawing from the rich traditions of such contemplatives as the Benedictines, as well as having been schooled in the Christian humanism of this time, Ignatius was convinced that silence was necessary for souls to be able to step back and discern what God was personally communicating to them in their lives a loving communication that was capable of pointing that person towards freedom. Empowered by such freedom, something he would call a grace, or unmerited gift, that woman or man was then able to see God in all things and all things in God. As with other spiritual masters who had gone before him, he proposed that a true encounter with God was not one which would take us away from the world, but one which would enable us to embrace it lovingly as the fruit of God’s creation, or of a world hungry for mercy, compassion, and reconciliation.

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[40] Nabobo-Baba, U. (2006). Fiji: IPS/University of the South Pacific Press.

The rest of this essay, then, is a bit of a witness of the unitive power of silence in my life, a life blessed with nourishing communities, opportunities for study and contemplation, and rich dialogues, verbal and nonverbal, in the classroom and elsewhere. This silence may sometimes be literal, as in the absence of words or gestures, but other times, it has also taken a more symbolic form, as when one's attitude towards God or life makes room for a reverent holding of indescribable mysteries. In a parallel fashion, for example, attention to a spiritual path may often require not only physical fasting and/or abstinence from some food or drink, but may also point us in the direction of fasting from some of the daily "noise" produced by excessive reliance on electronic media. For instance I once heard my nephew describe how difficult it was for him to put aside his cell phone during an immersion with the poor in Honduras.

Silence as an Open Prayer Posture

Ignatius, while convinced that people could only really pray if the grace had been granted to them, often exhorts the person to do everything in their power to make themselves disponable, that is, ready to receive. As when one does everything possible to prepare a meal for a good friend, the encounter can only happen if that friend comes, but the preparation is very important. Even in the 16th century, the Spanish mystic warned against the inability to step back from the noise of everyday life.

I can still remember my own anxiety the day before we began this intense period of prayer known as the Spiritual Exercises or long retreat of 30 days when I was a Jesuit novice at Grand Coteau, Louisiana, back in the Fall of 1980. Being a person who loves to talk, someone who eventually chose not one, but two professions which allow me to do just that, priest, and professor, I talked myself senseless that day! My poor Jesuit brothers! Before long, however, I found myself increasingly enjoying the opportunity to enter into what seemed to be the often unarticulated backdrops of my life. The fact that we, the Jesuit novices on this spiritual desert experience, were not directly speaking to each other, abstaining from letter writing, telephone conversations, or other ways of social discourse, much less being connected to media such as television or newspapers, provided us with a gifted opportunity to let our past lives unfold before us. But the amazing thing was that it was not simply about us being spectators, as one would watch a movie or play, but rather of symbolic scenes in which one was invited to be part of the unfolding event. Through the use of meditations called contemplations, most often rooted in scenes based on biblical passages, these times of silence afforded our hearts an opportunity to see with the inner eyes of the soul, or spiritual senses. It was as if pondering over passages from the scripture was now putting us in touch with the ancient loving relationship God has had with the Jewish people, and now desires to have with us. As a wise friend once told me, one story invites another. Please allow me to illustrate.

On October 25th, 1980, a day in which we were invited to pray a biblical passage from the prophet Jeremiah, someone called in his youth but afraid in his response, I, too, found myself unsure of what the future held for me, especially if I were to continue to keep such strange company! I was twenty-two years old, fresh out of college, sociology degree in hand, wrestling with the kinds of issues young people often face at that stage in their life, especially those around identity and vocation. One of the passages assigned to us that day, Jeremiah 18:5-6, reads thus: "Then the word of the Lord came to me: 'Can I not do to you, house of Israel, as the potter has done?'. . . 'Indeed, like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, house of Israel.'" My own contemplation took me back to my native desert terrain, back somewhere in the mountains of eastern New Mexico and west Texas. The potter, a gentle old Mexican man who lived in a simple, mud dwelling, invited me to come inside and see what kind of pot he would create for me. In the evening of that quiet day, more than thirty years ago, I wrote the following in my spiritual journal:

> Making the contemplation of the potter, I was struck by what symbolized what the Lord wanted me to be—a cántaro! Not an exquisite , ultra-refined European art piece, as I had hoped, but instead a simple, durable, folkish container of fresh, clean water, complete with a cup!
>
> What was I to make of this? I feel our Lord is trying to bring home to me that I must relish my culture, especially my Mexican ancestry, so as to be a container and dispenser of God's cool, refreshing grace.

> In all honesty, I must admit that I am not always proud to call myself Mexican. Sad but true, “Mexican” at times connotes backward, poor, and uneducated, not to mention machismo, lustfulness, and drunkenness.
>
> But these are stereotypes that I have grown up with. And, as the Lord is quick to remind me, my culture is certainly not lacking in richness. Strong family bonds, great respect for age, great devotion to God and Mary, a vibrant zest for living, and the value of a light heart, are certainly among them.
>
> God is not calling me to place my culture above that of others, but rather to realize the riches he has given me, by way of this heritage for example, and then out of this realization, move to the service of others. All is gift. I am his gift...

God’s Silence in Prayer

What do we do when seemingly, God does not respond? This experience of others and that of my own has convinced me that this silence has its own power. For example, at times it is a silence of “the ball’s now in your court,” that is, we can too easily expect the Divine to provide us with ready-made solutions. Could it be that in fact, this sacred silence provides an opportunity for us to do our part in dialogue with a loving Creator?

Other times we are too distracted by cares and our own view of what life should be, hence cannot see the larger picture. A simple walk by the ocean or other time spent in nature quickly reminds us that we are part of a mysterious universe which holds within her womb her own dark secrets, times of gestation, death and new life. It is not necessary for us to understand everything. This silence of ideas, of concrete solutions, reminds us that we live much better in the graced company of a universe than in the desire to control it. That is why St. Francis could speak of brother sun and sister moon. Even sister death, who was taking him home to his maker, became his graced companion. The late Anthony DeMello, the Indian Jesuit writer and retreat master who spent his life trying to help others to become aware of life’s sacred realities, scripts a telling story about a salt doll.

> A salt doll journeyed for thousands of
> of miles over land, until it finally
> came to the sea.
>
> It was fascinated by this strange
> moving mass, quite unlike anything
> it had ever seen before.
>
> “Who are you?” said the salt doll
> to the sea.
>
> The sea smilingly replied, “Come
> in and see.”
>
> So the doll waded in.
> The farther it walked into the
> sea the more it dissolved, until
> there was only very little of it
> left. Before that last bit dis-
> solved, the doll exclaimed in
> wonder, “Now I know what I am!”[41]

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[41] Anthony De Mello, *The Song of the Bird* (New York: Image Books, Doubleday, 1982), 98.

We come to a true awareness of who we are only through surrendering to something or someone much bigger than us.

That which seems like silence on the part of God can be paradoxically graced as it allows us to get in touch with our inner longings, urgent hungers, which keep us looking for that which will sustain us. Without this holy appetite, we stop looking and become complacent or self-satisfied, forgetting our need for the 'other'. As a college student, when I confided to a spiritual director how empty, hunger, and thirsty I felt, he surprised me by responding how happy he was for me. I gave him a puzzled look. His response: "I am glad that you feel empty, because if you do, then there is room for God. I am glad that you feel hungry and thirsty, because then you will keep looking for food and drink, or that which provides sustenance for you on the journey."

This apparent silence on the part of God reminds me of what the Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross, said when he thought he had reached the pinnacle of experiencing divine presence: "*Nada, nada, nada*", *nada* signifying "nothing" in Spanish. Even sacred nothingness is graced and there are times when all we can do is remain silent before its all-encompassing embrace.

Silence which allows the Body to Speak

When I was growing up on the United States-Mexican border, my Father used to tell us stories about his own Mexican immigrant Father, Victoriano, who left his war-torn country when he was only a teenager. He would get very sad when he would tell the story of how he died in an unfortunate accident chopping down a tree when my own Father was about 6 years old. The story, which always included a mention of some kind of eclipse the night of the tragic even, took on a cosmic dimension, one in which this the whole universe seemed to reflect the pain of this little boy who was later to lose his mother to heart disease when he was in his early teens. Shared with great love and admiration were the little details about his life which made him come alive. For example, as my Father narrated, his own Father used to pray in the back of the adobe mission church silently with his arms extended. Quite frankly, hearing this, although I did not say it, I dismissed this gesture as a lack of sophistication, something simple, uneducated people do. As a graduate student of theology years later, I discovered that this very *orans* gesture, that is, praying with arms extended, was the way in which early Christians prayed. In fact, it remains the position the priest assumes when leading the assembly in prayer even to today. As often as I am able, as presider, I invite the people of God to do the same with me. Ah, my wise and holy Victoriano whom I never met! Even without years and years of academic training, he understood the power of such an open, physical gesture to allow one's heart to be touched in silence by the source of all beauty and holiness.

My Father's memories once again stirred in my imagination when I heard one of my Jewish doctoral students say how much she admired the contemplative silence in Catholic churches one can see portrayed in movies. In these scenes which often involve the need for one of the characters to make a serious decision, one sees a person praying in silence amidst the soft glow and warmth of candles.

On a pilgrimage in northern Spain to the medieval shrine of Santiago de Compostella last Spring, I once again embraced the silence which allowed my poor, tired body, day after day, to speak. Why was **I** doing this? What had ever possessed me to embark upon this long trek? Accompanied by a friend about ten years younger, whom I consequently nicknamed "la bala" or "the bullet" in Spanish, I would marvel how easily he took to the road, seemingly not dragging himself as I was. One particularly difficult day of the ten or so days we walked I told him just to go on ahead of me in this vast valley which seemed to provide endless climbs. I was sure that I would not be able to take one more step. Left alone, I allowed the silence of nature to envelop me and try not to think about the pain I was feeling in my numb legs and blistered feet. Using my wooden staff, I simply trudged on, trying to convince myself that this was not a futile exercise and that like the millions who had done this walk before me, I, too, would someday see it as a valuable exercise, no pun intended. As I rounded a corner after a difficult climb, I looked back at the valley out of which I was coming. The afternoon breeze, the bright colors of spring, and the soft hues of the blue ridged mountains all cast their spell. My tiredness no longer mattered. The silence allowed me to be present to the moment and look back with gratitude that a loving God had allowed me to come this far, not just on this pilgrimage, but in my own, graced life.

Finally in terms of the silence which allows the body to speak, I am reminded of what the famed dancer and choreographer, Martha Graham, said when someone asked her the meaning of one of her dances: "Honey, if I could explain it to you, I wouldn't have to dance it!"

What an Openness to Other Religious Traditions can Teach Us about Silence

As a university student in the mid to late 70's, one who underwent culture shock leaving the border town of El Paso, Texas to study at Loyola University in New Orleans, I found much peace and stillness during the meditation times of a great course I took called "Christian Zen." It was taught by a Japanese American Jesuit by the name of Ben Wren. Of course, it was held at ten a.m.! Because the course also included other experiential exercises as Tai Chi, folk dancing, flower arranging and calligraphy, I looked forward to what these sacred times in the "zendo" would bring. For me, it gave me a taste of Eastern mysticism, yet affirmed the Spanish, Christian, mystical one I allude to above. Wren was fond of quoting St. John of the Cross's profound phrase: "The moment is pregnant with God." Not too much later, as a Jesuit novice, Anthony De Mello helped me to get in touch with the moment via the senses, something I had been doing unconsciously in the Christian Zen class.

In meeting the current head of the Jesuits worldwide, Adolfo Nicolás, a Spaniard who spent many years working in Japan and the Philippines, I sensed in him a deep openness to what other cultures and religions, especially those of the East, can teach us Western Christians. After attending an international meeting or synod of bishops in Rome whose theme was "the new Evangelization for the transmission of Christian Faith,", he gave an interview in which he was asked if he could offer some signs of what he would consider to be "Asian" holiness, to which he responded:

> As a matter of fact, anticipating this question I have consulted a few experts in Asia about the matter and I can say it was a very fruitful consultation. Let me offer you a few examples: filial piety, that at times reaches heroic levels; the totally centred quest for the Absolute and the great respect for those involved in the quest; compassion as a way of life, out of a deep awareness of human brokenness and fragility; detachment and renunciation; tolerance, generosity to and open-mindedness; reverence, courtesy, attention to the needs of others; etc. Summing up, maybe we can say that if our eyes were open to what God is doing in people (and peoples!) we would be able to see much more Holiness around us and many of us would feel challenged to live the Life of God in new ways that might be more adapted to the way we really are, or the way God wants us to be.[42]

Such conclusions can only be reached if we maintain an inner silence, or openness to what other religious traditions can teach us Christians of the West.

At times, this silence may be that of simply praying or meditating together. I remember attending a Christ-Buddha retreat some years back. Its purpose, to bring together Buddhists and Christians in order to foster a respectful interreligious dialogue, proved to be quite enriching. Times spent in silently meditating, sharing vegetarian meals, hearing talks from both traditions and small group discussions, participating in various forms of bodily exercise—all allowed us to be present, not only with our intellect, but also in a more full, holistic manner. Paradoxically, such embodied listening in silence to each other's faith tradition allowed us to discover riches we might have overlooked in our own traditions. For example, we Christians, sometimes guilty of excessive activism, were reminded of the more passive, contemplative elements found in our faith tradition while Buddhists pondered the more active gestures to help alleviate the world's suffering which had been enacted compassionately in their larger, ancient heritage.

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[42] Father General Adolfo Nicolás in the Digital News Services SJ, Vol. XVI, N. 17, 29 October, 2012.

Cultivating the Practice of Inner Silence Takes Time

Since my first visit back in 1976 to St. Charles College in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, a Jesuit novitiate and spirituality center, I have tried to cultivate the practice of silence in prayer, particularly when on retreat, as a way of listening. Listening to God's gentle promptings, particularly those found in our own hearts, becomes easier around the place's large oak trees, lush green lawns, and the general rhythm of life which centers on study and spiritual renewal. I have returned there many times over the years, at times quite exhausted by work and worry, only to providentially discover, once again, the inner beauty of the person God is shaping in me, not unlike the meditation of the cántaro I described earlier. There's a little two page handout found in the desk drawers of those retreat rooms which, over the decades, reminds me again and again of the power of that profound silence. In part, it reads:

> The silence of retreat is not simply a shutdown of communication with the outside world but rather a process of coming to stillness.
>
> It is much like the case of the busy person caught up in the affairs of life and of work who went to the desert solitary and complained about frustration in prayer, flawed virtue and failed relationships. The hermit listened attentively to his visitor's rehearsal of the struggle and disappointment in leading the Christian life. He then went into the dark recesses of his cave and came out with a basin and pitcher of water. "Now watch the water as I pour it into the basin," he said. The water splashed on the bottom and against the sides of the container. It was agitated and turbulent. At first the stirred-up water swirled around the inside of the basin, but then it gradually began to settle until finally the small fast ripples gave way to larger swells that oscillated back and forth, and the surface became tranquil and calm, so smooth, in fact, that the visitor could see his face reflected in the placid water. "That is the way it is when you live in the midst of others," said the hermit. "You do not see yourself as you really are because of all the confusion and disturbance." Nor do you recognize the divine presence in your life, he might have added.
>
> It takes time for the water to settle and become quiet; it is a process that one must wait upon, for attempts to hasten it are an interference that only stir up the water anew.

I am reminded of the proverb in Spanish, *Hay que darle tiempo al tiempo*, or "It is necessary to give time her time." As modern people caught up in many tasks, we have to take the time to allow silence to help us see again, especially the beauty which lies within us.

The Grand Coteau handout on silence concludes:

> The hermit Arseuius, one of those great men and women of prayer who lived in the Egyptian desert between the third and sixth centuries, once remarked: "I have often repented of having spoken but never of having remained silent." That is wise counsel for every disciple, but especially for every retreatant.

Ritualistic Silence

As I look back at the spiritual practices which have nurtured me since my childhood, I see that silence has often played a key role in helping to create a sacred space, especially as it made room for holy words and gestures. My earliest recollection of learning to pray was at my mother's knee as she guided me in the ritualistic practice of making the Sign of the Cross (actually, as I recall, right after a warm bath). Little cross on the forehead, then a light touch there, then on the chest, and shoulders, left and right, coupled with words of blessings, assured me that I was special, loved beyond all telling, and invited into a community which would be there when, at my Father's funeral decades later, I started with the same simple Sign of the Cross. The assembly's robust "Amen" at the end of the blessing came back as an affirmation of life! Despite the pain in my heart, I was not alone. The people of God shared the grief being felt by my mother, sisters, and brothers.

Popular Catholic devotions carried out on Good Friday, such as the Way of the Cross, often incorporate the profound silence of grieving, a grief which accompanies Mary, the mother of Jesus, at the foot of the cross. I was once present at "La Procesión del Silencio," or procession of silence, in the Mexican colonial town of San Luis Potosi. As women wearing beautiful mantillas or head coverings walked by with rosaries and prayer books, accompanied by persons on horses who also seemed to be enraptured by the solemnity of the day, I felt as if I was at a place where I did not have to say or do anything, simply allow myself to grieve because I was in the presence of others who had lost a loved one and knew that in our being together, somehow, our pain was lessened.

At a similar quiet, Way of the Cross, one prayed in three languages, Tagalog, Spanish, and Portuguese on Good Friday in one of the parishes in the San Francisco Bay Area, I witnessed how, in the words of my dear friend, colleague, and mentor, the late Alex García-Rivera, "gestures united us", in this case in a silent gazing or listening to each of the linguistic communities sing, or walking together in procession, while words threatened to separate us. "Words separate, gestures unite," summarized his lesson for me that solemn day. He also instructed me to contemplate the people's ritualistic embrace and veneration of a large, rough wooden cross, respecting the mystery into which they were transported by this ancient symbol.

In that same community, the glow of the morning Easter sun, despite the tragedy of Good Friday, brought healing and transformation as we felt the warmth of our celestial brother stir us to new life. The smell of Easter lilies brought to the church by families who often struggled to make ends meet, seemed all the more fragrant in the silence which we experienced before and after the joyous Eucharistic liturgy. "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!"

This same expectant hope has often appeared in the faces of the assembly when I have preached from my heart, especially when sharing something which came to me in prayer. Often it has been gripping for me to see how, in a mysterious sort of way, they understand even better than I the power of this hope. What stories they must have to tell!

Pedagogical Silence

Even after about twenty years of teaching adults in different settings, now doing so predominantly in graduate school, I still struggle with silence in the classroom. We often mistakenly assume that it means that nothing is happening. Advice from my friends who are introverts, mainly, have seen me allowing the class to sit in silence for a few minutes before opening up the discussion after I have posed a provocative question. This has proved to be very fruitful. We extroverts often have a tendency to rattle off whatever first comes to mind so this period of silence makes for more depth. This quiet time, moreover, creates a space which respects others' thought processes.

I have often been surprised by the occasional comment or writing of that certain student who hardly ever speaks up. It is clear from these that she or he has been listening closely all along and is often quite capable of not only summarizing what has been said but also helping to move the argument, or the commitment of the group, to a new level.

Finally, there is a certain silence in the classroom or in a faith sharing group which holds tenderly what has been imparted among the group, a living symbol of our covenant to keep confidential what has vulnerably been shared.

The Silence of Sabbatical

I am very fortunate to have a career in which every few years, I am able to take a sabbatical in order to dedicate myself to research and writing, course development, and overall intellectual renewal. These graced times have produced not only writing projects but also contemplative times in which I do not feel that I am being pulled in a million directions given tasks around academia and ministry. In my last one, I brought along the journals I had been keeping since late adolescent days, rereading what I wrote over the span of some thirty five years. Like the long retreat, this sabbatical silence allowed me to look again and respectfully contemplate where my life journeys had taken me. As I read these little volumes, ones in which I was amazed how faithful God had been not only to me but also to my loved ones, I made occasional notes so that I might be able to write some kind of memoir. But when the time came to do so, I found myself silent. It was not the time. Moreover, as I discovered in a retreat I made in

Nairobi before an international gathering of Jesuits the summer of 2012, too much focus on the past can distract us from looking at what lies ahead. In a lovely way, God is not finished with me yet, and like the famed poet Robert Frost penned, I still have “miles to go before I sleep and promises to keep.”

This new focus on the present, not just the past, together with humble preparation for the future, allowed me to take up photography again, that silence necessary for craft production. Through photography, I have come to appreciate light, texture, composition, color, especially as they come together in gazing upon the human face. At times, my prayer has simply been to gaze upon pictures I have taken, at times video clips, and within a short time, I am back in those places, quiet markers of horizons expanded, hearts renewed, in silence. As it turned out, a colleague’s advice, that I should not rush to write but rather allow the land to remain fallow for a time, gave me the freedom I needed to be still... and silent... on my sabbatical.

Some Destructive Forms of Silence

By way of an important caution, not all forms of silence are constructive or liberative. There is the destructive silence when the reputation of another person is being destroyed. There is the failure to denounce injustice or legitimately question authority. Political apathy rears its ugly head in the quote often attributed to Martin Niemöller, the German pastor and theologian sent to prison for his opposition to the Nazi regime in the 1940’s:

First they came for the socialists,
and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a socialist.
Then they came for the trade unionists,
and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a trade unionist.
Then they came for the Jews,
and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a Jew.
Then they came for me,
and there was no one left to speak for me.[43]

There is the condemning silence which is incapable of noticing the beggar on the street or the indigent in our charity hospitals, or even the rebellious adolescent for that matter. On a more personal note, the silence which does not allow us to listen to our deep, great desires in our hearts, crushes the gentle voice of these promptings placed there lovingly by God.

By Way of Conclusion:

I would like to close with a scripture passage which speaks of the awesome, silent presence of God. In it, Elijah, the great Hebrew prophet, experiences a vision, a vision which portrays a God often found where we least expect.

> [The voice instructed him to] "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave...[44]

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[43] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_they_came... accessed March 26, 2013.

[44] 1 Kings 19:11-13 (New Revised Standard Version).

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Silence/Absence as Passive Resistance in Fiji: A Case Study of Indigenous Ecotourism Development in Taveuni

Trisia Farrelly

Abstract

There are diverse ways of knowing and learning. Learning is best understood within an individual's cultural milieu which then informs teaching practice. The spoken word is only one in a myriad ways in which opinions or desires can be expressed. In some cultures, the "loudest voice" is spoken in "silence". In this paper, "silence/absence" as passive resistance to authority is explored in the context of efforts to implement indigenous ecotourism development in the The Boumā National Heritage Park, Taveuni, Fiji. Silence/absence implies either silence or silent and physical absence. Implications of silence for pedagogy are then intimated.

Keywords: *silence/absence, learning, resistance, pedagogy, ecotourism*

Introduction

Over the centuries, humans have been obsessed with language as symbol. The aptitude for language, it has been argued, is one characteristic that has separated 'man' from 'beast'. All the while we have ignored the possibility that silence can perform 'a number of highly sophisticated communicative functions' (Jensen, 1973, p. 249; Oliver & Barbara, 1962). The functionality of silence is enhanced by bodily praxis as nonverbal cues and could include a kind of 'look', a shift of the shoulders or head, a tension of the eyebrows or mouth or even a conscious corporeal absence in a particular social context. However, silence remains '*the* paramount factor in many communicative situations' (Jensen, 1973, p. 249). Cultural differences and contexts determine the function of silence.

In *Knowing and Learning* (2006)*,* Nabobo-Baba, lays out a cultural taxonomy of 18 types of silence from her observations in Vugalei, Fiji. The 11th taxonomy refers to 'Silence as resistance, disagreement, and opposition'. In her elaboration of this taxonomic classification, she notes that, in Vugalei, opposition to authority can be shown with silence. From 2004-2006, I observed a particular mode of silence which functioned as a form of passive resistance during research in The Boumā National Heritage Park, Taveuni, Fiji. In Boumā, silence, or silence as absence ('silent/absence') was employed as a form of passive resistance to a *status quo* sanctioned by those in positions of authority to determine the direction of indigenous development. It is important to note here that passive resistance is not mutually exclusive from the other taxonomic classifications Nabobo-Baba lists. For example, silence as resistance may also be related to 'silence and social class' or 'silence of women'. The silence I observed as a form of quiet resistance to the way community-based ecotourism was governed in Boumā may provide insights into the one of the many functions of silence indigenous Fijians may employ in educational settings.

Indigenous Development

Indigenous development may be understood as a 'people-led' development approach. Maiava (2001) states, "If you are not being led by local people, you're not doing it right" (p. 2). For the development practitioner, this requires a trust in indigenous communities' (Friere, 1972) that they know best what works in the complexities of their own cultural milieu. Indigenous development may, for example, be found in the informal economy whereby '…locals satisfy what the state has been unsuccessful in providing them with' (Llosa, 1989 cited in Corbridge, 1995, p. 289). Esteva and Prakash (1998, p. 288) describe this people-led process as involving the 'creating or recreating

[of] autonomous spaces'. In this way, lessons are learned from the people rather than expecting the people to learn from a 'superior' Western knowledge. Others have employed terms such as 'life projects' (Blaser, 2004) and 'alternative economies' (Gibson-Graham, 2008) to describe the kinds of organic grassroots development that occurs everywhere and all the time in spite of intentional and immanent development (Cowen & Shenton, 1995).

However, local knowledge and development may not be obvious to the sensibilities of external agents. Maiava and King (2007) explain that, like immanent development, indigenous development is 'hidden and marginalised, a perspective that is aided by the eurocentricity of Western economic development' (p. 87; see also Mehmet, 1995). This hidden and marginalised nature of indigenous development is resonant of Moscovici's (1984) Social Representation Theory which proposes that how local communities negotiate development processes may not be genuinely expressed in public forums (such as those necessitated in PRA (participatory rural appraisal) (see for example Chambers, . Because genuine acceptance or resistance to the *status quo* is not always expressed in public, development organisations have shown a general lack of interest in local governance in participatory development (see Muehlig-Hofmann, 2007).

It is perhaps the application of democracy and consensus more than any other development mechanism that may render outsiders deaf and blind to the complex socio-political undercurrents that exist beneath public representations of support or rejection of development projects. A more nuanced understanding of the private or silent, and subtle ways in which people express themselves in relation to development may require the unique ethnographic skills of those willing and able to afford extended periods of time *in situ* to build rapport and develop the cultural sensitivities required.

The Boumā National Heritage Park

The Boumā National Heritage Park was formally established in 1990. The *mataqali* (land owning clans) of the four villages and seven settlements who cooperatively own and reside within the Park as a tribe (Vanua[45] Boumā) had established their own community-based ecotourism initiatives within the Park. These included Tavoro Falls, Vidawa Forest Walk and Bird Watching, Lavena Coastal Walk and Backpackers Lodge, and Waitabu Marine Reserve and Camping. Despite receiving first place in a British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow Award category in 2002, there was a growing social dysfunction in Boumā during the research period. Continuous attempts to ensure the successes of the project and a string of failures had been exhausting and disheartening for the people of Boumā, particularly in some of the longer-running indigenous projects. Many felt that their voices had not been heard by those with the power and authority to facilitate change. While external consultants such as Tourism Resource Consultants (New Zealand) and then the National Trust of Fiji initially supported the establishment of the projects, the full management of the park initiatives were slowly placed back in the hands of the landowning clans. The purpose of my research was to find out why there were such high levels of discontent reported in a national park that was touted as an international success in 2002.

Method

The main ethnographic research in Boumā was conducted over a nine-month period in 2004. I returned in 2006 and then in 2014 for brief visits. Key to the analysis of silence for the purpose of this paper was informal *talanoa* or informal discussions held in private or semi-private spaces ("safe spaces") as part of daily participant-observation. While informal *talanoa* is part of mundane everyday life in Bouma, as a research method, talanoa provides participants with a 'safe space' to express themselves freely. The free-flowing discussions that emerge from these spaces occurred outside of restrictive *tabu* or uneven power/gender relationships (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2012). The *talanoa* employed as a key component of the research was a locally and culturally-specific form of *Talanoa* Research Methodology (Vaioleti, 2006). Coupled with extended periods of participant-observation*, talanoa* proved a culturally appropriate decolonizing method (Smith, 1999) enabling me (given time, trust, and mutual respect) to explore beyond public representations of 'how things appear' in the field to expose the messiness of micropolitics, and genuine needs and desires. That is, 'how things really are' and 'how everyone is really getting along'. However, it was also the silences between the *talanoa* that proved invaluable in gauging Boumā's social climate.

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[45] Vanua: refers to a tribe usually under the jurisdiction of a tribal chief and people. The vanua or tribe owns land and other resources usually communally in clan and sub clans.

Silence toward societal harmony

Va'anomodi[46] or silence is essential to the maintenance of social harmony in Boumā. Silence is one tool that people employ toward living life *va'avanua* (the '*vanua* way' or 'Fijian way' of life) and each function of silence contributes to social cohesion. The opposite of *va'anomodi* is to 'deliberately make noise so as to offend' (Nabobo-Baba, 2006, p. 95). For this reason, Fijians, in general, will go to great lengths to evade conflict (Pirie, 2000): 'Fijian culture, like other Pacific cultures, is imbued with an impulse to avoid confrontation. Confrontation within a group or community certainly occurs, but when it does the visceral reaction is to dampen it, to quieten and dissipate it, not to stamp it out'(Fraser, 2000 para 6). Andrew Arno (1980) provides one such example of conflict prevention in Yanuyanu of a hypocritical language (called *veiva'aisini*) which is employed to avoid shaming people publicly. Avoidance or *tabu* relationships mean that some kin may not be able to 'talk straight' (Farrelly, 2009, 2011) to one another. Indeed, in some cases any physical contact or verbal communication is avoided.

This is a life lived according to the prescriptions of kinship (or *na iva'arau ni bula va'aveiwe'ani*). This is exemplified in acts of compassion toward kin (Toren, 1999, pp. 272-273). *Va'aveiwe'ani* may be shown in gestures of kindness such as helping by spreading someone's *voivoi* (pandanus) to dry in the sun or providing labour for house-building, providing food and domestic assistance to a family with a sick parent or child, or taking down the washing of an absent family when the rain comes. There is also an expectation to contribute equitably to *ca'aca'a va'oro* (village work) as will be the focus of this paper. Because striving to maintain harmony within kin groups is essential for living life *va'avanua*, discontent, resistance, or disagreement is more acceptably made known through silence as passive resistance rather than through direct conflict. 'Passive resistance' may be understood as inertia which is used as a defence against dominant structures of control where there is dissent. This allows a social group to indicate discontent without confrontation.

Discontent

Strong leadership has been deemed critical in successful resource management (Veitayaki, 1998) since change affecting leadership can have a 'distorting effect' on development projects (Muehlig-Hofmann, 2007, p. 31). However, in many community management plans, it is assumed that a harmonious traditional community exists, held together by a strong leadership structure (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Mohan, 2001). This is not always the case. Muehlig-Hofmann (2007), writing about community-based management in a Fijian context explains:

> Findings show that local traditional customs, for example, around the instalment of chiefs, are eroding and one result is that village leadership generally weakens. This local foundation, therefore, requires more careful attention – without it, implemented management measures may be impractical and unsustainable (p. 31).

As has been noted, participatory approaches to development often lack an analysis of indigenous governance systems. Perhaps the rejection of local governance systems is a symptom of a lack of awareness of the influence internal power relations have on limitations of participation and empowerment. For example, in Reed's (1997) account of her research into community-based tourism in Squamish, she argues that it is difficult for development agencies to mediate uneven power relations between stakeholders. Power relations, she argues, strongly determine the results of collaborative tourism planning and may even preclude collaborative action (cited in Telfer, 2000, p. 244).

A common theme throughout my research was that of weak leadership or at least, perceived weak leadership as openly discussed only in informal *talanoa*. Many community members stated that weak leadership or weakened respect for leadership had lead to a diminished regard for the *vanua*. The *vanua* as a complex physical and conceptual amalgam can be defined as land, tribe, and spirituality, all under the jurisdiction of a chief, usually one installed by the people or clan. The *vanua* concept is also an indigenous Fijian epistemology and a complex set of rules and values for living life *va'avanua*. It may also be understood as a set of cultural devices and structures which serve to maintain the integrity and harmony of the community. It must be noted here that how the *vanua* is time and place-specific. This is evidenced in the unique ways in which aspects of the *vanua* are performed, imagined, valued, and negotiated alongside introduced skills and ways of knowing across Fiji.

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[46] Boumā dialect is applied throughout.

One example of this difference may be found in Boumā's micropolitics. Locally-perceived reasons chiefly leadership had weakened in Boumā included the following: a rejection of the traditional chiefly installation ceremony (by potential chiefs but not by the wider community); a decline in inter-generational respect for local knowledge (epistemologies and ontologies including belief in *vū* [ancestral gods], cosmologies and the wider *vanua* concept); and perhaps the introduction of 'human rights' in the 1970s coupled with formal education and other conduits of external values, skills and knowledge leading new generations to challenge chiefly knowledge and authority.

Weak leadership had led to a general break-down in social structure and had produced a growing *anomie* (Durkheim, 2001) in Boumā during the fieldwork period. Anomie is when a society provides little moral guidance. The outcome is a loss of a sense of community, security, and identity. The break-down in social structure, in turn, resulted in ruptures in decision-making networks and poor participation in community-based ecotourism initiatives and other community projects. It had also led to some anomalous events of direct conflict such as the murder of a village leader, threats to burn down Lavena Lodge, and to intentionally undermine the projects by setting up businesses in direct competition with them - but not before silence was employed as passive resistance.

The people of Boumā had been endeavouring to cultivate a culturally meaningful indigenous business model they called 'business *va'avanua*' (Farrelly, 2009, 2011, 2013) or business the '*vanua*/indigenous Fijian way'. However, the slow breakdown in social order and system of values in the village had impacted on management and decision-making processes and structures and, therefore, the ability for the Boumā tribe to develop indigenous business models for their community-based ecotourism initiatives 'the *vanua* way'. A breakdown in chiefly leadership and decision-making structures led many community-members to conclude that full participation in the ownership of the park for the majority of its community members was impossible.

For example, some of those directly involved in the management of some of the projects attempted to draw lines in the sand between park and community (arguing that the projects should be run as 'businesses' (in what they described as 'European style') and the governance of the villages should be '*va'avanua'*). This resulted in what some of the Boumā communities described as a 'crisis point' in which people had been left feeling dissatisfied, frustrated, angry, jealous, and disorientated. These fractures between the ecotourism projects and the communities were reflected in an interview with two participants who were not employed as park staff:

> The park and the village are working separately.
> The management of the Park:
> the board, the manager,
> when they want to do something,
> they just do it themselves.
> And the community
> is surprised at what they have been doing.
> So we tell them that we should know
> what changes they are making.
>
> The community should be advised first
> before the park management
> go ahead with their decisions.
>
> If there was anything

> I would like to see changed
> about the Park
> so that it was better for the community –
> that would be it.
> And the management,
> the board members,
> they put themselves apart from the community.
> They just want to run the business.
> They just want to go on their own.

Communication between the park management and the rest of the community in Lavena was further exacerbated by the suggestion that not only was the board not reporting to the community but that the project manager was not consulting with the board before proceeding with new decisions:

> The management,
> if they want to do something,
> they just keep on doing it.
>
> The board doesn't always
> take their decision to the village first.
> Even the park manager doesn't always
> take their decision to the board first.
>
> See, right now we are trying to follow that system.
> We are pushing it....
> Over the last few years we have regretted
> that this has not happened.

There were also major breakdowns in lines of communication and the contribution of ideas from Park employees to the *ti'oti'o* (smallest social grouping) upwards to the *yavusa* (sub-clan) in Lavena. This was the source of a great deal of discontentment in the village. Irregular family meetings (*ti'o*, *to'ato'a*, and *mataqali*) meant families were not given the opportunity to voice their opinions, ideas or concerns in time for monthly *bose va'a'oro* (village meetings). Consequently, community-members were withheld opportunities to be informed and to have their say on park project matters prior to village meetings when opinions were heard from each kin group and decisions were made. A member of *yavusa* Lavena explains:

> When the board gets together
> there is a representative from each family.
> But the information
> doesn't flow backwards and forwards from there.
>
> This is because the *ti'oti'o*
> does not sit together and talk.
> They are supposed to meet once or twice a week.
> Often...
>
> This is one of the main problems
> with the running of the Park.

Ti'oti'o and *to'ato'a* meetings are opportunities for each individual family member to ask questions and offer suggestions. The challenge was to have the meeting in a timely manner since sometimes Park/village decisions needed to be made quickly.

There existed the strong belief that the projects could be successful and could work in harmony with village life (the *vanua* way), if only it were for the strong leadership of the tribe. If the chiefs had insisted on maintaining regular meetings for their kin groups, the information from meeting to meeting would flow as intended. It was suggested that one reason why the chiefs had become so uncooperative about holding regular meetings may have been that they had had their 'noses put out of joint' by a growing trend toward ignoring traditional chains of communication and control that came with 'business' style project management. Thus, the chiefs too had employed 'silent absence' as a clear communication mechanism to inform all that they were also dissatisfied with the present circumstances:

> It is up to the chiefs to sit together and talk
> and make this happen.
> They are sitting together
> but I think the way the message
> has been sent to them has been different -
> The track - where the message is supposed to go.
>
> The message that goes from this person
> to this person
> and over this one
> and goes to this one.
> And this one just wants to do what he wants
> because they didn't come to him.
> They just jumped over him.
>
> That is the problem I think.
> That is not the traditional way -
> to jump over someone like that.
> It should be through every channel.
> This is not happening all the time now.

That the lines of communication have been compromised between park management and the each *yavusa* was also blamed on the chiefs' inability to communicate effectively with each other:

> The turaga ni vanua
> they are not getting on with each other.
> So the people in the village
> they just stay where they are living
> and just follow their own footsteps.

I spoke with a man who had moved to Boumā from a different tribe to marry a Boumā-born woman. He was appalled at the way the *turaga ni vanua* (the tribe's chief) was treated: 'People should respect their chief. People cannot listen to their chiefs here'.

Ca'aca'a va'a 'oro as silent/absence

Solesole vaki (or working together in clans) (Kingi & Kompas, 2005, p. 3) is more commonly known as *ca'aca'a va'a 'oro* (village work) or *ca'aca'a na park* (park work) in Boumā. Lavena Village used to have to pay for each compound to be mowed by community members, but now this comes out of park funds as long as everyone contributes to these 'community clean-up days' (*ca'aca'a na park)*. Lavena regularly has clean-up days whereby the whole village works together to improve the village. This is done on a rotation basis with the first Tuesday in the month dedicated to the *bose va'oro* (the village meeting); the second Tuesday is for general community work; the third week is for park maintenance; and the fourth week is for general community work again.

Park maintenance may include cutting grass, clearing rubbish, and repairing tracks, laying gravel and maintaining the backpacker lodge. Everyone in the village is expected to attend all of these community events. However, any bad feeling about the park, its management, or chiefly leadership is often said to be reflected in poor attendance in village meetings, park clean-up days as well as other community events. Consequently, attendance at *bose vaʻoro* and *ca'aca'a na park* were very visual social gauges of the community's level of satisfaction of the projects and of their leaders.

It is important that all village members attend the *bose vaʻoro* (village meetings) and *bose na park* (park meetings) in order to both contribute to, and to understand, village and park project matters and for the community-based ecotourism initiatives to be truly community owned and managed. However, village attendance in *bose va'oro* and *bose na park* fluctuated depending on the social climate of the village at that time and this relied heavily on the strength of their chiefs. The following and subsequent poetic narrative excerpt is an example of the content of informal *talanoa.* This is the kind of talk one would not hear in public forums and was often referred to as 'talking straight' or 'talking from the heart' when the context allowed interlocutors the context in which to do so:

At first
if everything is settled from every side
we can have 120-150 villagers at the meeting
but now
when there is an upset from somewhere
there is 40, 50, sometimes 70.

Declining meeting numbers reflected declining numbers in regular community work initiatives.

Ca'aca'a va'a 'oro can only work successfully where there is strong leadership and direction. In the past, if the *turaga ni 'oro* (village headman or government link to the chief) called everyone to come to assist in a community project, community-members would immediately drop whatever they were doing and come and help. During the research period, this was not the case. 'Nowadays' one woman said, 'When he calls, nobody comes to help'. When I asked why, she told me that few people [nowadays] had respect for their leaders:

Some people just stay in their houses.

It's the leadership.
They don't like who is leading –
the *turaga ni koro*, the *turaga ni vanua*.

Maybe the leader did something bad to the community…
And when they become leaders
the people don't like them [still]

So that's why people don't come to the community clean-up days.

The *turaga ni 'oro* at the time had stolen community funds. Although he had offered a sacrifice of *waqa* (kava root) in a reconciliation ceremony, talk in the village had suggested that there was still a residual lack of respect for him. This lack of respect was shown in this particular case by silence physical absence in response for his calls for community action.

This was a common theme in my many conversations with individuals across Vanua Boumā. Attendance at village park meetings and in park maintenance work (*ca'aca'a na park*) did not only indicate dissatisfaction with local leaders; according to most I spoke with, low attendance also provided a clear indication of the levels of satisfaction the community had with the ecotourism projects as a whole. This may include dissatisfaction with the way their managers ran the projects; lack of communication between the projects and the local community; lack of financial or other benefits; or a lack of participatory potential they had in the projects. Whatever the reason, lack of respect for leadership had a detrimental effect on the rallying of communal support for communal village projects including the community-based ecotourism projects.

Silent absence as passive resistance

Understandings of resistance to the *status quo* are not limited to direct and voiced explanation (for example, in *talanoa*). Participant observation of individuals and groups in Boumā revealed that corporeal presence or absence in a particular setting can clearly indicate the level of support for projects and leaders without uttering a single word. Within the transparency of non-action is a political strategy intended to clearly indicate dissatisfaction with the *status quo* without confrontation. In Boumā, this dissatisfaction was expressed by regular and intentionally obvious absences from park meetings and community work events. Thus, silent spaces that spoke louder than words of their discontent were left where their presence was anticipated by those in authority.

Scott's (1986) 'passive resistance' involves everyday forms of opposition to the *status quo* under conditions of limited agency and constrained choices. In Boumā, limited agency may be understood as an inability to 'talk straight' due to *tabu* or avoidance relationships, expectations of *va'aturaga* (culturally appropriate behaviours) and other restrictions, or simply wanting to avoid direct confrontation and conflict. Limited agency was particularly conspicuous in formal *talanoa* in park meetings where a European democratic meeting style had been encouraged by the District Commissioner when copra production was introduced in the 1950s (Roth, 1973). This included parliamentary procedures such as voting and roles such as secretary and treasurer. This process involved in this democratic 'foreign flower' inhibited the kind of free-flow 'question and answer' and clarification practice inherent in *talanoa.* Talking straight was not such as issue in informal contexts (including conversations with me as a non-indigenous outsider) as these could take place in private spaces where individuals were free to voice opinions regarding the ecotourism projects and other matters in the absence of *tabu* relationships and silencing power dynamics (Farrelly, 2009; Farrelly, 2011).

Everyday forms of passive resistance in Boumā included what Scott refers to as 'foot-dragging' and 'non-compliance'. These involved refusals to attend meetings and community working days despite the knowledge that attendance was compulsory for the whole community. In the absence of strong leadership and forums where people were encouraged to 'talk straight', informal *talanoa* and non-attendance functioned as revealing gauges of support or discontent for the projects. They also contributed to the active rejection of the *status quo* concerning what was happening in the village, particularly in terms of leadership. The openness and depth of feeling expressed in informal *talanoa* stood in stark contrast to the relative silences observed in park meetings. At times, it was only following the park meetings*,* that individuals expressed their confusion over or dissatisfaction with what had been decided in park meetings in informal *talanoa*.

Silent absence and the informal *talanoa* that no doubt set the stage for those physical absences sent a very strong message across Boumā that change was desired. Scott notes that forms of passive resistance like these can give way to direct conflict and rebellion (1979, p. 101) and this certainly happened in Boumā with the murder of a village leader and a couple of serious threats to destroy the ecotourism projects. However, these are extreme examples of resistance and highly unusual considering Boumā's resistance to threats to the core cultural values of the *vanua*.

Scott (1990) notes that those who emphasise hegemony fail to notice the 'hidden transcripts' or subtle moments of resistance. Everyday efforts to redefine 'life projects'(Blaser, 2004) in a way that held most meaning for the Boumā people were more commonly manifest through subtle yet powerful expressions of passive resistance. This highlights the need to deconstruct the Boumā 'community' as a homogeneous and harmonious entity and not only to attend to voiced resistance in public spaces but also to the heavily-laden meanings found in the silences left by unexpected or unwanted absence.

Silence and speech are not dichotomous and oppositional and exist in a complex tension with one another. In western epistemology, speech, expression, and voice are equated with freedom while silence is synonymous with repression, a lack of agency, and censure. However, when speech breaks silence, this does not imply that suddenly the truth emerges from a void where no meaning is to be found (Brown, 2005). Voice can act to silence a culture or a people (see Claire, 1997) and silence can function as a mechanism of sustained oppression (Mayberry, Chenneville, & Currie, 2013).

It is dangerous to assume that silence always implies assent. Rather, silence itself is its own truth and we need to learn to interpret the silences of others it is culturally constructed in place. This paper is a call for the resurrection of silence from its European epistemological subordination to speech and for a keen appreciation for its political value since silence can be "[a] means of preserving certain practices and dimensions of existence from regulatory power, from normative violence, as well as from the scorching rays of public exposure" (ibid, p. 85). Similarly, speech does not automatically imply freedom but may also 'bind rather than emancipate' while silence may 'loosen [power's] hold and provide for relatively obscure areas of tolerance' (Foucault, 1998, pp. 100-101). In other words, for Foucault, silence may not only function as a shelter *for* power but also a shelter *from* it (Brown, 2005, p. 86). So refusing to speak may be a deployment of power from below in order to resist power from above. However, Brown (2005) warns that we should not value silence as resistance too highly: while silence may be deployed as a strategy to counter subjugation, it does not imply emancipation.

De Certeau (1988) reminds us that Foucault's (1984) panoptican as an invisible silent apparatus of control can also be met with a silence as antidiscipline: invisible and with a logic of its own. The logic of this silence can involve the consumption of the practices and products of dominant social structures while reappropriating the intended meanings. This may also involve strategies wholly intended to resist those dominant practices and products. This paper has shown that silence can be a generative site of new knowledge and the negotiation of new knowledge with the potential for culturally appropriate indigenous development. Through *talanoa*, the knowledge and systems offered by dominant social structures were reappropriated and renegotiated. Cowen and Shenton (1998) call this 'what people are doing anyway' - despite external development efforts, or other dominant social structures. For example, despite the introduction of a European democratic meeting style (encouraged by the District Office and intended to enhance economic development practices), informal *talanoa* provided a formidable counter-strategy for more freely discussing responses to current circumstances and producing new knowledge toward culturally meaningful solutions.

Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) argue that conscious passive resistance (such as that shown in Bouma) is the most indisputable form of resistance. Cohen (2004) refers to deviant acts as a form of silent and yet conscious political resistance:

> The cumulative impact of [deviant] choices might be the creation of spaces or counter publics, where not only oppositional ideas and discourse happen, but lived opposition, or at least autonomy, is chosen daily. Through the repetition of deviant practices by multiple individuals, new identities, communities, and politics might emerge where seemingly deviant, unconnected behavior can be transformed into conscious acts of resistance that serve as the basis for a mobilized politics of deviance (2004, p. 27).

The consciousness of 'passive resistance' renders the term 'passive' misleading: those who resist the *status quo* when they respond to authority with silence do not lack agency. For example, non-attendance denoting resistance or private discussions of discontent are conscious political strategies to avoid direct conflict while sending a strong message of non-compliance. Cohen's (2004) 'intentional deviance' also emphasises the conscious nature of silence in Boumā's acts of passive resistance. Passive resistance is an intentional act to deviate from authoritarians' directives. However, this quiet, private context of resistance is not an end in itself. The hidden transcripts of Scott's (1990) passive resistance, like non-attendance and private and informal *talanoa* are spaces of potential for more public and transformative expressions of agency and resistance. Through informal *talanoa*, in particular, the people of Boumā provide themselves with a safe social context in which to 'conscientise' (Freire, 1968). That is, to raise their consciousness and mobilise toward such ‘active inactions’ or such as non-compliance and non-attendance. In the act of gathering and conscientising through informal *talanoa* and through mass non-attendance, individuals and groups may actively resist the *status quo* and create alliances in the process against disempowering structures and actions. Silent/absence as passive resistance, therefore, is not only generative, it is also agentive.

Conclusion

Those who research Indigenous development, tend to ignore traditional authority and community leadership even though they are key factors in the success of such projects. Attending to deviant or resistant acts within (what on the surface appear to be) harmonious traditional hierarchical structures in the Pacific (Muehlig-Hofmann, 2007) is vital if researchers are provide valid information regarding the satisfaction or ‘success’ of development initiatives. This means not just observing and analysing the public voiced expressions, presences, and activities of those with whom we collaborate in our work, but also silent absences and private heart-felt deliberations of concern, fears, and hopes and dreams.

Understanding how decisions are made in specific socio-cultural environments is critical to the success of community-based ecotourism. This also includes a closer attention to the micro-politics[47] of daily life in these locations. Local decision-making structures and processes are particularly critical because much community-based ecotourism management and planning relies on social values, and it has been argued that community-based ecotourism is less about the resources and more about the social structures and behaviours related to the resources (Jentoft, 1998). Therefore, the ‘motives, ethics, interests, and cultural conceptions driving local stakeholders’ must be understood (Muehlig-Hoffman, 2007, p. 31). As a result, researchers and development practitioners are becoming more interested in local social dynamics and perceptions of the development process (Veitayaki, 1998).

The individuals of Boumā saw both positives and negatives generated by the ecotourism initiatives. This illustrates the myth of ‘community’ (Guijt & Shah, 1999) as not all the members of Boumā supported ecotourism development (bearing in mind few understood its possibilities and limitations) and not all were given access to its benefits. Some of the benefits offered as possibilities, to at least some of the Boumā communities, were often outweighed by the ways in which community integrity was deemed to be threatened by those benefits. The main objections to the projects were the socially divisive and exclusionary nature of much of the management and decision-making of the projects, as well as the resulting misconceptions and confusions, and for the majority that the management of the projects threatened their potential to live life *va’a vanua*.

Reactions to the management of the projects also varied greatly between individuals in the Boumā ‘communities’. Some individuals and families in Boumā displayed their feelings of discontent with the projects and the ways in which they were affected by them through what has been described here as ‘passive resistance’. The manner in which this passive resistance was played out could sometimes set the protagonist on a paradoxical tight-rope between what is acceptable to the *vanua* and what is not. That is, for example, by physically withdrawing from an ecotourism project activity, an individual practices the non-direct and, therefore, non-threatening behaviour of someone who takes care to behave *va’aturaga* (culturally appropriately) while temporarily withdrawing from communal activities (deemed antithetical to the *vanua*). Other more extreme and rare forms of resistance, on the other hand, were in diametric opposition to the laws of the *vanua* and *va’aturaga* (e.g. threats to burn down Lavena lodge and others to undermine the business, the murder of the Waitabu *turaga ni’oro*) when other tactics of passive resistance had failed.

Passive resistance was also played out as informal *talanoa*. David Gegeo and Karen Watson present the value the Kwara’ae place on ‘critical discussion’ or ‘enlightened dialogue’ (*talingisilana ala’anga*) as social contexts for negotiating culture and indigenous epistemologies (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001). In Boumā informal *talanoa* provided a space in which Indigenous epistemologies are rethought and renewed. Here, in small groups, people could discuss how they interpret and value what is going on around them. Thus, informal *talanoa* facilitates the constant making and remaking of Boumā culture.

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[47] Blasé (1991) provides a broad-based, working definition of micropolitics: the use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in organizations. In large part political actions result from perceived differences between individuals and groups, coupled with the motivation to use power to influence and to protect. Although such actions are consciously motivated, any action, consciously or unconsciously motivated, may have political significance in a given situation. Furthermore, both cooperative and conflictive actions and processes are part of the realm of micropolitics (p. 11).

In her study of the significance of resistance in management education, Monaghan (2003) highlights the value of attending to learner resistance as absent voices in educational contexts. This paper also emphasises the depth of meaning implied by silence or silent absence (absence without verbal or written explanation). Often misinterpreted as laziness or, a greater attention to what happens at the margins or between voice and action may provide invaluable insights into the depth of engagement and resistance occurring in educational settings.

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Sowing Representative Democracy in the Kingdom of Tonga: The 2010 Elections and Future Implications for Political Education

Alumita Durutalo
Gordon Nanau
Desmond Amosa
Anchie Mona Latu

Abstract

The November 2010 general elections in the Kingdom of Tonga was a historical event in the sense that further amendments was made to the Constitution in April, 2010 to allow for an increase in the People's seats in the Legislative Assembly as well as the formal recognition and registration of political parties. As the only island state in the Pacific that was not directly colonized, Tonga's political development is unique in the sense that the Monarch and the Aristocrats or Nobles controlled political leadership for a long while since 1875. The move to allow for more commoner representation in 2010 marked the beginning of leadership democratization in the island Kingdom.

Researching and documenting this political milestone is crucial in the sense that it would contribute significantly to the study and understanding of the wider democratization processes in the small Pacific island states as well as highlight the need of political education.

Keywords: *Tonga, election, Pacific, politics, democratization*

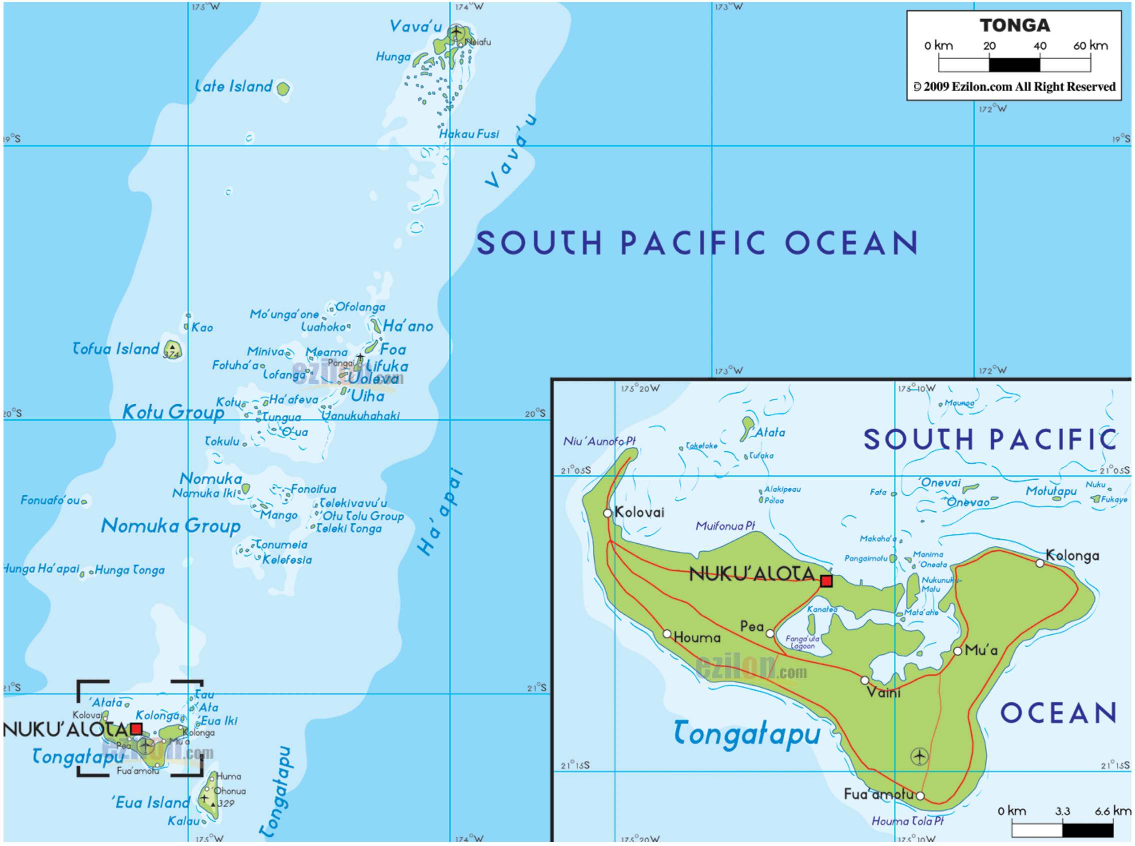
Research Background

This paper is based on a research that was conducted in the Kingdom of Tonga prior to and during the November 2010 General Elections. This election was an important milestone in Tonga's political history as a number of political and legal changes were introduced to facilitate a gradual move towards the process of modern leadership democratization in the island kingdom. Initially in April 2010, a Constitutional change marked a new move towards gradual democratization in the island kingdom's political system. These included an increase in the number of commoner representatives in parliament as well as the formal recognition of a political party system.

This study is part of a bigger and long-term research which has as its main aim the study of democratic leadership systems in the Pacific Islands region. It specifically targeted the commencement of long-term examination of political representation and political equality through party and electoral politics. The overall study involves both election observation and the collection of data that would contribute to the accumulation of knowledge and the establishment of a data base in the area of political representation through parties and elections.

In terms this Tongan study, the research had five main objectives. These included overviewing p*olicies and legislation* and ascertaining the processes of constitutional, legislation and policy changes to facilitate the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections. Linked to this was the documentation of Tonga's party and electoral system as well as registered parties.

Map 1: Map of the Kingdom of Tonga


TONGA
0 km
20
40
60 km
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Vava'u
Neiafu
Hunga
Late Island
Hakau Fusi
Vava'u
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN
Kao
Tofua Island
Mo'unga'one
Ofolanga
Luahoko
Ha'ano
Foa
Lifuka
Uoleva
'Uiha
Ha'afeva
Tungua
O'ua
Fotuha'a
Lofanga
Kotu
Kotu Group
Tokulu
Nomuka
Nomuka Iki
Fonoifua
Telekivavu'u
'Otu Tolu Group
Teleki Tonga
Mango
Nomuka Group
Tonumeia
Kelefesia
Fonuafo'ou
Hunga Ha'apai
Hunga Tonga
Ha'apai
'Atata
Kolovai
Kolonga
NUKU'ALOFA
Tongatapu
Fua'amotu
'Eua Island
Ohonua
Kalau
Tongatapu
Niu'Aunofo Pt
'Atata
Kolovai
Muifonua Pt
NUKU'ALOFA
Pea
Houma
Vaini
Mu'a
Kolonga
'Onevai
Motutapu
SOUTH PACIFIC
OCEAN
Tongatapu
Fua'amotu
Houma Tola Pt
0 km
3.3
6.6 km
175°W
174°W
173°W
172°W
19°S
20°S
21°S
175°20'W
175°10'W
21°05'S
21°15'S

http://www.ezilon.com/maps/oceania/tonga-physical-maps.html

The second objective was the review of election information awareness in terms of the assessment of the level of awareness and understanding of the role of party formation, party membership and elections in the democratic process in Tonga. Additionally, people's perceptions of parties, party membership and the conduct of elections were gathered. The sources and type of information that was disseminated to people prior to elections was also analyzed.

The third objective involved the study of political party formation as well as the assessment of people's awareness of the link between elections and national security concerns. In this context, the study also involved the documentation of people's awareness of the link between party formation, the nature of parties, the conduct of elections and political violence. Also linked to the third objective was an analysis of the level of people's awareness and perception of party formation, party membership, elections and corruption.

The fourth objective focused on an examination of customary and traditional influences on party and electoral politics in Tonga. This included a study of customary and traditional influences on party formation, party membership and the conduct of elections. People's awareness, understanding and views on "gift giving" or "vote-buying" before elections were analyzed and documented. Furthermore, objective four also focused on documenting any practice of patron-clientelism in the formation of parties and conduct of elections.

The fifth objective of the research was futuristic focused in the sense of envisioning a political education strategy that could be adopted given the fulfillment and or non-fulfillment of research objectives. This included identifying how the education systems in the Pacific such as the University of the South Pacific member countries can be used as a major medium for the dissemination of information on leadership through representative democracy. The same could be said of other countries in the Pacific islands.

Furthermore, the research through its findings, focuses on the possibility of exploring how international aid funding can support awareness workshops in the area of parties, elections and the overall promotion of democracy in the Pacific especially in the University of the South Pacific's twelve member countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Is, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Research Methodology

In terms of Research Methodology, this research adopted a qualitative approach but also used quantitative methodology as elections involve figures and some quantification processes.

Research Methods

This research involved both *secondary and primary data* collection. Secondary data collection began with a detailed review of accessible literature in the area of political parties and elections globally as well as regionally in the Pacific Island countries. In the case of Tonga, this included a review of the Tongan Electoral Act which informed the research on legislation governing the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections.

Primary Data Collection involved four phases. Phase one involved consultation with stakeholder*s.* The*se* were consultations with the Supervisor of Elections in the Kingdom of Tonga, leaders of registered political parties; a candidate for the nobles' representatives; candidates for People's Representatives; leaders of prominent NGOs; Church leaders; leaders of some women groups and community leaders; youths and youth leaders' representatives.

Phase two involved in-depth interviews and Collection of data from the Elections Office. Data gathered included those about registered political parties, population and registered voters. Interviews were conducted and interview questions were guided by the study objectives.

Phase three involved following the campaign trail in terms of listening to campaign speeches and collection of party manifestos for in-depth study.

The fourth and final phase of primary data collection concentrated on election observation, analyzing the conduct of elections and interviewing voters and candidates.

Apart from the stakeholders and candidates, approximately sixty voters were interviewed during the elections. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods were used to analyze data from the research.

The Research: An Introduction

The formation of political parties and the conduct of elections symbolize the practice of representative democracy globally. In the words of Andrew Heywood, "elections are … nothing less than democracy in practice"[48]. One of the fundamental roles of elections is to facilitate and promote the processes of *political representation* and *political equality*, two fundamental principles of democracy. Through elections, politicians do not only represent the *general will* of the people but they are also viewed as *servants of the people* that elect them into power. Citizens are empowered to control government during elections since it is a time when they can vote out undesired political representatives and vote in promising ones. Having a say in political representation contributes towards the notion of *"government by the people".*

Pacific island societies like other indigenous societies globally, have come to embrace various principles of democracy through the processes of imperialism, colonization and globalization. In Pacific Island societies, transition from the customary ways of leadership to the modern democratic leadership systems involve the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections. However, it is interesting to note that in some indigenous societies like those in the Pacific, modern democratic leadership systems operate alongside customary ways of leadership, or at least are impacted by the sways of customary leadership.

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[48] Heywood, A. 2007. *Politics* (third edition). Palgrave Macmillan, New Zealand: p. 247.

Island countries in the Pacific region including eleven of the twelve member countries of the University of the South Pacific (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu), have gradually embraced the principles of representative democracy and political equality in various degrees. The Kingdom of Tonga, on the other hand, following its ancient customs and traditions closely, was not directly colonized. Tonga was an absolute monarchy and had a slightly different political system in that the King and Nobles dominated socio-political leadership for quite a long period of time. Tonga was the only Pacific island country that was not colonized directly but had an advisor in the British missionary Shirley Baker in the late 1800s.

The Kingdom of Tonga: A Brief History

The Kingdom of Tonga is divided into three main island groups: Tongatapu, Vavau and Ha'apai. It has a land area of 748 sq. kilometres and a population of approximately 104,100 (2010 estimate). More Tongans now reside outside of Tonga in countries like New Zealand, Australia, the United States of America and also in Europe.

What makes Tonga's political development interesting is that apart from not being colonized, Tonga has one of the oldest recorded and oral histories in the indigenous Polynesian world. Tongan history relates the evolution of three dynasties beginning with the Tu'I Tonga lineage; the Tu'I Ha'atakalaua lineage and on to the current ruling dynasty, the Kanokupolu lineage. The evolution of these lineages spanned centuries.

When missionaries arrived in Tonga in the early 1800s, consequent to the evolution of the latest Kanokupolu lineage, Tonga's customary political system was already quite advanced and complex. Perhaps, this was a major reason that no European power competing in the Pacific at that time could find a gap for an excuse to colonize Tonga. Tribes were ruled by a number of independent and powerful chiefs who were competing for overall dominance in the island group. Taufa A'hau I from Ha'apai for example, finally gained dominance in Tonga through warfare and inheritance. This enabled him to establish supreme authority, thus making him first overall King of Tonga.[49]

Royalty in Tonga was established both by customary law through inheritance and victory in warfare, as well as the establishment of a new Constitution in the 1870s. The Constitution codified the King's authority as the ultimate power in Tonga. British advisor, Wesleyan missionary Shirley Baker, helped to draft the 1875 Tongan Constitution and became Tonga's Prime Minister from 1880-1890. The Tongan Constitution, supporting a Constitutional Monarchy is also one of the oldest in the Pacific. Germany was the first power to recognize Tonga as an independent state leaving Great Britain with no choice but to follow suit since Britain was in competition with Germany in the Pacific[50] at the time.

Modern government leadership in Tonga had always been in the hands of the reigning monarch and Nobles until the Tongan Constitution was amended in 2010 to increase the people's or commoner representation in parliament. On November, 25, 2010, Tonga moved gradually towards representative democracy, when for the first time, two political parties were registered prior to elections.[51]

Significance of the Research

An observation and analysis of the evolution of parties and elections in the Pacific Island states highlight some peculiar traits about party formation and the conduct of elections in this region. For example, apart from Tonga and to some extent Samoa, the idea of political representation through party formation and the conduct of elections emerged overnight in almost all Pacific Island countries, that is, on the eve of the departure of colonizers.

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[49] See also I. C. Campbell. 2003. *Worlds Apart: A History of the Pacific Island,* Canterbury University Press, New Zealand: pp. 93-96.

[50] Hixon, M. 2000. *Salote, Queen of Paradise*. University of Otago, New Zealand: 14-15.

[51] http://pidp.eastwestcenter.or/pireport/2010/September/09-15-02.htm Date accessed, 15/10/2010.

Additionally, parties and elections in indigenous societies are influenced by the processes of colonization as well as the sways of cultures. Political parties and elections although theoretically constituted and grounded along legal-rational thinking, have been based on other reasoning in the indigenous Pacific Islands' context. Kabutaulaka explains that in the Solomon Islands, politicians' allegiances to parties are weak and consequently the party system is weak. The frequent practice of "crossing the floor" reflects the practice of "unbounded politics". He adds that, "parties are not sufficiently strong in binding the loyalty of elected members"[52]. This particular case shows that both the party system and the electoral processes have not succeeded in preparing individual political leaders to fully embrace the democratic principles upon which the notion of political parties and elections are grounded.

Likewise, party formation and the conduct of elections in Fiji between 1970 and 2006 were highly influenced by factors such as ancient Fijian rivalries, patron-clientilism, ethnicity and militarism. These in turn contribute to and exacerbate long-term political instability in post-colonial Fiji.[53]

At another level, parties and electoral systems in a number of Pacific island states have not facilitated nor promoted gender balance in terms of female leadership and representation in parliament. This has happened despite the fact that females also had crucial leadership roles in matrilineal and patrilineal pre-European Pacific societies. Hindering the entry of women into Pacific parliaments directly negates the democratic principle of political equality in the modern leadership system.

The table below highlights women's representation in some Pacific Islands' parliaments.

Table 1: Women in Pacific Parliaments (June 2006)

Country	**Size of Legislature**	**Number of female members**	**% parliament members**
Papua New Guinea	104	1	0.1
Vanuatu	52	2	3.8
Solomon Islands	50	0	0
Tonga	30	1	3.3
Nauru	18	0	0
Palau	16	0	0

(Source: A Woman's Place is in the House – House of Parliament, Pacific Islands Forum: p.61).

As seen in Table 1, women in the Pacific Islands region have been grossly under-represented in parliaments in the post-colonial period, despite the high level of education that women have achieved in a number of Pacific Island states including Tonga. Therefore, long term research in the area of representative democracy is needed to facilitate possible solutions to the problem through the introduction of suitable policies. Additionally, in this particular election observation in Tonga, interviewees have openly discussed their views on what should be the role of women in Tongan politics. While this research focused on how the principles of democratic representation and political equality were addressed during the 2010 Tongan general elections, a long-term study of political parties and elections need to be done to identify needs in this particular sector of the political system. These can then be used to inform policy such as the strategies to be used in political education; whether there is a need for the temporary reservation of seats in parliament for women and other minority groups, and or the instigation of legislative and constitutional changes to facilitate other democratic processes.

Due to increasing concern in political stability, good governance and gender inclusiveness in Pacific leadership systems, it is important to undertake in-depth and long term study in the area of political representation through the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections. These could provide important avenues for introducing long-term stable leadership changes in Pacific societies.

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[52] Kabutaulaka, T. T. 2006. "Parties, Constitutional Engineering and Governance in the Pacific Islands", Rich, et. al., (eds), in *Political Parties in the Pacific Islands*. Pandanus, The Australian National University: p. 104.

[53] Durutalo, A. 2006. "Fiji: Party Politics in the Post-Independence Period", Rich, et al (eds), in *Political Parties in the Pacific Islands.* Pandanus, Australian National University: pp. 165-182.

Research Findings

Research findings and data were derived from the various sources previously mentioned in the research methods. The findings were categorized under the main themes according to the main research questions. Set out below are explanations of findings under the main themes as well as some recommendations in the area of political education.[54]

Historical and Political Background

Changes that Facilitated the Electoral Process: When and how did these Come About?

The 2010 Tongan elections marked a political watershed for commoner citizens when the Tongan Constitution was amended to allow for new democratic changes. King George Tupou V had to relinquish some of his power, to enable some Constitutional changes in Tonga's electoral law. For example, for the first time, the Prime Minister was no longer nominated by the King but chosen by the 26 members of Parliament. Changes in the membership of Tonga's Legislative Assembly began in April, 2010 when political reforms were introduced to increase the number of people's representatives from 9 to 17. There were five main electoral divisions. These included 10 seats for Tongatapu, 3 seats for Vavau, 2 seats for Ha'apai, 1 seat for Niua, and 1 seat for Eua.[55] These new changes implied that 17 out of 26 seats in the People's Assembly or 64.5% were directly elected by the people. Prior to this, only 30% or 9 out of 30 seats belonged to the common people.[56]

Although Tongan commoners had occasionally voiced their opinions on the need for more democratization in the Island Kingdom, what quickened the pace towards the embracing of modern democratic leadership was the 2006 "Black Thursday" event in Tonga's capital Nukualofa, where almost 80% of buildings were burnt down by pro-democracy supporters. The pro-democracy movement was [and is] under the leadership of Samuela Akilisi Pohiva, who is also leader of the Democratic Party of the Friendly Isles.

Changes which were ushered in through the demands of the pro-democracy movement included the formation of political parties. However, the Supervisor of Elections in Tonga explained that political parties were not formally registered in the 2010 elections even though they were formally recognized generally.[57] It was anticipated that the role of political parties in Tonga would have been similar to those in other Pacific Island countries in terms of their promotion and facilitation of the democratic processes. Voters were registered after the constitutional changes in 2010. Table 2 shows a comparison in the number of registered voters in each of the five electoral districts in 2008 and 2010.

The figures show that there was a significant decrease in the total number of registered voters in 2010 in comparison with the numbers in 2008. Reasons for this decrease may be due to a number of factors and this can be a topic of research on its own.

Candidates were also registered prior to the elections and Table 3 shows the number of candidates in the different constituencies.

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[54] Please refer also to Appendix 1.

[55] The 17 constituencies include 10 on the island of Tongatapu (constituencies 1-10); 1 constituency on the island of Eua (constituency 11); 2 constituencies on the island of Ha'apai (constituencies 12-13); 3 constituencies in Vava'u (constituencies 14, 15, 16) and 1constituency on Niua (constituency 17). See also appendix 2 on constituencies.

[56] "Tonga on Track to Historic Democratic Elections: Parliament to Address Critical Legislation in Coming Weeks". Http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2010/September/09-15-02.htm. Date accessed, 15/10/10.

[57] Interview with the Supervisor of Elections Tonga, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.

Table 2: Registered Voters (2008 & 2010)

Constituency	2008	2010
Tongatapu	37,418	29,157
Vava'u	13,008	6,701
Ha'apai	8,916	3,267
Eua	4,463	2,241
Niua	1,989	864
Total	65,794[58]	42,230[59]

Table 3: Number of candidates in each constituency

Constituency	Number of candidates
Tongatapu 1	8
Tongatapu 2	9
Tongatapu 3	10
Tongatapu 4	7
Tongatapu 5	13
Tongatapu 6	15
Tongatapu 7	10
Tongatapu 8	10
Tongatapu 9	15
Tongatapu 10	12
Eua 11	3
Ha'apai 12	11
Ha'apai 13	3
Vava'u 14	7
Vava'u 15	6
Vava'u 16	5
Ongo-Niua 17	3
TOTAL	147

(Source: *Moana*, November, 2010: 8-24)

In the November, 2010 General Elections in Tonga, people's representation to the Legislative Assembly not only attracted numerous local candidates but also some overseas Tongan candidates, many of whom had already departed for "Greener Pastures" in New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America. One of these, Dr. Sitiveni Alapua, for instance, a winning candidate in the 2010 General Election, had lived and worked in Hawaii for quite some time.

Tongans living abroad were recognized and legally entitled to vote or run as candidates if they were present in Tonga during the election period.[60]

Factors that Contributed to Party Formation as well as Party Leadership and Membership

The 2010 Constitutional Amendment enabled the formation of political parties in Tonga prior to the November 2010 elections. However, although a few political parties were formed, we gathered through our interviews that approximately 60 percent of our interviewees still did not have an in depth understanding of what a political party was. The only party that had some semblance of a political party was Akilisi Pohiva's *Democratic Party*

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[58] Final Report – 5 December, 2009. Constitutional-Kingdom of Tonga, p.83.

[59] *Enrolment Statistics,* Tongan Electoral Commission (Komisoni Fili'O Tonga): http://tongaelections.com/index.php/electoral-roll/enrolment-statistics (Accessed 08/02/1013).

[60] Final Report – 5 November, 2009. Constitutional and Electoral Commission _ Kingdom of Tonga: p. 94.

of the Friendly Islands (DPFI). However, even DPFI was more a political movement than a properly organized political party per se.

Some interviewees gave the following answers when interviewed whether they subscribed to or knew anything about political parties. Ignorance in what political parties are about were reflected in the following answers: “What is a party?”[61]; “I do not really understand how political parties work”.[62]; “I do not know what party means”[63] and “I do not really understand”.[64]…”

Other answers reflected a partial and skewed understanding of the roles of political parties. For example, “I do not like the idea of having political parties because it is a narrow way of thinking and it will make people go to war”[65]; “Tonga does not need parties because it is only a small country”[66]; “Only a few people will believe in what parties say”[67]; “Parties will constrain people from speaking their minds”[68]; and “I dislike parties… Parties will control what has to be said”.[69]

Those that gave their reasons for supporting a party acknowledged the advantages of a party in a political system. For instance, some interviewees explained the following about the roles of political parties: “parties will unify people’s thinking”[70]; “by having parties, it will be easy for people to identify which parliamentarians to go and see if we have needs”[71], “members of one party will enable parliamentarians to work together as a group when they are in parliament”.[72]; “Parties already have their agendas which they will implement in parliament”.[73]; Parties are important for the development of Tonga”[74]; and “Through parties, people can work together for the benefit of the country”[75].

Other answers reflect an understanding that parties facilitate the running of government, for example, “Parties will enable all constituencies to have a representative in parliament”[76]; “Running a government is best left to a party which is made up of a group working together”[77]; “I like the idea about parties because there are things we do not know about the government that parties reveal”[78]; and “If each member of a party knows what he/she is supposed to do in parliament then it’s alright”.[79]

In the 2010 Tongan elections, the high number of independent candidates standing in each constituency reflected a number of possible trends. First, that the idea of contesting under a party banner was new and not yet understood and or appreciated by candidates. Second, that the electoral system, which was *‘first past the post’,* tended to encourage the participation of many candidates. Similar situations occur in other Pacific Island countries that use the First Past the Post electoral system, like the Solomon Islands. Given Tonga’s electoral system, the 2010 elections saw a large number of candidates competing in the people’s seventeen constituencies.

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[61] Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[62] Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.
[63] Interviewee, Constituency 4, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010
[64] Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[65] Interviewee, Constituency 7, Tongatapu 7, 25th November, 2010.
[66] Interviewee, Constituency 8, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[67] Interviewee, Constituency 10, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.
[68] Interviewee, Constituent 8, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[69] Interviewee, Nuku’alofa, Tongatapu, 22nd November, 2010.
[70] Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.
[71] Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[72] Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu, 25th December, 2010.
[73] Interviewee, Constituency 4, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[74] Interviewee, Constituency 8, Tongatapu. 25th November 2010.
[75] Interviewee, Constituency 7, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.
[76] Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.
[77] Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[78] Interviewee, Constituency 7, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.
[79] Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.

Table 4 shows the number of candidates in each of the five main electoral divisions, the number of candidates, the number of seat and total number of registered voters.

Table 4: Electoral Divisions, Number of Seats & total number of registered voters for people's representatives

Electoral Division	Number of Candidates	Number of Seats	Total Number of registered voters
Tongatapu	109	10	29,157
Vavau	18	3	6,701
Ha'apai	14	2	3,267
Eua	3	1	2,241
Ongo Niua	3	1	864

While the average number of candidates competing in each constituency was quite high for relatively small electoral bases, Tonga also has seats which are reserved solely for nobility representatives.

Nobility in Tonga is an inherited status. The Tongan Constitution recognizes the customary leadership role of Nobles. In the 2010 elections, 33 registered Nobles voted for their 9 representatives in Parliament.

Therefore the percentage of noble seats in the Legislative Assembly was 35% and 65% belonged to the people's representatives. Noble family members over the voting age of 21 voted as commoners.

Image 1: A Noble's Residence on the island of Tongatapu

Photo: © Alumita Durutalo, A Noble's Residence on Tongatapu 2010

The electoral division for Noble representation in Tonga were: three representatives for Tongatapu, two representatives for Vava'u, two representatives for Ha'apai, one representative for Eua and one for Ongo-Niua. Altogether a total of nine Nobles and seventeen People's representatives were elected to the Tongan Legislative Assembly. Table 5 highlights the names of Noble representatives in the 2010 elections.

Table 5: Noble Representatives in the 2010 General Elections

Island Group	Noble Representatives
Tongatapu	Lord Tuivakano
	Lord Ma'afu
	Lord Vaea
Vava'u	Lord Tu'I'afitu
	Lord Tu'I'lakepa
Ha'apai	Lord Fakafanua
	Lord Tu'iha'ateiho
Eua	Lord Lasike
Ongo-Niua	Lord Fusitu'a

[80]

The 2010 final report of the Constitutional and Electoral Commission explains that Tongan Nobles are still recognized as customary leaders by the Tongan people. In this context, their leadership roles are still considered as relevant in modern Tonga. Similar to chiefly leadership systems in other indigenous Pacific Island societies, Tongan Nobles have their customary areas of jurisdiction. This gives Tonga its uniqueness in terms of the inclusion of indigenous leadership in the modern leadership system.[81]

Table 6: People's Representatives in the 2010 Tongan General Elections

Constituencies	Representatives
Tongatapu 1	Samuela Akilisi Pohiva
Tongatapu 2	Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika
Tongatapu 3	Sitiveni Halapua
Tongatapu 4	Isileli Pulu
Tongatapu 5	Aisake Valu Eke
Tongatapu 6	Siosifa Tuitupou
Tongatapu 7	Sione Sangster Saulala
Tongatapu 8	Sione Havea Taione
Tongatapu 9	Kaveinga Fa'anunu
Tongatapu 10	Semisi Palu'ifoni
Eua 11	Sunia Manu Fili
Ha'apai 12	Uliti Uata
Ha'apai 13	Mo'ale Finau
Vava'u 14	Lisiate Aleveita Akolo
Vava'u 15	Samiu Kuita Vaipulu
Vava'u 16	Viliami Uasike Latu
Ongo-Niua 17	Sosefo Fe'aomoeata

[82]

Party and Electoral Systems

The role of political parties in the Tongan political system still has to be fully understood and accepted by the majority of the voting population, even though the 2010 Constitutional change allowed for the registration of political parties. While parties existed in the 2010 elections, the majority of candidates competed as independents. The Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands (DPFI) which won twelve out of the seventeen people's seats, operated more like a political movement than a formally organized party. However, given that the DPFI dominated the party system in 2010, Tonga appeared to have had a *dominant party system* at that particular point in time, given that there was only one dominant party. But it must be noted that Constitutional change in 2010 allowed for the establishment of a *multiparty system.* The type and nature of party system may change again in the future due to such factors as an increase in people's political awareness or a change in political culture.

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[80] Tonga Election Results 2010, http://tongaelections.com/index.php/elections/election-results (Accessed 31/01/2013).

[81] Final Report – 5 November, 2009, Constitutional and Electoral Commission, Kingdom of Tonga.

[82] Tonga Election Results 2010, http://tongaelections.com/index.php/elections/election-results (Accessed 31/01/2013).

While Tonga had a *Multiparty System* with a *First Past the Post* Electoral System, it cannot not be affirmed that the influence of the party system on the electoral system or vice versa, was enough to contribute to the high number of candidates, competing for only seventeen seats in the Legislative Assembly. Additionally, the majority of candidates in the 2010 elections competed as independents. However, it could be argued that the *First Past the Pos*t electoral system encouraged the participation of many independent candidates. The Constitutional change allowing for new political changes was similar to the act of opening Pandora's Box. Even new campaign trends, unseen in election campaigns in other parts of the Pacific was witnessed for the first time as seen in Image 2.

Image 2: Campaigning on a Moving Truck in Tongatapu

Photo © Alumita Durutalo, Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu 2010.

On the whole, campaign speeches delivered from the back of moving vehicles were not very clear. In our interviews, more than 60% of the interviewees did not really know the main message(s) that candidates in their constituencies were trying to convey to them, let alone from the back of a moving truck.

Table 7 provides a summary of political parties, independent candidates as well as Noble candidates and the number of seats they won in the 2010 elections.

Table 7: Number of Seats Won By Each Political Group

Parties/Independents /Nobles	**No. of Seats**
Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands (DPFI)	12
Independents	5
People's Democratic Party (PDP)	0
Sustainable Nation Building Party	0
Tonga Democratic Labor Party	0
Noble Representatives (Elected by 33 registered Nobles only)	9
Total Number of Seats	26

(Source: Matangi Tonga, Nov. 26, 2010)[83]

As the table shows, the only political party that won seats was the Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands (DPFI). Supporters of the pro-democracy movement provided the power base of the DPFI. Other parties did not seem to have solid power bases from which to draw their support. The dominance of independent candidates also indicated that the idea of having political parties has not been widely considered nor embraced in Tonga.

Promotion of Women Candidates

Between 1875 and 1951, Her Majesty the late Queen Salote Tupou III gave Tongan women the right to vote and stand as election candidates when she amended the 1875 Constitution.[84] Despite this legal sanction, a few Tongan women have been parliamentarians.

In our interviews, a lady interviewee confirmed that women in Tonga were given the right to vote in 1951 and since then only four women have been voted into Parliament. She stated that women have participated in elections but “they are generally seen as newcomers on the block”, or “the new electoral divisions with smaller constituencies disadvantage them” and “Women are publicly attached to men for their contribution and Parliament is not women friendly”[85].

Additionally, another lady interviewee indicated, “in Tonga, there are many women voters but they just don’t want to stand in elections”. One reason that she gave for this is that “in politics you have to do a lot of compromising”.[86] She noted that many women do not want to participate in elections because of this. Overall, the reasons explained above were some of the stumbling blocks that served to deter women’s participation in general elections.

In 2010, out of a total of one hundred and forty seven candidates, only eleven were women. Out of these, ten competed in the Tongatapu constituencies and one competed in Ha’apai. Table 8 highlights women candidates and the constituencies they competed in.

Table 8: Women Candidates and their Constituencies

Candidate	Constituency
Mele Teusivi Amanaki	constituency 2 (Tongatapu)
Malia Alisi Taumoepeau	Constituency 2 (Tongatapu)
Betty Blake	Constituency 3 (Tongatapu)
Mele Linda Mau	Constituency 4 (Tongatapu)
Ofa Tautuiaki	Constituency 5 (Tongatapu)
Lesieli H. Niu	Constituency 6 (Tongatapu)
Mavaetangi Manavahetau	Constituency 7 (Tongatapu)
Fataimoemanu L. Vaihu	Constituency 8 (Tongatapu)
Ofa Fatai	Constituency 9 (Tongatapu)
Malia Peata Sioko Noa	Constituency 10 (Tongatapu)
Langilangi Vimahi	Constituency 12 (Ha’apai)[87]

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[83] Matangi Tonga, Nov. 26, 2010: 2-29

[84] Likiliki, O. G. 2006. “Advancing Women’s Representation in Tonga”, in *A Woman’s Place is in the House – the House of Parliamen*t. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji: p.145.

[85] Interviewee, Nuku’alofa, Tonga, 22nd November, 2010.

[86] Interviewee, Nuku’alofa, Tonga, 22nd November, 2010.

[87] Refer to Appendix 2.

Overall, women contributed 7.5% of the candidates in the 2010 elections. None of the women candidates won a seat in the election, however, the current Minister for Education, Dr. Ana Taufe'ulungaki was nominated by the government to become a Government Minister.

Due to the low turnout in women's participation as election candidates, a male candidate argued that there is a need to encourage women to participate in parliamentary elections. He explained that in future, one way of achieving this is to have reserved seats for women in parliament. He believed that if there are reserved seats for Nobles in Parliament, then there should also be reserved seats for women as well as for Tongans living abroad as this would cater for those who have dual citizenship.[88]

Another interviewee who was an independent woman candidate highlighted the need to promote women candidates in Tonga. She argued, "there should be a reservation of seats for women in parliament, even if this was only a temporary measure". She explained that cultural inhibition is one of the major stumbling blocks for women to join politics in Tonga.[89]

While the majority of women candidates in 2010 stood as independent candidates, a few such as Mele Teusivi Amanaki, joined political parties such as the Tongan Democratic Labor Party.

As explained in the 2010 final report of the Constitutional and Electoral Commission, having no political parties work against the chances of women candidates and also against the candidates of minority groups.

However, the Commission does not believe that reservation of seats for women to go to parliament is beneficial for women in the long-term. The Commission believes that Tongan women have customary rights and most are also well educated and can compete with men on these grounds.[90]

Figure 1 shows the percentage of voters by gender in 2010.

The above graph shows that the number of female voters were on the whole slightly higher than male voters in almost all constituencies. Perhaps, in future if women candidates were better organised to get support from the women, they may win a number of seats in the Legislative Assembly.

A number of organizations, national, regional and international, contributed to the promotion of women candidates prior to the 2010 elections. One such organisation was the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).[91] Almost all women candidates that we interviewed believed that more should be done in terms of awareness and training to encourage women candidates in future elections in Tonga.

Voter Preferences

In terms of voter preferences and influences, the majority of our interviewees voted for people that they preferred and choices were made on individual decisions. Some voters preferred independent candidates while others voted on party line. On Tongatapu, where our research focused, the Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands was quite popular as a party choice.

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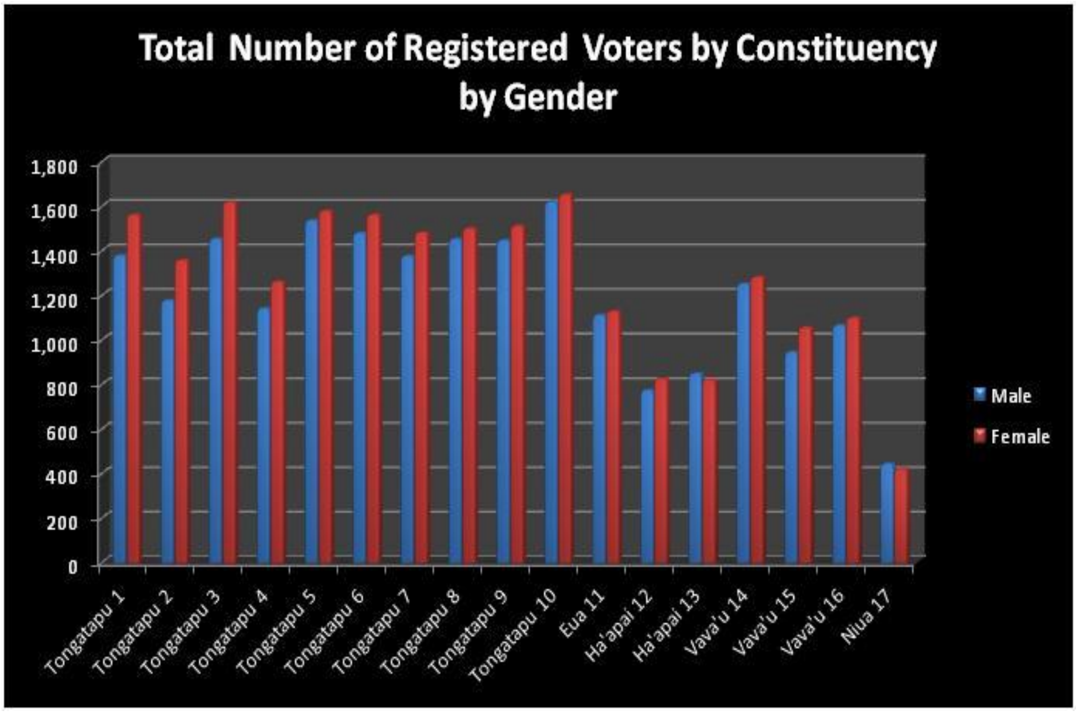
[88] Interviewee, Tongan election candidate, 23rd November, 2010. Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

[89] Interviewee, Woman Candidate, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. 23rd November, 2010.

[90] Final Report – 5 November, 2009. Constitutional and Electoral Commission – Kingdom of Tonga: p. 77.

[91] Interview with a woman candidate, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. 23rd November, 2010.

Figure 1: Total Number of Candidates by Constituency and Gender in 2010



(Source: Tonga Electoral Commission)[92]

Some interviewees were influenced in their choices by the campaign messages that they heard and the experiences of the candidates. For example, we found that some campaigns in Tongatapu were quite well organized. Mr. Semisi Sika's campaign in Tongatapu Constituency 2 was one such example. He had a campaign centre with workers who managed his campaign for him. He even had Tee Shirts specifically printed, and DVDs specifically made to promote his campaign and the Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands. Image 3 shows Mr. Semisi Sika's campaign centre and slogan.

Mr. Sika's well organized campaign together with his long-term work amongst youths in Tongatapu contributed to his election victory. For those who supported political parties on Tongatapu, the majority supported the *Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands* which won nine out of the ten seats.

During election day, people freely converged and socialized near polling stations. This is a common feature of elections in Pacific societies. Even though people vote for different political groups, socialization amongst kin groups still happens. Image 4 shows a kava session (Faikava), at a polling station in Tongatapu on election day.

Major Concerns of Candidates in the 2010 Elections

Candidates highlighted a number of major concerns that they wanted to address in parliament, foremost of these was the issue of resource distribution and poverty. These were reflected in the following interviews on the reason(s) for contesting the elections: "to address poverty in the sense that people don't have money"[93]; "things are not going according to plan in Tonga. I am standing to address poverty"[94]; "equal access to economic development and the equal distribution of resources"[95]; "to improve Tonga's economic viability so that it can bypass the amount earned through remittance"[96]; and "to promote self-sufficiency in Tonga"[97]

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[92] *Enrolment Statistics,* Tongan Electoral Commission (Komisoni Fili'O Tonga): http://tongaelections.com/index.php/electoral-roll/enrolment-statistics (Accessed 08/02/1013).

[93] Candidate for Constituency 1, Tongatapu. 22nd November, 2010.

[94] Candidate for Constituency 9, Tongatapu. 23rd November, 2010.

Image 3: Tourism Industry + Semisi Sika = Prosperous Tonga

Tourism Industry + Semisi Sika = Prosperous Tonga
C 11915

Photo: © Alumita Durutalo, Semisi Sika's Campaign Centre, Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu 2010.

Image 4: Faikava in Tongatapu – election 2010

Photo © Alumita Durutalo, Faikava during Polling Day in Tongatapu 2010.

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[95] Candidate Constituency 3, Tongatapu, 23rd December, 2010.

[96] Candidate Constituency 5, Tongatapu, 22nd December, 2010.

[97] Candidate Constituency 1, Tongatapu, 23rd November, 2010.

On the issue of democracy, interviewees expressed both the strengths and weaknesses of democracy. An interviewee viewed the pro-democracy movement in a negative light: "the Tongan Pro-democracy Movement was condemning Tongan traditions and way of life…people have a choice to contribute or not …the movement should not go out and tell the people to stop respecting".[98] Along this line of argument, an interviewee, who used to support the movement in its early days, argued that the burning of Nuku'alofa in 2006 turned her away from the movement as innocent people were victims of this violence.[99]

In terms of the strength of the pro-democracy movement, another interviewee argued, "that the economy in Tonga has dropped drastically due to a lot of corruption and people do not know how much is left in government. The new democracy movement has been uncovering all these".[100] Additionally, another candidate stated that the reason that he contested election was: "to actively participate in moving Tonga towards democracy".[101]

An interviewee further argued that one of the electoral changes that he expects in Tonga in the future is that, "all nobles are to be elected by all the people and not by nobles only".[102]

The 2010 Election Results: An Overview and Implications on Political Education

The 2010 election observation in the Kingdom of Tonga concentrated on the island of Tongatapu, which altogether has 10/17 constituencies for the people's seats as well as 3/9 Noble representatives. A total of 147 candidates competed for 17 People's seats, implying that an average of 9 candidates competed in each constituency. This is quite high for a small developing country with a population of about 104,100 in 2010. Overall, there was an air of great enthusiasm about the elections from both the voters and the candidates. The late King himself, King George Tupou V, expressed that the election was, "the greatest and most historic day for our Kingdom".[103]

The formation of government after the elections was an interesting and cautious political maneuver in the exercise of balance of power in the small Pacific Island kingdom. Although the pro-democracy movement's party DPFI, won the majority of people's seats, twelve out of seventeen, they did not get the chance to choose the Prime Minister. Lord Tu'ivakano, a Noble representative from Tongatapu became Prime Minister with the support of the Noble as well as independent candidates.

It could be argued that judging by the formation of government after the elections especially in the election of a Noble to be Prime Minister, that Tongans will move cautiously in selecting modern leaders through the democratic process. As two interviewees reiterated: "there should be a balance in the system of government between the customary and the modern" and "potential conflict should be avoided in the formation of any government".

The 2010 Tongan Elections and Its Implication on Political Education

Political education can be defined simply as teaching and learning processes in the area of power and power relations in a community, society or country. Such teaching and learning process is used to enable people to gain information and knowledge so they can make informed and wise decisions on political matters. Political education in the context of this research is aimed at preparing voters to make informed decisions prior to electing national leaders.

In the context of indigenous societies like Tonga and other Pacific Island states, where democracy co-exists with customary leadership systems, political education would be challenging as one tries to maintain a balance between customary and modern leadership systems. However, based on the objectives of our 2010 elections research, we have made the following observations and recommendations based on the practice of modern democratic elections.

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[98] Interviewee, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 22nd November, 2010.
[99] Interviewee, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.
[100] Interviewee, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.
[101] Candidate constituency 2, Tongatapu, 22nd November, 2010.
[102] Interviewee, male candidate, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.
[103] Telegraph, London. http://www.smh.com.au/world/kingprepares (accessed, 12 February, 2013).

Deconstructing and Simplifying the Concept of Democracy

There is a need to inform voters about democracy in general and specifically *representative democracy* and *political equality*. In the long-term, a good grounding in democracy may mean including it as a subject or part of a subject in the school curriculum at both the primary and secondary school levels. A sound knowledge of democracy in terms of its history, nature and application would facilitate better understanding of other inter-related democratic processes.

Party leadership and membership

As mentioned earlier, the role of a political party was not clearly understood by approximately 60% of those interviewed. This may have been partially due to the fact that the idea to have political parties were fairly recent in Tonga. In the long-term, there is a need for political education in this area.

Party and Electoral system

There is a need for political education to inform the voters on the relationship between the party system and the electoral system and vice versa. For example, a First Past the Post electoral system with a multi-party system tends to increase the number of candidates and intensify competition. This may cause a winning candidate to enter parliament with only 20% or 30% of the votes. Given the large number of Tongan candidates in the 2010 elections, it would be worth considering the introduction of a system such as the Alternative Vote (AV) system, for example, which will make candidates and parties work together in terms of exchanging preferences, thus preventing a lot of votes from being wasted.

Promotion of Women Candidates

One particular need area in political education not only in Tonga but in the majority of Pacific Island States, is the encouragement of women to compete in parliamentary elections. The limited number of women competing in the 2010 elections, regardless of the high number of well-educated Tongan women, was testimony to this need.

All voters should be educated on their constitutional and human rights to participate equally in elections either as voters or candidates. In our interviews, except for women candidates, very few interviewees wanted to promote women's rights to contest future parliamentary elections.

Political education is a need in indigenous societies that are now embracing modern leadership democratization. It is important that people are educated to fully understand modern leadership systems in terms of their strengths and weaknesses to enable them to make informed and wise decisions on the leadership choices they are presented with during elections. Uninformed choices can have negative socio-political and economic consequences in the long term.

International Funding and Support for Democracy Education

Political education in small island states in the Pacific including the Kingdom of Tonga require both funding and professional expertise to carry out democratic awareness through education. While some education for women were funded by UNIFEM prior to the 2010 elections, more support is needed for broader political education purposes in the future. A possible source of expertise to undertake political education training could be drawn from the University of the South Pacific which is a regional university for twelve island states in the Pacific, including the Kingdom of Tonga. Intensive political education processes are needed to inform people about modern political representation and democratic leadership.

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Mr. Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika, now Member of Parliament for Tongatapu 2, was indeed the epitome of *“The Man from the Friendly Islands”* when he welcomed us to his campaign centre. We learnt a lot from his valuable information.

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Comments and recommendations in this research may be used for further research and study on democratization in Tonga and the Pacific Islands region as a whole.

Malo aupito, vinaka vakalevu, talofa lava and tank yu tumas.

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Appendix 1

Research Questions

I. General Research Questions

1. What Constitutional changes have been introduced in Tonga in terms of its electoral law to include political parties and people's representatives?
2. Why have the changes come about?
3. How are political parties formed?
4. How long have the parties existed?
5. What factors contribute to party formation?
6. Who are the party leaders?
7. Who are the party members?

II. Party and Electoral Systems

8. What type of party system does the country have?
9. What type of electoral system does the country have?
10. In what way(s) does the party system strengthen the electoral system and vice versa?

III. Promotion of Women Candidates

11. Has the party fielded women candidates before? If not, why not?
12. What steps have been taken to include women candidates.

IV. Voters Preferences

13. Do you vote for whoever you want or do other people influence your choice?
14. Do you like the current party system and electoral system in your country, give your reason(s).
15. Which party do you support and what are your reasons?

Appendix 2: Women Candidates, Kingdom of Tonga Elections 2010

In 2010, a total of eleven women were candidates in the elections. Out of these, ten competed in the Tongatapu constituencies and one competed in the outer islands. Overall, women contributed 7.5% of the candidates in the 2010 elections. Women candidates included:

- Mele Teusivi Amanaki (constituency 2)
- Malia Alisi Taumoepeau (Constituency 2)
- Betty Blake (Constituency 3)
- Mele Linda Mau (Constituency 4)

- Ofa Tautuiaki (Constituency 5)
- Lesieli H. Niu (Constituency 6)
- Mavaetangi Manavahetau (Constituency 7)
- Fataimoemanu L. Vaihu (Constituency 8)
- Ofa Fatai (Constituency 9)
- Malia Peata Sioko Noa (Constituency 10)
- Langilangi Vimahi (Constituency 12)

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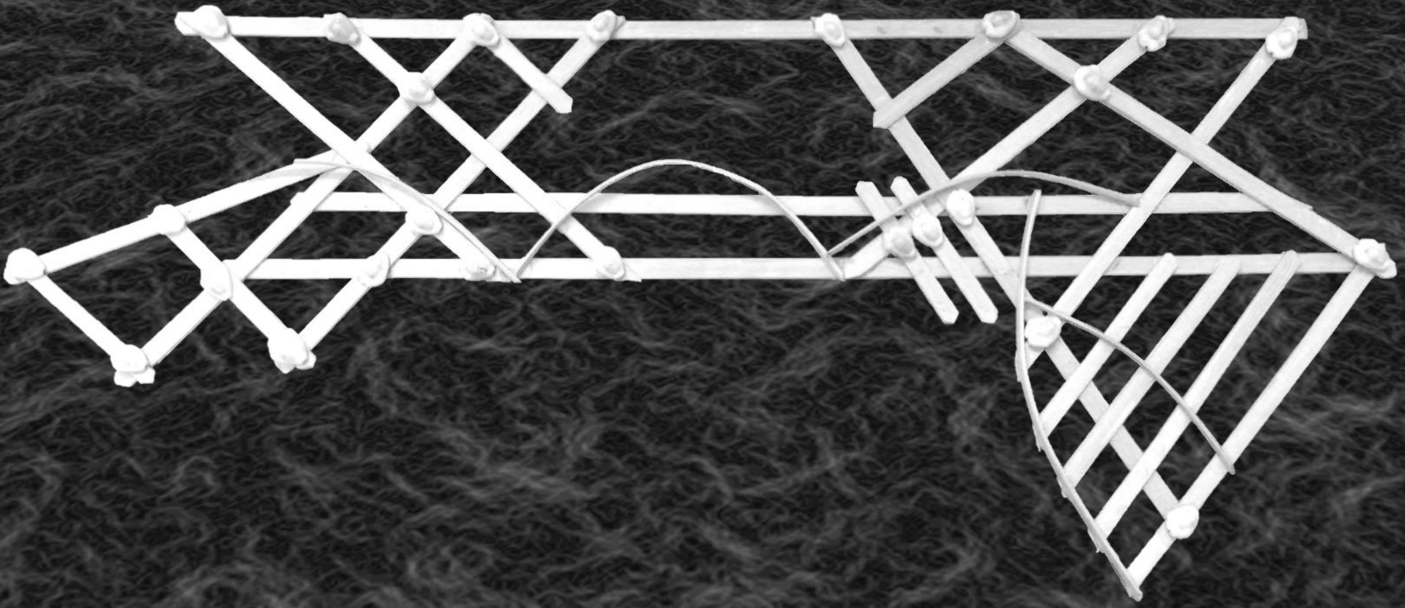
DIVERSITIES IN EDUCATION DELIVERY FOR DIFFERENT CONTEXTS



Teacher Educators and Indigenous Rights in a Complex, Multicultural, but Uncertain Future

Zane Ma Rhea

Abstract

This paper examines the work of teacher educators in nation states where mainstream education systems have been developed by colonial powers in the past. Such teacher educators work within a complex and specific set of historical circumstances that have created whole education systems that were developed over hundreds of years in distant imperial centers, overriding the needs of already present Indigenous peoples. Overlaying this challenge is a complexity of newer immigrant populations that have settled in previously colonized nations, coming from all corners of the globe, demanding that teacher educators are able to teach student teachers how to meet the needs of school students from myriad ethnic cultural backgrounds. Of central importance to this paper is the question of how teacher educators can manage the Indigenous rights challenge within a multicultural space of negotiation, while recognizing the colonial presence and legacy in their work.

With the emergence of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2008)*,* nation states have endorsed the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples to control of how their children are to be educated. The challenge for teacher educators lies in their responses to the set of challenges facing them as they prepare the next generation of schoolteachers within complex, multicultural states. Most teacher educators in universities in countries such as Australia, having a majority non-Indigenous population, are female and come predominantly from a British or Irish ethic cultural background, have little internal awareness of the issues involved in either the Indigenous or 'multicultural' domains, have never considered their pedagogical approach in terms of Indigenous rights, and focus predominantly on including curriculum resources about Indigenous and other culture's lifeways as a response to these challenges. This paper develops an analysis of professional development workshops conducted with teacher educators about their views and understandings of Indigenous rights within their respective cognate areas, the impact of an Indigenous rights approach on their teaching, and how they are negotiating the multicultural interface with Indigenous rights (Thaman 2013).

Keywords: *teacher educators, indigenous rights, multicultural education, university teaching and learning*

Introduction

This paper examines the work of teacher educators in nation states where mainstream education systems have been developed by colonial powers in the past. Such teacher educators work within a common but specific set of historical circumstances that have created whole education systems designed to serve the needs of non-Indigenous people in distant imperial centers, overriding the needs of an already present Indigenous peoples in modern colonial or postcolonial states.

Overlaying this challenge is a newer complexity of newer immigrant populations that have settled in previously colonized nations, coming from all corners of the globe, demanding that teacher educators address the needs of learners from myriad ethnic cultural backgrounds in their preparation of student teachers. Of central importance to this paper is the question of how teacher educators can manage the Indigenous rights challenge within a multicultural space of negotiation, while recognizing the colonial legacy in their work[104].

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[104] An earlier version of this paper was given as a Keynote for the Multicultural Programs Unit, Department of Education & Training, NSW 2001 State Professional Development Conference, 21st May 2001.

This paper presupposes that education is, as hooks (1994) suggests, the practice of freedom. It also presupposes that to take up the opportunities of education, one also needs to cultivate pluricultural skills. It is necessary for those involved in teacher education to have skills and knowledge that will take them beyond their re-creation of their worldview into a world that is multiculturally competent and also recognizes Indigenous rights. It is a new sort of wisdom that understands change and uncertainty (Fullen, 1991). Big education systems will certainly continue into the future, and nations such as Australia, the example in this paper, will be multicultural and will also need to address the education rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In nations across the Pacific, also colonized, even while the majority might be Indigenous, commonly the education systems were first imposed and shaped by the experiences of colonization. The extent to which Pasifika peoples can take control of, and significantly alter, the shape and provision of education services for their peoples in the face of globally comparative and competitive markets is beyond the scope of this paper but many of the challenges in university teacher education programs remain common across previous colonies whether there are Indigenous or non-Indigenous majorities. How do we educate in this uncertain multicultural future that also recognizes the rights of Indigenous people? We need to understand the consequences of our worldview on how we shape this future (Vasta & Castles, 1996). And for that we need wisdom to develop the education policies and practices that will guide us through the early twenty first century (Brundtland Report 1988; Beare & Slaughter 1993; Ramsden, 1992, 1998).

Globalization of world markets and media has had significant impact on national identity formation. Jamrozik *et al* (1995) give a good history of the development of multicultural policies in Australia. Clearly, as the Australian society works out its relationship to its residents of the multicultural polity of Australia, approaches to multicultural education will shift and change. Presently, the concept of the rights and responsibilities associated with cultural identity are being contested and eroded by the demands of global economic capitalism and the reactions of nation states to belonging or not belonging (Giroux, 1998).

With the emergence of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2008)*,* many nation states have endorsed the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples to control how their children are to be educated. The challenge for teacher educators lies in their responses to the set of challenges facing them as they prepare the next generation of school teachers within complex, multicultural states. In the Australian context for example, most teacher educators in universities are female and come predominantly from a British or Irish ethic cultural background, have little internal awareness of the issues involved in either the Indigenous or 'multicultural' domains, have rarely considered their pedagogical approach in terms of Indigenous rights, and focus predominantly on including curriculum resources about Indigenous and other culture's lifeways as a response to these challenges.

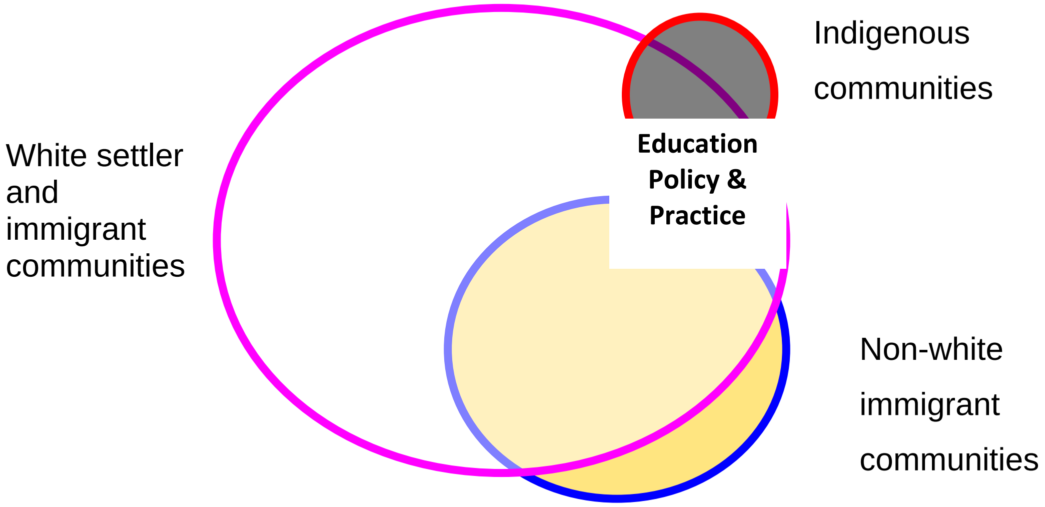
Little has been studied about how teacher educators are responding to the demand of preparing university student teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and understanding of meeting the needs of Indigenous learners, and how this is to be understood within the multicultural narrative. This paper develops an analysis of professional development workshops conducted with teacher educators about their views and understandings of Indigenous rights within their respective cognate areas, the impact of an Indigenous rights approach on their teaching, and how they are negotiating the interface of mainstream and multicultural educational approaches and Indigenous educational rights.

Education is a complex task because it is preparing children and adults for a future that we cannot see clearly. We are guessing largely, what they will need. Teacher educators then face a sometimes overwhelming task when thinking about what needs to be taught to aspiring teachers. Multicultural Education has managed to find a space in these considerations as has Indigenous Education. Sometimes taught together in a grab bag 'Diversity' subject and sometimes dealt with as discrete cognate areas, as Diagram 1 shows. I believe that there are some intersections of thinking that are overlapped but are treated as discrete in this discussion.

Group Influences on Teacher Education

The influence of white settler and other immigrant communities forms the majority view in a country such as Australia and the education system is served by teacher educators coming predominantly from peoples from Britain and Ireland and more recently from Europe and white immigrants from New Zealand and South Africa.

Diagram 1: Intersecting interests in Education policy and practice


Indigenous communities
White settler and immigrant communities
Education Policy & Practice
Non-white immigrant communities

A second group is comprised of non-white immigrant peoples such as the Chinese whose ancestors came during the gold rushes, the Afghanis and Pakistanis who came as cameleers; and more recent immigrants and refugees from all parts of the world coming as political and economic migrants. Their non-British ethic cultural backgrounds have substantially been subsumed into mainstream education and it has been only in the past 20 years that countries such as Australia have adopted a more culturally inclusive approach to the education of these children, with a concurrent increase in the number of teacher educators coming from these ethnic cultural backgrounds working as academics in universities. This group comprises the majority of academics teaching the multicultural specialist units in teacher education programs.

A third and even smaller group of teacher educators are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders but their influence on teacher education as a distinct cognate area is miniscule. This is an emerging field of work to which the thinking in this paper contributes.

Three Bodies of Knowledge & Action: An Uneasy Interface

The discussion above highlights the still uneasy interface between three bodies of knowledge and action. The first is the all-encompassing mainstream education system with its now established teacher education processes based in universities. Teacher educators work as academics undertaking teaching and research within their cognate areas of specialization. Mainstream education systems around the world derived their shape mainly from practices established under the most recent period of British and French colonization and the influences of American globalization of education work, new public management and standardized global testing regimes that provide comparative measures of the education outcomes of nation states.

Alongside the emergence of massive education systems doing similar things all over the planet, despite cultural differences, the second body of knowledge and action has been associated with multicultural education, having emerged as a response to nation states becoming more diverse in terms of the ethnic cultural background of their populations due to immigration. Research by sociologists of education and results of globalized standardized testing reveal that teachers needed skills and knowledge to be able to teach effectively across a diversity of ethnic cultural backgrounds. The idea of cultural inclusion still for the most part has been focused on improving the academic achievement of all children within the established system. Teacher educators began to address this issue by developing specialized units of study that enabled student teachers to explore issues of cultural diversity as part of their developing skill set. Initially, multiculturalism was dealt with as an individual unit of study but as an increasing diversity of issues such as class, race (including awareness of Indigenous students' needs), gender, disability, sexuality and sexual preference, and class demanded the attention of teacher educators, the multicultural agenda became folded into a grab bag of 'diversity awareness' units of study.

The third and most recent body of knowledge and action to emerge is Indigenous education. It has emerged from a distinct rights-based approach, based on international legal recognition of Indigenous *sui generis* rights. The term *sui generis* is being used in the sense that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have cultural and intellectual property rights that are inalienable (which means that they are not extinguished by later legal frameworks; for further discussion, see Janke, 1998). There is now call for this to be developed as a distinct cognate area within teacher education alongside English, Mathematics and so on. This approach calls for links to be made to Indigenous rights and processes of reconciliation in the ways we teach and understand the teaching and learning process. This third approach asks teacher educators to bring Indigenous education matters out of the multiculturalist grab-bag into a distinct response, while acknowledging that some of the intercultural skills are held in common.

The argument made here is that teacher educators who are professionally competent to meet the needs of the majority need also to radically engage with their professional practice to introduce their students to a highly globalized world where Indigenous children have specific, *sui generis* rights. A number of questions come to mind here: What sorts of skills and attitudes do we want future populations to hold - Globally competitive and highly skilled intercultural communicators or closed-minded persons who are frightened by difference? What graduate attributes do we want student teachers to have such that they can distinguish between the generalist diversity and multiculturalist agenda whilst at the same time being able to address the *sui generis* rights of Indigenous students? (McLaughlin & Ma Rhea, 2013; Ma Rhea 2013)

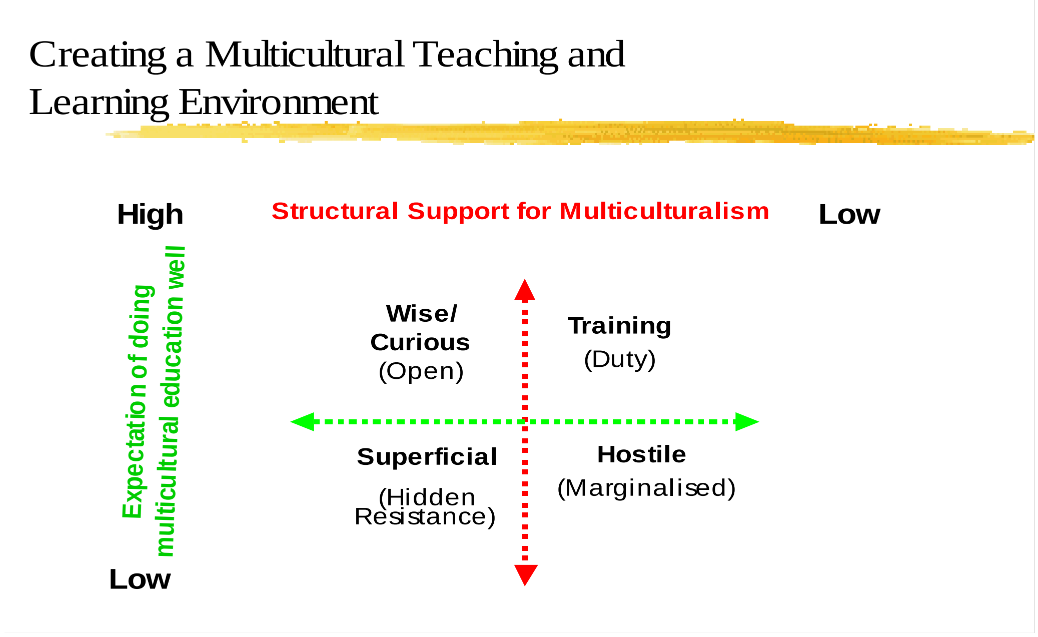
Professionals working on various aspects of education policy and practice need to think about cultural safety for all learners. This paper focuses on the interface between mainstream education, multicultural education, and Indigenous education. The next section will give insight into some of the aspects of professional development and academic strengthening that are undertaken in this space, describing some of the tools used to facilitate the learning of teacher educators.

Managing the Interface between Mainstream Teacher Educator Work, Multicultural Perspectives, and Indigenous Rights

The following four diagrams provide insight into the type of engagements made with teacher educators and also shape the framework of thinking for this paper. The first (Diagram 2) is a useful diagnostic tool that helps to identify the sort of learning environments that teacher educators can create and the consequences of those learning environments.

In our teaching, we are always challenged to create a learning environment where difficult issues can be discussed and worked through to achievable outcomes. I have adapted this model from the work of Little (1975) and the literatures of social and cross-cultural psychology (see for example Brislin, 1993; Casse, 1979; Hall, 1959, 1976; Sabnami et al., 1991; Seelye, 1985, 1996). The basis of the four quadrants is explained below. The top axis is about the structural supports that are in place for education that is inclusive of both Indigenous and multicultural perspectives. The side axis is about the level of expectation placed on teacher educators to do Indigenous and multicultural education well.

Diagram 2: Creating a Multicultural Teaching and Learning Environment


Creating a Multicultural Teaching and Learning Environment
High
Structural Support for Multiculturalism
Low
Expectation of doing multicultural education well
Low
Wise/ Curious (Open)
Training (Duty)
Superficial (Hidden Resistance)
Hostile (Marginalised)

Low Expectation/Low Structural Support: Hostility to Indigenous and multicultural education in the majority, marginalization of those that are 'othered', who don't fit in.

Low Expectation/High Structural Support: Creates superficial response to Indigenous and multicultural education, diversity, and social justice and hidden resistance from those who are othered, who know that they don't fit in. This has often been the case in Indigenous programs at universities where all the structural supports are in place but there is low expectation of Indigenous students, especially in their ability to succeed. The students themselves become hidden resistors because they experience the superficiality of the approach.

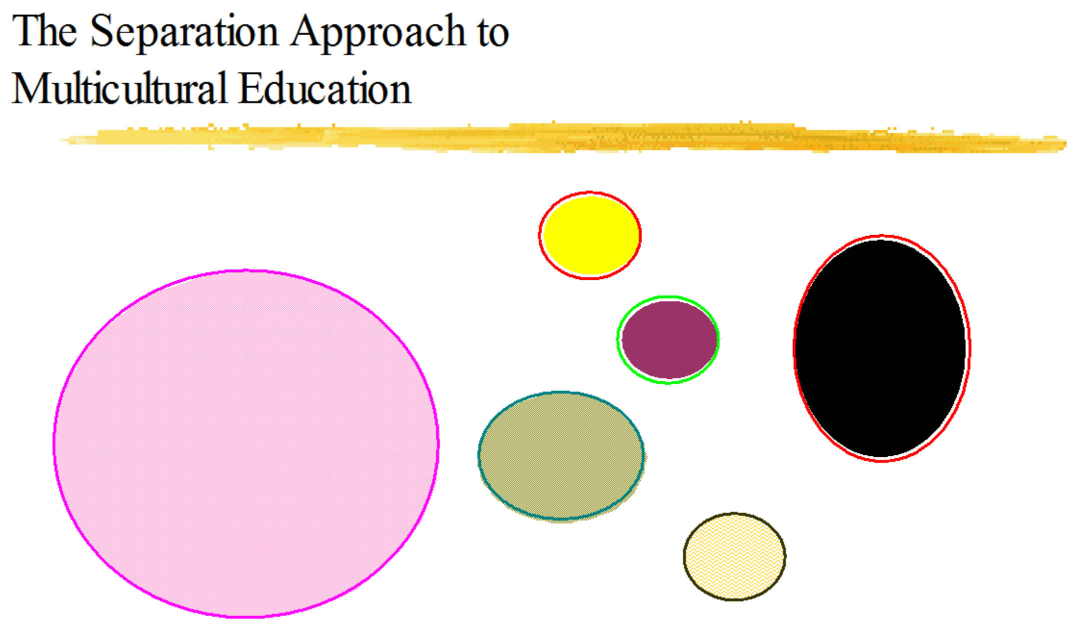
High Expectation/Low Structural Support: Creates a training mentality where people care about Indigenous or multicultural education because it is their duty to care but they get little structural support to implement necessary changes (often because these things are not static and have come from a high support/low expectation approach previously). In past work I have seen this pendulum effect and it is quite hard to break such a cycle except by paying close attention to the dynamics and working with both axes simultaneously.

High Expectation/High Structural Support: Creates a wise, curious, open environment where all people within a company, institution or bureaucracy feel valued and feel a sense of belonging.

Clearly this last quadrant is the most desirable learning environment and can be created through good policy and planning processes after undertaking a thorough organisational climate survey of some type to gather essential diagnostic data.

The next three diagrams (see below) give teacher educators insight into some of the underlying assumptions embedded in their thinking about Indigenous and multicultural education and most specifically on how the education system deals with difference. It is important to note that these responses to difference do *not* lie on a continuum from worst to best. We can find examples of each in the current system and all are in response to the demands placed on traditional mainstream Australian education by different religious or class groups, immigrants, Indigenous people and so on (Ma Rhea, 2009).

Diagram 3: Separation Approach



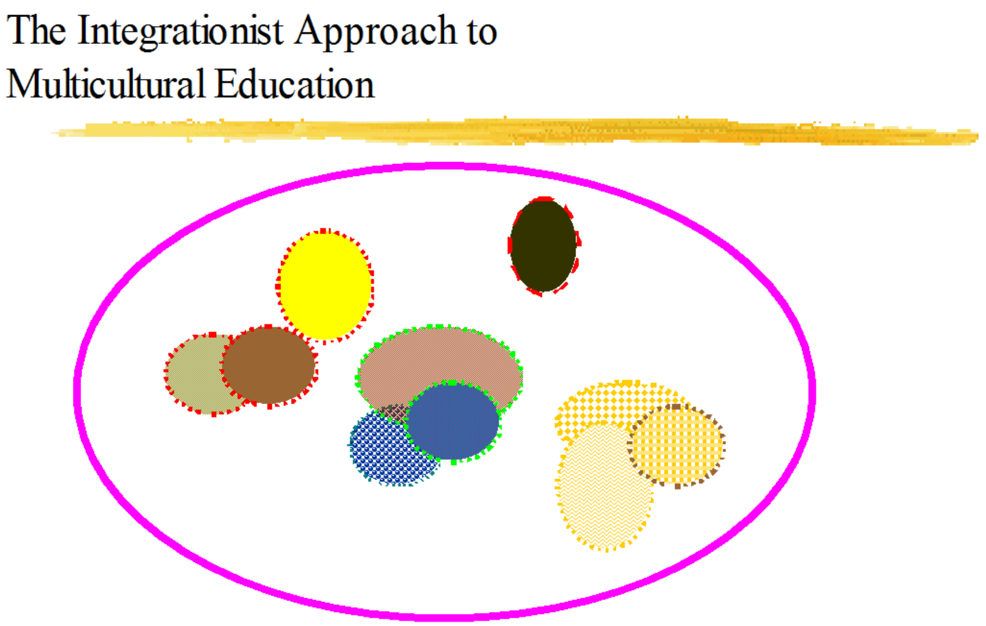
The Separation Approach to Multicultural Education

The first response to these sometimes competing demands has been separation (see Diagram 3). We have many examples of this approach in university teacher educator courses. Established and now considered 'mainstream' teacher educators from cognate areas such as English, History, Mathematics, Science, and Geography teach teachers how to teach these subjects from a deep knowledge base. Teacher educators, themselves, have been educated from school into these cognate areas; they have seen their teachers teach these subjects; they are familiar with the content as learners; and are able to draw on research in their field to improve the way that learners learn the body of knowledge required in each. Therefore, they know the content (curriculum) but also, importantly, they know the pedagogical approach that has been used to teach the body of knowledge.

Teacher educators in the 'multicultural education' group are expanding the concept of the mainstream to be inclusive of alternative ways of understanding the content knowledge associated with established cognate areas. Less has been done to challenge the way that these content areas are taught – the pedagogy underpinning the teaching of such knowledge. A more common in approach is an invitation for student teachers to take the journey to understand the learner from a different culture and to be as inclusive as is possible.

Teacher educators in Indigenous Education are an emerging group. There are strong arguments for this to be a separate cognate area, rather than being collapsed into 'multicultural' or diversity education more broadly but these teacher educators can also become marginalized and swamped by the established subjects and come to be regarded as a politically correct 'bolt on' to an already well-regarded teacher preparatory course.

Diagram 4: Integrationist Approach



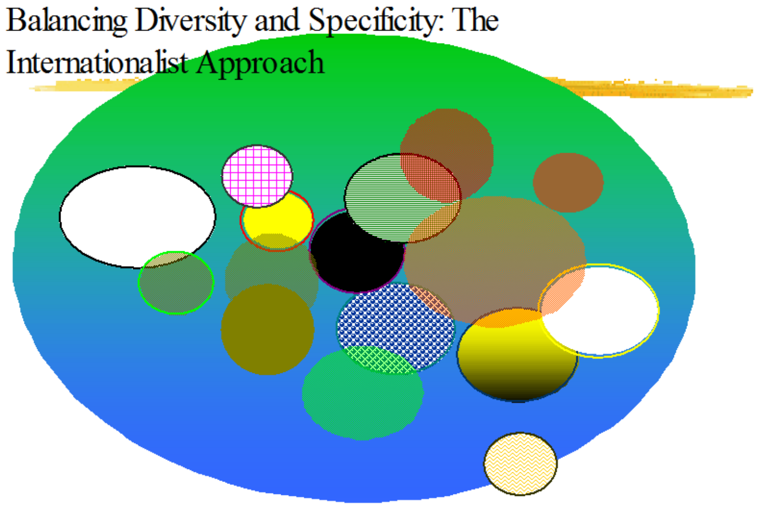
The Integrationist Approach to Multicultural Education

The integrationist approach, sometimes also called the assimilationist approach, is the approach that suggests that people who come to Australia need to learn to fit in. It approaches multicultural education from a deficit perspective. It is necessary to look at the concept of integration/assimilation closely because it is by far the most common approach to multicultural education and has also historically been the main driver in Indigenous Education policy and practice. It is embedded in concepts of national identity (What is an Aussie?) but it approaches multicultural education from a strong ethno-specific perspective. Diagram 4 depicts a pink-lined sphere that represents mainstream British-descent cultural group who hold most positions of public power within Australian society despite long term non-British immigration to Australia. There are many different groups who come to live in Australia who keep some aspects of their ethnic cultural affinity but they are also influenced by the majority culture. It is now known that subsequent generations lose their affinity to their ancestors' cultures and become 'Aussie' to various degrees.

An important question to ask is: Is multicultural education simply a transition system that only needs to be in place until the majority of non-British descent immigrants to Australia have been here a few generations? It is important to consider this question because multicultural educators, amongst others, can continue to be involved in producing ideations that justify neo-colonialism on a global scale, developing curricula that assume the superiority of English and Western ways of doing things and using teaching and learning pedagogies that heavily rely on what is called the Apprentice model. A broader understanding of Indigenous and multicultural education demands producing ideations and behaviors which will allow us to think beyond the 'fitting in' worldview.

The third framework approaches multicultural education from the perspective of diversity and inclusivity (or as the French prefer, *diversité et specificité*). This approach presupposes that there is no majority influence, an approach that takes up an ethnorelative perspective on teaching and learning (see Diagram 5).

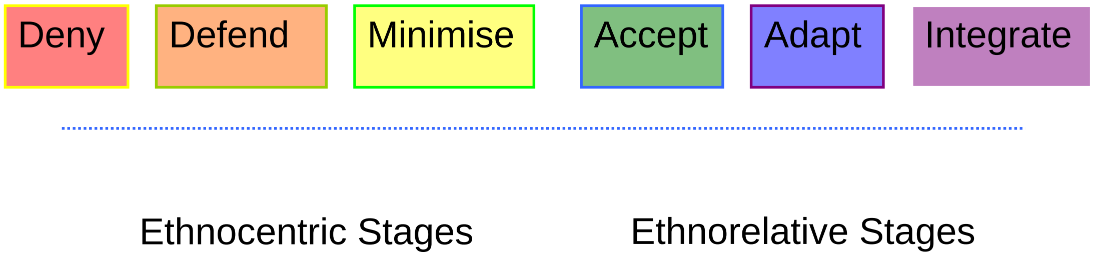
Diagram 5: Pluricultural Approach


Balancing Diversity and Specificity: The Internationalist Approach

The Pluricultural approach is more complex. It recognises both the specificity and diversity of needs involved in the task of Indigenous and multicultural education in a globalized nation such as Australia. It suggests that creating dialogue spaces will support a pluricultural approach (Fox 1996). This approach is also deeply implicated as a response to the pressures of internationalization and can be seen more commonly now in universities. The demands of globalization and internationalization are not the same as those of nation building. The problem faced by teacher educators in undertaking this sort of internationalist, pluricultural, Indigenous rights aware education is that the money for education faculties comes from governments that have traditionally served the needs of the mainstream, majority, tax-paying classes. It is more likely therefore that education policy makers and administrators will favor an assimilationist/integrationist approach over a pluriculturalist, Indigenous, and internationalist one.

Education for a Multicultural Future: Bennett's contribution

In developing thinking on the interface of mainstream, multicultural, and Indigenous education and using the above approaches, it is useful to consider how teacher educators think about difference. I have adapted Milton Bennett's scale (1986, 1993, 2004; also called the *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*) for many professional development engagements with teacher educators and in–service teachers to support them to develop their internal awareness about Indigenous and multicultural education.



Milton Bennett laid the foundations for a scale that is now regarded as very useful for developing intercultural sensitivity and I will briefly summarize the key aspects of his approach here.

By *Ethnocentric*, he means using one's own set of standards and customs to judge all people, often unconsciously.

By *Ethnorelative*, he means a person who has come to be comfortable with many standards and customs, someone who can set aside their own value judgments, even temporarily, to understand another point of view.

He gives a continuum of possible responses to difference explained below. While he suggests that one goes from one end through a process to the other end, my research and experiences suggest that it is not so straightforward. One can go back and forth and it is a never-ending process when one lives in a world of diversity and is confronted by difference on a daily basis. Below I give some working examples of teacher educator reactions to these stages and some possible responses that one can make as a facilitator of professional learning:

Deny (denial)

“It doesn’t matter where someone comes from. They need to learn to fit in here”

Response: Use non-threatening cultural awareness activities with teacher educators (ethnic luncheons, entertainment, travelogues, talks on history, exhibits, visiting Indigenous elders). The purpose is to help people begin to recognise and enjoy differences and break down barriers to contact.

Defend

"Our British ancestors set up a good education system. It’s worked all over the world to civilize people. It is not our fault that Aborigines can’t learn Western ways of doing things"

Response: Explore education practices in other cultures finding out what we have in common and what is ‘good’ in all cultures. NOT appropriate at this stage to argue that cultures are not good or bad but just different. Examine the consequences of not fitting in to that system, do research on the effects of colonization, set up role plays or games such as the ‘Racism game’ where teacher educators are suddenly not privileged within the system and support them to look at their responses when they are on the outside. Some people may want to slip back to Denial because on the surface it feels more comfortable than the Defense stage.

Minimize

"The best thing to do when teaching an Aboriginal student is just be yourself."

Response: Use simulation exercises, personal stories, teacher educators from other cultures (choose carefully) to show how behavior can be interpreted differently. Encourage teacher educators to enquire of others about their behavior. Support them to understand that what feels ‘normal to them’ maybe offensive to someone else. Acknowledge the normal discomfort people may feel.

Accept

"I know my student, a Chinese woman, and I, a white male academic, have had different life experiences but we're learning how to work together."

Responses: Learning to respect differences distinguishes this stage from the previous one. There is stress recognition and respect for behavioral differences. The Focus should be on verbal and non-verbal intercultural and gender communication styles. Encourage the view that what is different is also appropriate. Caution: moving too quickly to a discussion of values may be threatening and result in a move backward.

Adapt

“I would like to investigate the different perspectives of the Vietnamese and the Italian students who were involved in the dispute about how to teach about the Second World War and use some cross-cultural conflict resolution approaches to try and resolve it"

Strategies: Provide opportunities for teacher educators to explore the complexities of cross-culture without needing a particular viewpoint to work from. They can try a few perspectives and see what gets them closest to a satisfactory outcome. Give them opportunities to practice their new ability in face-to-face interaction, e.g. a task for partners from two different cultures, or a problem-solving session for a multicultural group. Relate activities to real-life situations.

Integrate/assimilate

"Sometimes I don't feel like I fit in anywhere”

Responses: This can be a difficult place of non-belonging. The key step with such teacher educators is to encourage them to establish one's own ‘cultural core’ or personal value system. Such people can have difficulty identifying right from wrong because everything is so relative. As with all Ethnorelative Stages, Integration requires thought and effort and these people need encouragement to explore what, amongst all the things they have experienced, are the most important to them.

Future Directions: Paradigmatic Shifts

Drawing on the approaches discussed earlier which examine the professional development needs of teacher educators in countries such as Australia that still sit within the colonial system, and countries of the Pacific that have achieved independence as postcolonial nation states, it is possible to draw some general remarks about this emerging challenge facing universities as they face a pluriculturally complex society underpinned by the pre-existing rights of Indigenous peoples and have a need for their teacher educators to be able to develop and teach the next generation of teachers (Sabnami et al., 1991; Spivak, 1993).

The problem of course is that the demands of the big, impersonal education systems in most countries now are such that universities and schools are constantly under pressure to solve myriad social problems through making improvements to their teacher education and professional development programs. With education being regarded as an influential policy implementation space, teacher educators play a key role in addressing commonly competing demands and, importantly, competing educational values. As yet, little research has been conducted about how teacher educators are facing the need to integrate mainstream, multicultural, and Indigenous aspects into the professional development of an aspiring teacher. There is a field of knowledge emerging from undertaking academic strengthening and teacher educator professional development from which this paper arises but it is also the case that there is little political will at this time for what is negatively regarded as ‘special treatment’.

There appears to be greater concern to preserve a homogenous ‘national identity’ in the face of the pressures of globalization. Both multicultural and Indigenous education have suffered under such constraining factors for a long time now, trying not to be assimilationist in their approaches but bound by historical legacies, funding parameters, and the political and economic will of elite interests.

It will help to have a closer look at where the expectations are at the interface of mainstream, multicultural and Indigenous education today though it is not easy for teacher educators to be involved in social justice work in a highly competitive globalized world. Yet the work is vital and important to the future peace, health, stability and prosperity of postcolonial, democratic states in a highly globalized world.

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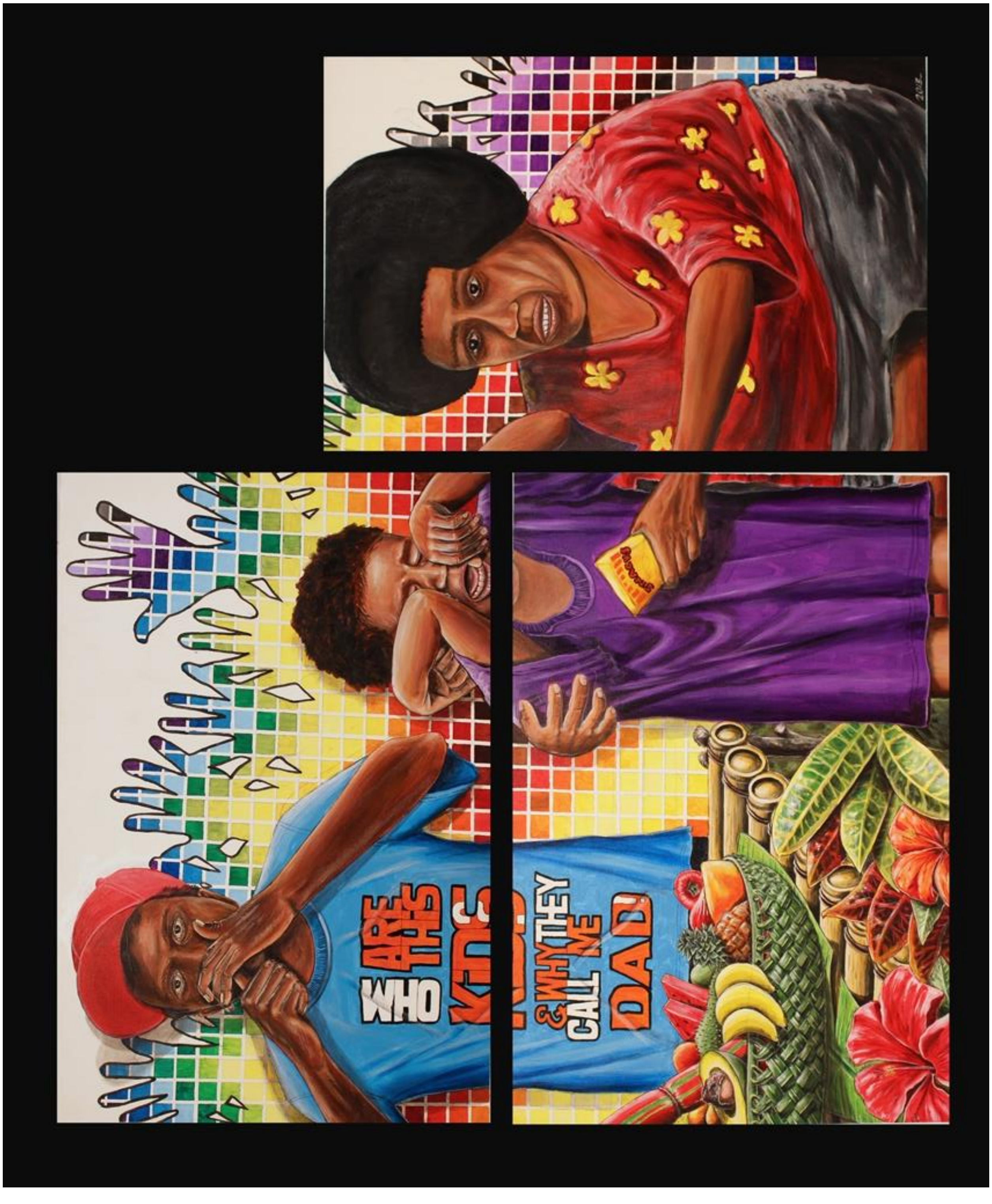
WHO ARE THIS KIDS
& WHY THEY CALL ME DAD!

Woman, Child and Smoker by Viliame Vosabeci – Acrylic on canvas. Family Series, Triptych

Perspectives of Gender Roles in a Selection of Oral Traditions: Folklore and its Implications on Multicultural Counseling on Guam

Beverly G. Alave
Margaret T. Artero

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to document a selection of personal oral stories and traditional Chuukese legends to assist mental health and school counselors in building their multicultural competence when working with Micronesian cultures on Guam. This action research was the experiential component of the multicultural counseling course to augment the theoretical component. The research period was within the eight weeks of the course and the researcher was able to interview a sample size of five participants. Approval for this research was received by the Institution Review Board (IRB).

At the on-set of the study, the participants signed consent forms prior to any interviews. The interviews conducted consisted of asking the participants to share a story or a legend that portray aspects of gender roles within the Chuukese culture. There were three hypotheses or main themes underlying the study. These were:

1) Women in Chuukese culture are not subservient to men;
2) Women in Chuukese culture maintain power outside, as well as inside the household; and
3) Chuuk maintains itself as a matrilineal society.

The results indicate none of these themes emerge from the study. Rather, the role of Chuukese women varied across the three themes. Limitations of the research and implications for further study were examined.

Keywords: *multicultural counseling, Chuukese culture, folklore, gender goles*

Introduction

A very important aspect of multicultural counseling is counselors being attune to the diverse cultures within their community. According to Sue and Sue (2008), for counselors to understand the differences of race, culture, gender, and other socio-demographics, they need to experience the emotions that are entrenched in these differences. Learning multicultural theories is insufficient without the experiential component of diversity in terms of becoming an effective culturally competent therapist. Counseling and psychotherapy must constantly adapt their frameworks and approaches to fit the needs of potential clients in an increasingly diverse world.

With education and training in traditional counseling and psychotherapy still spearheaded by Western European construction, even the most well intentioned counselors could be misled and misinterpret clients' life experiences and cultural values.

On Guam, there is a need to determine culturally appropriate approaches in the counseling field. Guam is currently a host to a variety of cultures and ethnicities in the region of Micronesia. As a territory of the United States, the influence of modernization is evident in Guam. However, embedded in the lives of the local residents and immigrants who have made Guam their home, is the values and practice of their traditional customs and beliefs. Expanding awareness of the different island cultures who reside on Guam and incorporating cultural sensitivity to understand the values, customs, and beliefs of other ethnic groups are essential in serving the needs of this diverse community.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the gender roles, values, customs, and beliefs of the Chuukese culture as told in their folklore and storytelling. The goal is to build on the preexisting knowledge and awareness of the Chuukese population and to apply the research's findings to multicultural counseling and psychotherapy. The Chuukese culture was the focus of the study as it is a specific minority population here on the island of Guam.

For over two decades, Guam has served as the residence for people hailing from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM: Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Yap), the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands due to the Compact of Free Association. This Compact is an agreement between the United States of America and the aforementioned island residents permitting them to travel and explore the United States and its territories with the option to reside and work (Rubinstein & Levin, 1992). Studies on multicultural competence of mental health services on Guam and in the rest of the Pacific and Micronesian region are relatively few (Peterson, 2009; Rubinstein & Levin, 1992). Even more scarce is information published about FSM (Goodenough, 1951; Keating, 1999; Petersen, 2009). This study therefore serves to contribute to the limited research on Chuukese life experiences and cultural reality (Chao, 2012, Gladin, & Sarason, 1953; Goodenough, 1951; Lambeth, & Santiago, 2001) and specifically on the area of gender roles as encapsulated in their stories and folklore.

The value of utilizing gender roles to understand culture lies in the fact that gender roles, or gender relations are deeply rooted and varies widely between and within cultures.

Gender Roles: A Definition

A definition of gender roles is the sets of social and behavioral norms considered socially appropriate for individuals of a specific gender (Schoefthaler, 2006). Gender roles are contingent upon a culture's development of values and beliefs on how women and men should behave and interact within society. The main element in the analysis of gender roles in this study was traditional Chuukese folklore passed down through generations in the form of oral traditions. Folklore, myths, and legends are an integral vehicle for oral traditions sometimes incorporating the saliency of gender roles into the overall message or meaning.

Oral traditions are essential for expanding multicultural awareness and knowledge as it reflects the worldview of a group of people. Through storytelling, one can further understand the knowledge that is valued. It could help explain how cultures function today. Storytelling can broaden the lens through which we look at life by incorporating what other cultures may see through their respective lenses. Included in the research hypothesizes were three major themes.

First, women in Chuukese culture are not subservient to men. Second, women in Chuukese culture maintain power outside, as well as inside the household. Lastly, Chuuk maintains itself as a matrilineal society. There is paucity of research that contributes to the knowledge of Chuukese culture *(Chuuk women's council,* n.d.; Gladin, & Sarason, 1953; Lambeth, & Santiago, 2001) with the exception that it is a non-Western society; the assumption is that Chuukese culture gender roles may not necessarily reflect those of Anglo-American societies.

Literature Review

To illustrate the significance of folklore in gathering information on gender relations, the review follows a historical perspective into the hierarchal context of gender roles in Micronesia. Micronesian cultures are valuable historical contexts for exploring the matrilineal hierarchies of gender difference for unlike most other modern societies, the island cultures remain matrilineal to this day. According to Petersen (2009), every Micronesian is born into a matrilineage, which is the line of descent traced through women. Among the many factors that shape the family dynamics, one overarching dimension that is particularly important is the emphasis on ties to the female line. For purposes concerning land and sociopolitical elements, there is a shared bias toward matrilineal patterns (Petersen). This matri-bias can be further examined in the typical Micronesian household where there is a greater tendency for a married couple to choose to live in the wife's mother's household (See Figure. 1).

Men and women bring different, but essentially equal assets to their households. Because of the fundamental precepts of matriliny in the Micronesian islands, women are seldom formally or officially denigrated (Petersen, 2009). Women in the Micronesian cultures generally are treated with respect and revered. Keating (1999) states that on the island of Pohnpei, women have a high social value because women determine social status and legitimacy to power. Another example is found in the islands of the Chuuk lagoon where the most productive fisheries are the women's domains, whereas the men cultivate the gardens and do most of the heavy work entailed in cooking (Goodenough, 1951). In the designation of labor, there are clear tendencies, patterns, and habits distinguishing the tasks normally assigned to men and women, however, women can and do take on jobs normally held or done by men (Petersen, 2009)). The focus on matriliny permeates throughout all aspects of the Micronesian culture. This perspective of the gender roles men and women assume in Micronesia appear in other countries and cultures as well, specifically in their oral folktales, legends, and myths. In Africa, Sougou's (2008) study focused on analyzing transformational trends in gender roles in African orature. The research collected tales from young women from the region of Fatick in Senegal. These stories were recorded while being performed in front of an intimate audience by women who worked as housemaids in the city (Sougou). Most of the stories depicted female characters as protagonists who were the focal point either to transform the status quo or to stand by the accepted gender norms (Sougou, p.28). This study revealed that the folktales illustrated by the Senegalese women were used as platforms for women's issues as it encapsulated the women's attitudes on the status quo. The metaphorical construction and coded messages in the tales represented the women's need to urge people to enact social transformation and to eradicate violence against women. The women who acted as narrators carved their realm of cultural reality in the folktales that they shared in this study. "Such stories will in turn be told to and by generations of youth that are bound to transform them at will" (Sougou, p.37, 2008).

The historical role of women and their place in contemporary society is continually changing. Xi Juan, a well-known romance writer in China, has used the vehicle of storytelling as a means to dispel the traditional gender roles viewed as the social norm. In her work *The Legend of the Blooming Lotus* on a continent called Blooming Lotus, the women rule and men are subordinate. This challenges the familiar gender construct in most romance novels where the strong male rescues the weak female, and it explores the gender discourse that women should be subordinate to men, apparent in many societies (Liu, 2011). Scholars have argued that chronicles of women's country scattered in legends and myths appear to be a reflection of the residues of pre-civilized matriarchal societies. The Greek mythology of the women Amazon warriors as well as Wittig's novel *Les Guerillieres* depicted a group of lesbian warriors who affirmed female sexuality and rejected patriarchy (Freedman, 2007).

Traditional cultural gender roles concerning men and women are a salient issue in the construct of therapeutic theories. The subsequent studies address the necessity to recognize multicultural issues such as race, ethnicity, and gender and how it relates to therapeutic practices that attend to individuals' needs within a social context. Chantler (2005) highlighted how traditional counseling and psychotherapy fail to meet the needs of marginalized groups. In particular, Chantler focused on person-centered therapy frameworks and the limitations within the therapy style in order to extend it and respond better to marginalized groups (2005, p.240). The study offered examples of anti-racist and gender sensitive counseling services as a possible alternate mode of therapy approach. According to Chantler, the founding principle within person-centered therapy invited a concentration on the individual's course to growth regardless of the inequality of the environment (2005, p.246). This principle could inevitably lend itself to rationalize societal inequalities and accept the status quo, which is potentially damaging for minority clientele. It is Chantler's belief that therapy cannot separate itself from multicultural contexts, so it must adapt itself to engage within the context to be able to appropriately counsel minority and target populations. The study provided suggestions for modifying traditional interpretations of individualized meanings in therapy to include ones that are more systematic. Incorporating this logic illustrated the links between interventions that are more practical (i.e. lack of money, transportation, preferred language for counseling) and how it challenges the conventional interventions employed in therapy.

Figure. 1. (p. 95, Petersen, 2009)

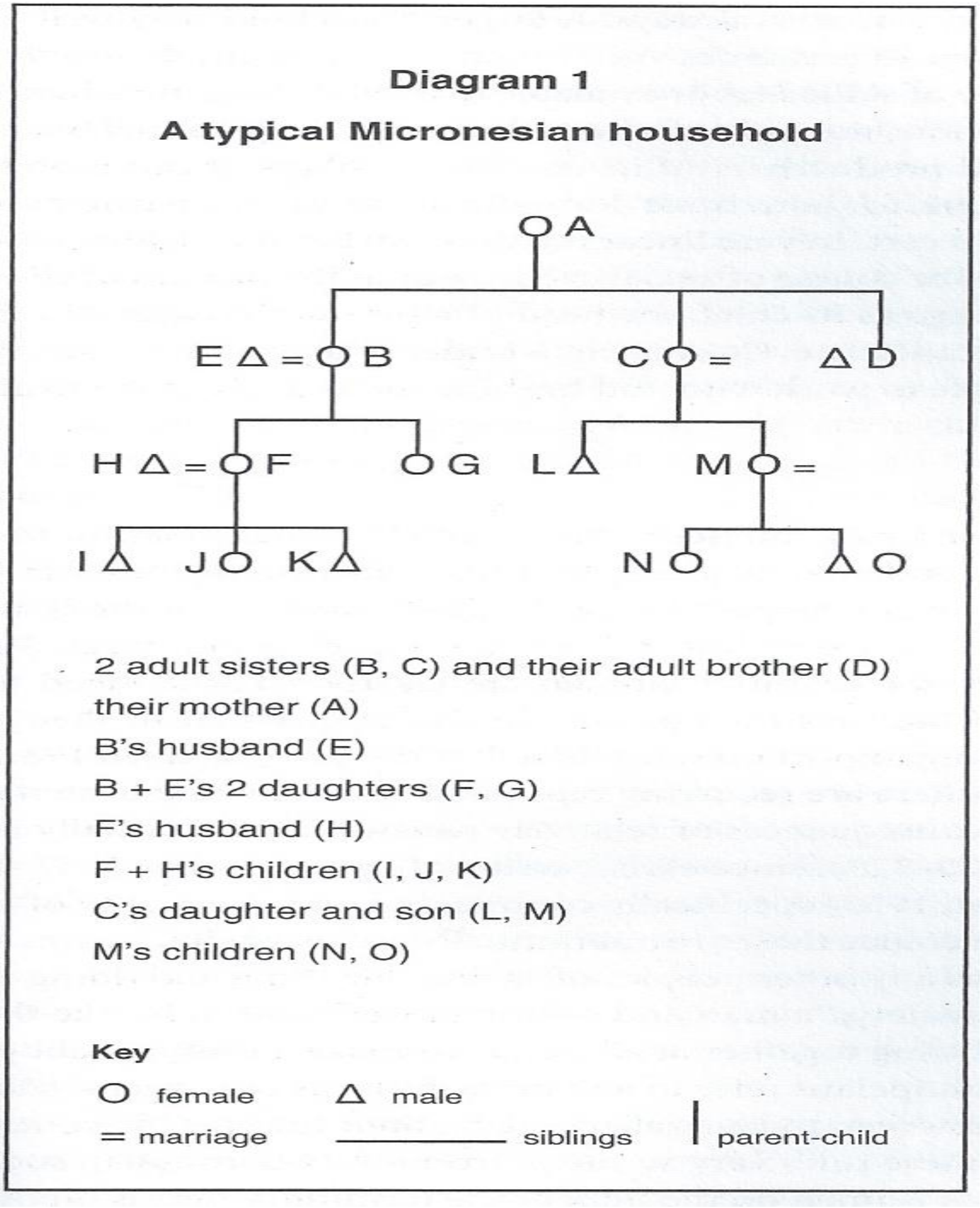

Diagram 1

A typical Micronesian household

- 2 adult sisters (B, C) and their adult brother (D)

their mother (A)
B's husband (E)
B + E's 2 daughters (F, G)
F's husband (H)
F + H's children (I, J, K)
C's daughter and son (L, M)
M's children (N, O)

Key

○ female △ male
= marriage ——— siblings | parent-child

Chao (2012) focused on examining the effects of multicultural training on counselor's racial/ethnic identity, gender-role attitudes, and Multicultural Counseling Competence (MCC). Chao hypothesized those counselors who received high multicultural training increased their MCC and greatly increased multicultural awareness pertaining to racial/ethnic identity and gender-role attitudes. A total of 460 counselors were recruited for this study and were asked to complete a series of questionnaires that measure multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness. The findings in Chao's study partially supported the hypothesis that multicultural knowledge was increased through multicultural training, but not multicultural awareness. The findings suggested that "awareness" represents an individual's self-reflection on his or her understanding of socio-political forces in order to appreciate the cultural impacts that it has on clients (Chao, 2012, p.41). It reinforced the idea that awareness takes more time to develop and may need a more comprehensive type of training that involves reflective thinking. Chao asserted that the primary principle of MCC is to increase counselors' self-understanding. To entertain the principle, multicultural training should be altered to include an in-depth journey of self-exploration and self-discovery to increase counselors' understanding of their own respective heritages to become culturally competent counselors.

Although the studies varied in implications and outcomes, a theme that appeared throughout the studies is that multicultural competency remains a relatively new concept. The core values of multicultural competence promote a world of cultural pluralism, viewing society holistically where humans can recognize and remain true to their native roots yet live in harmony with others who are different. This view may be an idealistic dream, but those who make a conscious decision to identify their personal prejudices and biases are moving towards a more culturally sensitive society.

Methodology

This was a qualitative study using unstructured interviewing. In unstructured interviewing, the researcher may have a set of questions and have the focus and goal of the interview, however, the researcher has no formal protocol (Trochim, W., 2000). In an unstructured interview, the researcher establishes rapport with the participants, asks open-ended questions, and encourages the participants to express themselves freely. Unstructured interviewing is a valuable method in gaining knowledge of various cultures and experiences (Cohen D., & Crabtree B., July 2006).

Participants

In depth interviews of five participants were conducted for the study. A purposive sampling method was used to obtain participants for the study. The required criteria were that the participants were from Chuukese descent; over 18 years old; willing to participate and sign a form consent for the study. The participants were three men and two women with a mean average age of 37.4 years and age range from 19 – 64 years. The researcher interviewed the participants individually.

Methods/Instrument

An interview questionnaire was developed by the researcher for the fall semester ED625 class. The Folklore and Multicultural Counseling Study Interview Questionnaire consisted of the following questions:

a) Please share a story or a legend from your culture that describes the roles of men and women.
b) Why did you choose that particular story or legend?
c) Do you consider the story or legend important to pass down to other generations? Why or why not?
d) What do you think the folklore says about men and women in society or about gender roles?

Procedure

Participants were asked to take part in an hour-long interview conducted by the researcher at the University of Guam campus, as well as outside venues that were deemed convenient by the participant. The researcher explained and provided the participants with the research cover letter and informed consent form. After providing the participants with the cover letter and informed consent, the researcher asked for demographic information from the Folklore and Multicultural Counseling Study Interview Question template. After responding to a series of demographic questions, the participants were asked to share a story or a legend from their culture that elucidates about the relationship between and women in society. For clarity, follow-up questions were asked by the researcher after the participants had shared their story or legend. Involvement of participants was less than one hour.

Results

Ten stories and legends were collected as a part of this research. The data was summarized and then organized by separating the stories in accordance with each participant. The participants' responses to follow-up questions in the interview form were also included in this section.

Participant A

Participant A shared a story of how Chuukese culture has changed since the Catholic religion was introduced into Chuukese society. Two generations ago, women were allowed to maintain multiple relationships with partners and it was desirable for a woman to have numerous boyfriends before she is married. The difference with the generation today is that it is now unacceptable for a woman to have multiple relationships before marriage and it is considered shameful if she is with the company of many men. Participant A also shared how it was unwise to receive food items, specifically chicken and the lapu-lapu fish, from someone that you do not know because it was considered a curse to do so. Participant A shared a personal story of how he became gravely ill on two separate occasions because he had accepted food items from strangers. He was not responsive to conventional medical remedies and sought the assistance of local cultural remedies. On those two separate occasions, he was given an unknown substance presented in a brown paper bag by women who were considered the local healers in the community. He was given specific instructions on how to cure himself of the sickness with the substance that was provided. He reported that after he followed healer's instructions, he was cured. To this day the substance remains unknown but Participant A considers those women healers to be his saviors.

In regards to the follow-up questions, Participant A shared two specific stories because he wants fellow Chuukese people to understand the strength and power of their own culture. He considered the stories and legends important to pass down to future generations because it is important to remain cautious and respectful of Chuukese culture and women's roles within it such as that of the medicine woman... Participant A also stated that he thinks the folklore talks about the shared responsibilities of the genders in society and about valuing people who use magic to heal, such as the women who cured him of his illnesses.

Participant B

The first story shared by Participant B was about how education is viewed as an activity for the males to participate in. The male is expected to lead the family by receiving education. The females are expected to rear children even if she also receives an education. Participant B shared that a vast majority of females do not finish high school because they are expected to raise a family, thus they are not encouraged to pursue educational opportunities. Participant B also shared that although there are now government mandates regarding education, culture still dictates who is expected to get an education and who is not. The second story shared by Participant B was about role of grandparents according to the Chuukese culture. Grandparents are viewed as those with eternal wisdom. Matters in life should first be consulted with grandparents because they are viewed as people who give guidance to younger generations. Participant B shared that while grandparents are highly valued, they are less respected by the younger generations in current times. Elders today are more selective of who they pass on their knowledge and wisdom to.

With regards to the follow-up questions, Participant B chose to share these particular stories because he believes that the Chuukese culture is slowly decaying and he is powerless to stop it. Participant B considered it important to pass down folklore to future generations because of his fear that one day Chuukese culture will be lost forever. He hoped that by contributing these stories, it ensures the knowledge and memory of his culture are safeguarded and not forgotten. Participant B discussed how folklore stressed the hierarchy of gender roles in Chuukese society and how he believes that, while elder women are still highly regarded, more recently, women are viewed as lower in status than men. Elder women are still highly regarded.

Participant C

Participant C's first story is in regards to the Chuukese culture's practice of magic. Magic is described as a superpower that someone can possess and it can be associated with herbal medication, chanting, spells, and so forth. For example, chanting involves calling the spirits to assist with herbal medication and to assist with executing a spell. Spells can also be used against others if one is in conflict with someone but is unable to physically fight. Spells are believed to be so powerful that it can either kill someone or bound a person to another's will. Good and bad magic both exist and the person who wishes to learn traditional magic must earn that right. Women are more likely to possess magic to heal sicknesses whereas men are more likely to possess magic to fight against enemies. The second story shared by Participant C is about the authority of the eldest female in the family. Participant C shared that the men are in charge of leading the family, but the eldest female possesses the authority to establish decisions and to overrule decisions previously made. The eldest female is defined as the eldest female in either the mother or father's side. It also means that the respective mother or father must also be the eldest in their family. If the family somehow disregards the orders of the eldest female, they must repent by providing valuable gifts.

With regards to the follow-up questions, Participant C has shared these stories because for her, it displayed the complexity and richness of her own culture. She expressed that this research has prompted her to appreciate her culture even more. She believed that it was important to pass down folklore to younger generations because she is part of the surviving culture and wishes to extend the knowledge as far as it can go. Participant C believed that the stories are clues that indicate how women played an integral role in Chuukese society.

Participant D

Participant D shared two legends that were passed down to her by her grandmother. The first legend is entitled "The Chief's Son and the Sea Witch". The legend was about a Chief named Sebastian and his son Sepenchian from the mountains of Fanipw on the island of Fefen. Sebastian and Sepenchian shared a love of fishing, but Sebastian always warned his son that if he were to fish alone, he must remain in the south side of the island and not venture to the north. In the tale, Sepenchian disobeyed his father's orders and went to north side of the island. He came across a rock that turned into a beautiful woman and was blinded by her beauty. The woman was invited back to the village by Chief Sebastian and was greeted warmly by the villagers. Although at first he was charmed, Sebastian's opinion of her changed once he started to notice the woman's strange and un-humanlike behaviors. Sebastian tried to kill her but once he got close, the woman turned into a sea witch and flew back to the north side of the island. The witch spat on the ground as she flew upward and her vomit created large black stones in its place. Despite the witch escaping, Sebastian and Sepenchian remained unharmed and the village went on living. The only marks that remained of the sea witch were the black stones that still exist on the village of Fanipw to this day.

The second legend is entitled "Beautiful girl from Fefen, Fanipw" and it is about the woman that disappeared from her family forever. In Fanipw there is a freshwater pond that delivers mountain water to the people of the village and it flows all the way to the ocean. There lived a beautiful girl that frequently bathed in the pond. She came across a man who was also bathing in the pond and became infatuated with him. The man reciprocated her feelings and wanted her to meet his family. He possessed the power to shift shape into a mermaid and had the power to shift into the shape of the girl as well. When the girl met the man's family, they turned out to be evil sea snakes and threatened that if she ever shared their secret to others that she will turn into a sea snake for all eternity. Unfortunately, the girl was not able to conceal the secret and she transformed into a sea snake and lived amongst the sea snake family. She was never able to become human again.

In the follow-up questions, Participant D chose to share the legends because she grew up with her grandmother and valued the knowledge that she had shared with her. She considered it important to pass the legends down to future generations because she believed the folklore had some truth to it in regards to the black magic. She believed that black magic actually exists in Chuukese culture. Participant D thought that the folklore that she shared demonstrated how women can both be possessors and victims of black magic.

Participant E

Lastly, Participant E shared one personal story and one legend. The story that he shared talked about his early life as a fisherman in Wonip. He recollected on the techniques and knowledge of fishing taught by his father and how he used to fish as a means of living. Fishing provided financial income and food for everyday consumption. He recalled how the ladies of the house were in charge of preparing the meals while the men sit and wait to eat. Participant E also reminisced on how his everyday diet consisted of the most natural food that was found on the island. It kept him and the village people strong because they had to work hard to obtain food. He lamented on how it was now easier to eat because of commercial stores that opened in Chuuk and how lazy people have become. He concluded saying how fishing was a part of his life that he will cherish forever.

Participant E also shared a legend entitled “Nimwes”. The legend is about a 12-foot tall, beautiful princess named Nimwes. She had an immense passion for collecting flowers all over Micronesia. Her family possessed the power to turn all the flowers that Nimwes collected into perfume that allowed Nimwes to walk across the ocean. Nimwes wanted to pick a flower from the village of Feuchap on the island of Utod in Chuuk, but Nimwes’s father had warned her that Chuukese black magic can overpower Yapese magic. Nimwes disregarded her father’s advice and picked it anyway. The village people from Feuchap saw what she had done and offered her with food poisoned with black magic. Nimwes became weak as she tried to escape the village and she died. Nimwes’s father contacted the village and apologized for his daughter’s behavior. Once the village realized that they had killed the princess of Yap they were overwhelmed with guilt. They carried her body to the top of the mountains in Utod and buried her there out of respect and remorse. Participant E explained that if one were to travel to the village and visit the grave, one could see that flowers have abundantly grown on top, a symbol of Nimwes’s love for flowers.

With regards to the follow-up questions, Participant E shared the story and legend because it was a part of his life that is sacred to him because his life is now different here on Guam. He remembers the folklore because it is valuable to him. Participant E thought that it was important to pass down the folklore to future generations to prevent loss of culture. He reported that he has noticed the Chuukese people are leaving Chuuk at an alarming rate and that Chuukese immigrants are becoming more accustomed to a different culture. Participant E thought that the folklore valued and honored the fishing lifestyle and that it was essential in Chuuk to know how to fish.

Discussion

The analysis and the follow-up questions of the folklore, stories, and legends showed that the roles of women varied in the different contexts as shared by the participants. One theme that was common throughout the folklore was a woman’s role in the family. Women were regarded as the authority in the household and in charge of every household matter. A second theme that emerged was that women were looked upon as innate healers, using their healing powers for good purposes. A third theme that became apparent was the importance of physical beauty in women. Women were almost always strikingly pleasing when included in folklores.

Results in this study indicated that the three themes of the hypothesis were not supported. The hypothesis that women in Chuukese culture are not subservient to men was not supported as the data suggested through the folklores that women’s status were below that of men. The women’s role remained as caretaker of children and of the household. Several of the folklore illustrated how women fell victim to black magic, which were usually practiced by men.

The hypothesis that women in Chuukese culture maintain power outside, as well as inside the household was not supported. There were several illustrations of women playing a major role in the home by overseeing household matters. There was data that asserted that women had less power in the community in one example that women were not being encouraged to pursue the completion of an education in modern day Chuuk.

The third hypothesis that Chuuk maintains itself as a matrilineal society was not supported. As with the other two themes, there was insufficient data to support this statement. The complexity of the roles of women shown in the data analysis was demonstrated by the various themes in the folklores, stories, and legends. Considerations for replicating this study may involve obtaining a larger sample size and including both younger and older participants in the study.

Limitations for this study involved the low number of participants. Although there was richness in the quality of data that was collected, it cannot be generalized to the whole Chuukese population. The opinions and reflections of the participants in this study are not representative of the entire Chuukese population and can also contain personal bias. The interview questions may be vulnerable to possible bias if the researcher is not capable of performing reliable interviews. Considerations for future study are to increase the sample size, revise the interview questions, and have the researcher do a pilot study before the actual study to refine the interview questions. The study hoped to capture the cultural reality of the Chuukese population living on Guam. There may be a different cultural reality of the Chuukese population living in Chuuk.

Recommendations

Several recommendations from this study can be suggested to improve multicultural competence and counseling. Language barriers may arise and considerations must be made in order to accommodate linguistic challenges. As hierarchal relationships are evident in Chuukese culture, it is important for the therapist to determine the family structure and communication pattern. Sue and Sue (2008) suggest that if it is not obvious if the family is either egalitarian or hierarchal, addressing the father first and then the mother might be most productive (p.364).

Sue and Sue also recommend developing community liaisons and that therapists must be willing to consult with traditional healers and make use of their services if necessary for the client's needs (2008, p.229). Chuukese culture embraces the concept of magic and considers it as an alternative option to more contemporary healing practices. The practice of magic may also involve a distinction between levels of existence that do not require understanding. Implications for therapists involve entertaining alternative practices and beliefs held by Chuukese clients and to become knowledgeable of the beliefs held by the Chuukese population.

When counseling Chuukese women, gender issues must be addressed in order to validate the different experiences of women in regards to their respective culture. Although through this study it was prominent that women played major roles in their families, it was not represented that women played a role outside of the home. Implications for clinical practice involve exploring the sociocultural factors that influences women's role in society and modifying counseling theories to include gender issues and its impact on women.

In closing, this study suggested implications and recommendations for clinical practice due to the collection of cultural values and experiences of the participants included in the research. Limitations have been presented and this study has expanded on the preexisting understanding of the worldview of the Chuukese populations and the sociopolitical experiences of this cultural group on Guam.

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The Effect of Reading Curriculum and Ethnicity on Elementary School Students' Reading Achievement

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Abstract

This research study examined the relationship between a reading curriculum program, ethnicity, and student achievement among grade three students enrolled in the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) elementary schools. In 1999, GDOE directed its public elementary schools to choose their reading curriculum from two scientific research-based programs, Direct Instruction and Success for All, or Met'got (a standards-based curriculum using the GDOE content standards, curriculum, and adopted textbooks). The purpose of this study was to determine the effect that each reading program has on GDOE elementary school students' reading achievement. Additionally, the study tested if ethnicity was an influencing factor that affected student reading achievement and whether an association existed between ethnicity and type of instructional reading program. The purposeful sample (*N* = 324) was taken from the population of grade three students who were enrolled in six randomly selected GDOE elementary schools–two Direct Instruction, two Success for All, and two Met'got schools. Using a two-way ANOVA test with a 3 X 3 factorial design, the results of this study confirmed that type of reading curriculum program used and ethnicity do affect grade three students' reading achievement as measured by the students' reading scores on the district-wide assessment, the SAT-10. The researchers concluded that in order for reading to be taught well and elementary students to successfully develop reading skills, a structured, scientific, research-based program is beneficial regardless of students' ethnicity.

Keywords: *reading achievement, elementary school reform programs, standards-based curriculum*

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 was a landmark legislation in US educational history that profoundly changed the curriculum and teaching in education to proliferate standards-based testing (NCLB, 2011). The NCLB Act seeks to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to receive superior education and to be proficient on state academic achievement standards and assessments (USDOE, 2012). For schools successfully implementing NCLB, the processes that would attribute to their success included closing the gap between high and low performers; improving accountability at the school, local, and state levels; aligning state assessments; and using scientifically research based instructional programs (USDOE, 2012). Since it was enacted into law, the NCLB Act has made considerable changes in education to help students meet proficient levels on state tests and Annual Yearly Progress measures (Chapman, 2007). Beginning in 2002-2003, school report cards were changed to reflect student achievement data and information on the performance of the school district (Chapman, 2007). In 2004, funding for Reading First programs was provided for schools to implement a comprehensive scientifically based reading program for students in kindergarten to third grade with more funding provided to schools with higher concentrations of poor children (Chapman, 2007). In 2005-2006, annual testing of grade three through grade eight students in reading and mathematics was implemented; and by 2007-2008, students were tested in science at least once across all grade levels (Chapman, 2007).

In Guam's public schools, the changes the NCLB Act advocated were reflected in the Guam Department of Education (GDOE). These changes in the public education system began with efforts to institute a standards-based education resulting in the GDOE K-12 content standards and performance indicators that embodied research-based practices (GDOE, 2008). In 1999, as part of the growing effort to improve student performance, GDOE educators were expected to progress students across all grade levels in all content areas through the implementation of the Reading First reform initiative—Direct Instruction (GDOE, 2008). This reform initiative was implemented due to the students' low Stanford Achievement Test (SAT-9) performances and a growing concern for the students' reading, language, and mathematics achievement levels in the SAT-10 (GDOE, 2008). The SAT-9, which was later revised as the SAT-10 by Pearson in 2002, has been the chosen district-wide test for GDOE public schools to date (GDOE, 2008). Part of GDOE's goals and objectives to increase student achievement require the use of a system-wide standards-based test to determine whether students are attaining the necessary knowledge and skills required for the next grade level (GDOE, 2008).

The SAT-10 is a multiple-choice norm-referenced achievement test that has been utilized by many schools for over 80 years and given to students in grades one through 12 (Pearson Assessment, 2012). The goals of the SAT-10 are to measure student progress through objective measurement of achievement aligned with state and national standards (Pearson Assessment, 2012). Scores are measured using a scaled score, national and local percentile ranks, stanines, grade equivalents, normal curve equivalents, and performance levels (Pearson Assessment, 2012). Results of the test assist educators in determining what students know and are able to do, in addition to providing administrators with reliable data to examine the progress of meeting the NCLB's national and state expectations (Pearson Assessment, 2012).

In Guam public schools, utilizing the SAT-10 data has resulted in the growing issues over low SAT-10 scores in the past decade, which has increased concerns about the effectiveness of the schools' current curriculum and chosen reform program (GDOE, 2008). One indicator that GDOE uses to analyze the SAT-10 results is the test's four performance standards:

(a) Level 1 is below basic – little or no mastery of knowledge or skills;
(b) Level 2 is basic – partial mastery of knowledge and skills;
(c) Level 3 is proficient – solid academic performance and students ready for the next grade level; and
(d) Level 4 – superior performance or beyond grade-level mastery. (GDOE, 2011).

The analysis of the SAT-10 performance levels in school year 2011-12 reveal that 79% of GDOE grade three students performed at the basic and below basic levels—and by grade five, this percentage increased to 89% (GDOE, 2012).

Direct Instruction is no longer the only curriculum reform program for GDOE elementary schools. In 2009, to resolve the growing concerns of effectiveness of the Direct Instruction program and low SAT-10 scores, school stakeholders were given the opportunity to select their reform program from among three choices—Direct Instruction, Success for All, or Met'got (standards-based curriculum) for school year 2009-2010 (Hart, 2011). The selection process resulted in 11 schools remaining with the Direct Instruction program, 10 schools using the new Success for All program, and six schools reverting to Met'got (the standards-based curriculum) (Hart, 2011).

Problem Statement

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, was enacted to close the achievement gap and assist all students in reaching proficiency in reading and language by the year 2014 (McNeil, 2011). However, by SY 2010-2011, standardized test results indicate that about 82% of schools were not meeting adequate yearly progress (McNeil, 2011). The SAT-10 test for Guam public schools show a slight improvement in scores, but scores are still trailing the US national average (GDOE, 2011). SAT-10 mathematics scores are at an ultimate low in comparison to the national standards, and SAT-10 reading and language scores for second and third grade students show a dip (GDOE, 2011). Although publishers and creators of reading programs provide professional development, accountability, and strategies for specific skills, more research and development of reading programs at the elementary level and their effect on student achievement are still lacking (Slavin, Lake, Chambers, Cheung, & Davis, 2009).

Guam's public education system uses three types of reading instructional programs. 11 public elementary schools are implementing Direct Instruction, 10 public elementary schools are implementing Success for All, and six schools, called Met'got, are using the GDOE content standards for their curriculum. Criticism from Guam stakeholders about the instructional reading programs in the public elementary schools differing views regarding which instructional reading curriculum actually increases SAT-10 scores, have been an ongoing debate (Ngirairikl, 2011).

This study sought to examine grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores to determine if a specific instructional reading program has a greater effect on increasing student performance in reading. Additionally, the study tested if ethnicity was an influencing factor that affected student achievement and whether an association existed between ethnicity and type of instructional reading program on SAT-10 reading scores. Grade three students were chosen for the study as they comprise the first cohort of students to be taught using Direct Instruction, Success for All, or Met'got since kindergarten.

Purpose of the Study and Research Question

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of reading curriculum programs and students' ethnicity on grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores. The three reading curriculum programs examined are Direct Instruction Program, Success for All Program, and Met'got (a standards-based curriculum). The three largest ethnicities in GDOE: Chamorro, Filipino, and Pacific Islander represented the student ethnicities examined in this study. The overarching research question that framed this study was: *What effect does reading curriculum and student ethnicity have on academic achievement of grade three students as measured by the SAT-10?*

Literature Review

With the growing interest of improving student achievement in the United States, schools have resorted to adopting scientific-based programs to meet the needs of diverse students (Fashola & Slavin, 1998). Hayes and Stahl (1997) refer to such programs as models rather than approaches or methods of instruction because each contains its own epistemology and practice for reading. Although reading models each have their own instructional practice, they also incorporate other aspects from other models into their instruction to fit their goals (Hayes & Stahl, 1997). Programs such as Direct Instruction, Success for All, and a curriculum-based program are designed to make changes in the school's curriculum, instruction, classroom management, assessment, professional development, and governance (Fashola & Slavin, 1998). In the 1990s, whole language was the major influence in elementary classrooms along with Direct Instruction – a major model for special education, but has reemerged as a universal influence on regular classrooms (Fashola & Slavin, 1998).

Direct Instruction (DI)

DI was developed by Zig Engelmann in the 1960s and was grounded on an empirical research study with follow-up studies for about 30 years with the purpose of determining how children learn (NIFDI, 2012). The success of the DI program stems from Engelmann's basic principle that for students to fail to learn was unacceptable if students were taught using a clear, strategic design with the learners in mind (Hayes & Stahl, 1997). According to NIFDI (2012), the basic philosophy and assumptions of DI include the belief that all children can be taught, improve academically, and increase self-image, and that all teachers can succeed if provided with adequate training and materials. Closing the gap between low performers and high performers can be achieved through controlled instruction which reduces the possibility of students misunderstanding information they are being taught and allows for low performers to be taught at a faster rate than their higher-performing peers (NIFDI, 2012). The tenets that Engelmann adopted 25 years ago continue to be the guiding principles for today's continued development of DI (Hayes & Stahl, 1997).

Distinctive features of the DI model consist of presentation, concept analysis, and programming strategy (Kenny, 1980). The model emphasizes small group, face-to-face instruction by teachers, scripted lessons, program strategies, training procedures, teaching process, and child progress (Hayes & Stahl, 1997). Teachers receive a wide array of materials and support from the NIFDI and their consultants with lessons that are scripted but still allow room for creativity (Donlevy, 2010). Other prerequisites include an established schedule and routine that are defined in which students become quickly accustomed to both schedule and lessons, making it simple to follow student progress (Donlevy, 2010). Moreover, teachers are given laborious trainings that allow them to monitor individual student progress for accountability, teach the program with fidelity, and to implement the DI program in their school site (Donlevy, 2010).

Instructional time is a prerequisite to the success of the DI program (NIFDI, 2012). Student success and mastery is highly dependent on the amount of time that students receive on a daily basis with reading, language, and mathematics. For reading and language, a 90-minute reading block in the morning, followed by a 60-minute block in the afternoon, as well as a 60-minute block for mathematics, are necessary to ensure the fidelity and success of the program (NIFDI, 2012). The importance of instructional time is necessary for students to be able to move from one level to the next, while ensuring complete comprehension and mastery of each lesson taught (NIFDI, 2012). In Guam public elementary schools, DI is given 90-minutes for reading in the intermediate levels; in the primary levels, 90-minutes for reading and language are combined (Thompson, 2011). The program is structured with direct student to teacher instruction in which students have to master a lesson when it is taught, and if not mastered, the teacher either re-teaches the lesson, provides remediation, or is tested back at a lower reading level (Thompson, 2011).

Success for All (SFA)

The SFA program was first created in 1986 by Robert Slavin, Nancy Madden, and a group of team developers from Johns Hopkins University (Bruner & Greenlee, 2001). SFA is a research-based reading curriculum that is formulated using effective practices for beginning reading and cooperative learning strategies (Bruner & Greenlee, 2001). The program is a comprehensive reform program for elementary schools that provides creative curricula and instructional methods in reading, language arts, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science from kindergarten through grade six (Fashola & Slavin, 1998). SFA emphasizes a balanced approach to phonics, meaning, and cooperative learning (Fashola & Slavin, 1998). The program weaves five essential strategies to ensure student learning: (a) leadership for continuous improvement, (b) school-wide support and intervention tools, (c) powerful instruction, (d) professional development and coaching, and (e) research (SFA, 2012).

Leadership in SFA is a collaborative leadership process where school faculty and staff, along with the administrators, work in teams to take responsibility for different aspects of developing both school and student success (SFA, 2012). Instructional teams examine and monitor student success or concerns that need to be addressed (SFA, 2012). The school-wide solutions team includes an intervention team (which focuses on student referrals from teachers), parent and family involvement, and community connections (SFA, 2012). This team creates systems to support students, parents, teachers, and problem-solving strategies to meet individual student success (SFA, 2012). The school-wide support and intervention tools also include one-to-one tutoring for students who are struggling in reading (Fashola & Slavin, 1998). A program facilitator assigned to the school assists teachers with instructional methods and coaching, provides professional development, manages assessment to keep track of student progress, and oversees the overall program implementation of the school (Fashola & Slavin, 1998).

"Powerful instruction" in SFA, the third essential strategy, refers to the cycle of effective instruction where learning is concentrated around cooperative learning with a balance between teacher instruction and student learning time (SFA, 2012). Through questioning and modeling, teachers lead students through new content, which is then followed by partners and team practice which can see students take control of their learning (SFA, 2012). Professional development and coaching provide extensive training from SFA coaches who assist teachers in the proper implementation of the program (SFA, 2012). Ongoing support and guidance is provided to establish component teams that provide peer-to-peer support to school site facilitators and teachers through observations and workshops. Other support include program consultants being assigned to a school, goal setting and progress monitoring, e-mail and phone support, and access to online information (SFA, 2012). In the GDOE elementary schools that use SFA, a 90-minute block is given where students work on phonetics, comprehension, and fluency

(Thompson, 2011). The incorporation of group learning and review of previous lessons are part of the program as students advance from one level to the next (Thompson, 2011). The SFA program is focused on cooperative learning so students are able to discuss their answers collaboratively and celebrate at the end of a lesson as a team (Thompson, 2011).

Met'got (Standards-based instruction)

Met'got is a standards-based instruction used by GDOE that requires the alignment of the district's content standards when planning instructional activities and assessment (Beacon Learning Center, 2001). A standards-based curriculum advocates effective instruction by teaching learners how and where to apply knowledge through meaningful lessons, activities, and appropriate assessments that set the tone for higher order thinking skills (Beacon Learning Center, 2001). According to the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (2013), standards-based curriculum should include: (a) inquiry and problem solving, (b) collaborative learning, (c) continual assessment embedded in instruction, and (d) higher order questioning.

In May 2003, GDOE adopted the District Action Plan as a guideline for improving academic standards (GDOE, 2010). GDOE's current K-12 content standards and performance indicators have been revised to meet the current trends in education, national standards, and what the local community believes is relevant to prepare all students to be competent and productive citizens in society (GDOE, 2010). The GDOE K-12 content standards and performance indicators are a part of the district's adopted curricula, which teachers are required to use to for their instructional units and lesson plans (GDOE, 2010). Furthermore, the standards are aligned with the US National Standards in the content areas (GDOE, 2010).

The GDOE Met'got schools currently use standards-based curriculum by basing the school's curricula on the GDOE content standards and performance indicators as adopted by the Guam Education Policy Board (Thompson, 2011). The Met'got program is not a reform program and is less structured when compared to DI or SFA, but the program offers professional development support and opportunities (Thompson, 2011). No pre-developed curriculum is available for implementation; hence, Met'got schools create their program using the professional trainings received in a variety of areas and the GDOE adopted textbooks (Thompson, 2011).

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were first launched in April 2009, with the purpose to prepare students for college and career readiness (ASCD, 2012). In 2012, the final version of the CCSS was completed, and 46 states and United States territories adopted the CCSS (ASCD, 2012). The implementation of the CCSS is focused on conceptual understandings and procedures in the early grades that will allow teachers to teach core concepts of each subject matter (CCSS Initiative, 2012). In 2011, the GDOE adopted the CCSS. The criteria for standards are rigorous, in which higher order skills, application, and knowledge are expected (Sanchez, 2012). The content standards are aligned with college and work expectations and internationally benchmarked to prepare students for society's expectations (Sanchez, 2012). As proposed in GDOE's working timeline, by school year 2013-2014, full implementation of the alignment guide, curriculum guides, standard based assessments, and resources will be established along with continued formal CCSS trainings (Sanchez, 2012). Furthermore, CCSS assessments will be available to states and territories by school year 2014-2015 (Sanchez, 2012).

Ethnicity and Student Learning

Students of different races and ethnicities achieve at different levels in schools, causing an achievement gap (Morrison, 2009). In the United States, standardized test results reveal this gap among minority groups and their white peers (Morrison, 2009). Each of these groups brings a variety of beliefs and practices that influence their learning (Eggen & Kauchak, 2010). The cultural and ethnic backgrounds of students play a significant role in their learning process, and these factors often influence how students respond to different teaching strategies, methods, and approaches (Morrison, 2009). For example, a classroom that is teacher-centered and very structured might be effective for immigrant students familiar with this model in their countries of origin (Morrison, 2009). While no single method of teaching or curriculum instructional approach is equally successful with all students, a goal of all schools is to help ensure that all students learn and that instructional approaches are reflective of students' diverse learning backgrounds and modalities (Morrison, 2009).

The GDOE student population is comprised of a myriad of ethnic origins. At the time of this study, the GDOE Annual State of Public Education Report (ASPER) states there were 31,361 students enrolled in GDOE, representing at least 21 ethnic groups (GDOE, 2012). According to the ASPER, the three largest ethnic groups representing 92% of the GDOE Student population are: Chamorro (41%), Filipino (25%), and Pacific Islander (26%). Pacific Islander includes Hawaiian, Samoan, Kosraean, Pohnpeian, Chuukese, Yapese, Marshallese, Palauan, and Fijian ethnic groups. The remaining 8% of the student population represent ethnic groups from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (which includes students from Rota, Saipan and Tinian), Asians (which includes Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Indonesian and Vietnamese students), and “Other” (comprised of African American, Hispanic, American Indian-native, Unknown, and Unclassifed categories). The “Unaccounted” category represents students who did not officially report their ethnicity information to the researchers.

Methodology

Population and Sample

The purposeful sample (*N* = 324) consisted of 108 grade three students who were enrolled in two randomly selected DI schools, 108 grade three students from two randomly selected SFA schools, and 108 grade three students from two randomly selected Met’got (standards-based curriculum) elementary schools in GDOE. Of the 324 students, 114 were Chamorro, 96 Filipino, and 114 Pacific Islander. The sample size of 324 grade three students were randomly selected from the total population of 2,303 grade three students attending GDOE, which represented a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of five.

Hypotheses

The null hypotheses tested using the two-way ANOVA were:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in third grade students’ SAT-10 reading scores based on type of instructional reading program.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in grade three students’ SAT-10 reading scores based on students’ ethnicity.

H_{03}: There is no interaction between reading program and student ethnicity that has a significant effect in grade three students’ SAT-10 reading scores.

Data Collection

Data collected for the study were archival data from the GDOE SAT-10 results for school year 2011-2012. This study employed a quasi-experimental research design because subjects or groups were not randomly assigned, but, instead intact groups were organized by grade and instruction; hence, the researcher had no influence in creating such existing groups (Hearn, 2012). Grade three students were chosen for this research, as they represented the cohort of students who have been exposed to their school’s reading program (DI, SFA, or Met’got) since kindergarten. The research study also used an ex post facto design. This design permitted the researcher to explore possible causal relationships between variables that are not controlled by the researcher (Hearn, 2012). The ex post facto design utilizes archival data in which the researcher does not influence the independent variables, but data have been established.

The assessment scores were taken from the reading section of the SAT-10. The dependent variable was the SAT-10 total reading scores for school year 2011-2012, and the independent variables were the schools’ reading programs and students’ ethnicity. Using the 3 x 3 ANOVA, the levels or conditions of the first independent variable included three levels of reading instruction (DI, SFA, and Met’got), and the second independent variable, ethnicity, consisted of three levels representing the three largest ethnic populations in the GDOE (Chamorro, Filipino, and Pacific Islander). The archival SAT-10 data were gathered from the GDOE Curriculum and Instruction division. Information on ethnicity is on the SAT-10 test forms and inputted into the GDOE SAT-10 database. Numbers were assigned to students to protect confidentiality; the researchers did not have access to the students’ names and, thus, were not able to match SAT-10 scores to students’ names.

Data Analysis

The reading SAT-10 scores were analyzed using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19. The comparisons of reading scores between DI, SFA, and Met'got schools were conducted using a two-way ANOVA 3 X 3 factorial design. The two-way ANOVA was also used to determine if an interaction existed between type of reading program and ethnicity on grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores. The alpha level was .05. If the independent variable proposed a significant difference that was less than .05 (as indicated by the Sig or *p*-value), the determination was made that a significant difference was observed. When the results showed a significant difference, a Tukey Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) post-hoc test was used to locate the independent variable treatments or conditions that were responsible for the overall significant difference.

Limitations

The study was limited to grade three students from the GDOE elementary schools for school year 2011-2012. Another limitation was that only two elementary schools for each instructional reading program were chosen. Schools were chosen that had implemented the same reading curriculum program for three consecutive years, and third-grade students were chosen for the study as they comprised the first cohort of students to be taught using the same reading curriculum program since kindergarten. However, there was no guarantee that all participants were exposed to the same program from kindergarten through third grade since data to determine the transient rate at each school were not available in GDOE. School implementation of the reading program may have affected students' SAT-10 reading scores; that is, DI, SFA, and Met'got schools may not have provided the same quality of instruction. Finally, the extent to which the reading programs were aligned to the SAT-10 was not a factor explored in this study. Alignment of the reading programs to the SAT-10 was not the focus of this study; but, rather, the focus was on students' attainment of the reading skills assessed in the SAT-10 since this test is the district-wide instrument measuring the targeted reading skills for each grade level in GDOE regardless of reading program.

Results

Hypothesis 1

The first null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in third grade students' SAT-10 reading scores based on type of instructional reading program. The alternative hypothesis states a significant difference exists in third grade students SAT-10 scores based on type of instructional reading program. The Levene's test of Equality met the assumption of the two-way ANOVA for homogeneity of variances between the groups; that is, there was no significant difference in the variances across all groups. Table 1 shows the mean test scores and standard deviation by instructional reading program.

Table 1: Mean SAT-10 Scores and Standard Deviation by Reading Instructional Program

Reading Instructional Program	Mean	Standard Deviation
Success for All	591.48	34.85
Direct Instruction	583.33	28.45
Met'got Standards Based	573.61	25.99

Success for All (SFA) had the highest mean test score of the three programs (*M* = 591.48, *SD* = 34.85), Direct Instruction's (DI's) mean score was second (*M* = 583.33, *SD* = 28.45), and Met'got had the lowest mean among the three programs (*M* = 573.61, *SD* = 25.99). The two-way ANOVA shows that a significant difference exists in grade three students SAT-10 reading scores based on type of instructional reading program since the p value is less than the .05 alpha level: *F*(2, 315) = 8.01, *p* = .00, thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. The results indicate that when type of reading instructional program (DI, SFA, and Met'got) is taken into consideration, the grade three SAT-10 reading scores are significantly different.

Since the null hypothesis was rejected, a Tukey HSD was calculated at the .05 alpha level comparing the three types of reading instructional programs to determine where the differences lie. The results of the Tukey HSD post hoc test are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Multiple Comparisons for Reading Program

Reading Program	Mean Difference	Sig.
SFA and DI	8.15	0.10
DI and Met'got	9.72	0.04
SFA and Met'got	17.87	0.00

The Tukey HSD post hoc comparison indicates that there was no significant difference in DI students' test scores versus SFA students' test scores (M = 8.15, *p* = .10). DI versus Met'got indicates a significant difference in the students' test scores (M = 9.72, *p* = .04). SFA versus Met'got show a significant difference in the students' test scores (M = 17.87, *p* = .00). The results of the Tukey HSD post hoc comparison demonstrate that SFA versus DI show no significant difference in regards to grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores. However, DI and SFA students scored significantly higher in grade three SAT-10 reading than Met'got students.

Hypothesis 2

The null hypothesis for hypothesis 2 states that no significant difference exists between SAT-10 reading scores of grade three students based on ethnicity. The alternative hypothesis states that a significant difference exists between SAT-10 reading scores of grade three students based on ethnicity. The Levene's test of Equality met the assumption of the two-way ANOVA for homogeneity of variances between the groups; that is, there was no significant difference in the variances across all groups. Table 3 shows the mean test scores and standard deviation by student ethnicity.

Table 3: Mean SAT-10 Scores and Standard Deviation by Student Ethnicity

Student Ethnicity	Mean	Standard Deviation
Filipino	595.94	29.26
Pacific Islander	577.28	30.11
Chamorro	577.28	29.58

The mean test scores for Pacific Islanders and Chamorros are the same (*M* = 577.78, *SD* = 30.11 and 29.58, respectively), while Filipino students had the highest mean test score (*M* = 595.94, *SD* = 29.26). The two-way ANOVA confirms that a significant difference exists in SAT-10 reading scores based on student ethnicity: *F*(2, 315) = 11.54, *p* = .00, where the *p* value .00 is less than the alpha value .05. The null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the results indicate that when ethnicity (Chamorro, Filipino, and Pacific Islander) is taken into consideration, the grade three SAT-10 reading scores are significantly different. The results of the Tukey HSD post hoc test are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Multiple Comparisons for Ethnicity

Student Ethnicity	Mean Difference	Sig.
Chamorro and Filipino	18.66	0.00
Chamorro and Pacific Islander	0.29	1.00
Filipino and Pacific Islander	18.66	0.00

The Tukey HSD post hoc test shows a significant difference between Chamorro and Filipino students' test scores (mean difference = 18.66, *p* = .00). There was no significant difference in test scores between Chamorro and Pacific Islander students (mean difference = 0.29, *p* = 1.00), while the comparison between Filipino and Pacific Islander students' test scores show a significant difference (mean difference = 17.03, *p* = .00). The overall results indicate that SAT-10 reading scores between Chamorro and Pacific Islander students are not different. However, Filipino students show a significant difference in their SAT-10 reading results when compared to Chamorro and Pacific Islander students. Specifically, Filipino students scored significantly higher in grade three SAT-10 reading than Chamorro and Pacific Islanders students.

Hypothesis 3

The null hypothesis states there is no interaction between reading program and student ethnicity that has a significant effect in grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores. The alternative hypothesis states an interaction between reading program and student ethnicity has a significant effect in grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores. The two-way ANOVA indicates that no interaction effect exists between type of reading instructional program and student ethnicity on grade three students SAT-10 reading scores: $F(4, 315) = 1.26$, $p = .29$, where the p value .29 is greater than the alpha value .05. Therefore, when taking into consideration the ethnicity of students in combination with type of reading instructional program they are exposed to, there is no significant difference on students' SAT-10 reading scores.

Conclusions

Hypothesis 1 focused on type of reading instructional method GDOE public elementary schools are utilizing and its effect on student achievement. GDOE's purpose for schools using a scientifically research-based reform program is to create accountability for student learning and to encourage high academic standards for students by consulting with program experts (Federal Program Division, 2012). A plethora of research and studies on professional development and reading strategies are not uncommon; however, more research and development of reading programs in the elementary level and their effect on student achievement is still lacking (Slavin et al., 2009).

The findings for Hypothesis 1 indicate that a significant difference exists in third grade SAT-10 reading scores based on type of reading instructional method. The results indicate that students attending a school implementing a research-based program such as DI or SFA from grades K-3 score better on the SAT-10 reading as compared to students from Met'got schools. The results showed no significant difference in grade three SAT-10 reading scores between DI and SFA students. These findings do not discount or criticize the Met'got standards-based curriculum. Rather, as noted by the GDOE Federal Programs Division (2012), DI and SFA are literacy programs that are highly structured, data driven, and scientifically researched-based programs that have been proven to work through rigorous research and findings. In these programs, student performance is tracked, monitored, and assessed regularly to identify students who are succeeding versus students who are struggling (Federal Programs Division, 2012). GDOE's intent in requiring schools to choose an effective scientifically research-based reform program is to allow for flexibility and accountability that enables schools to practice and achieve high academic standards for their students by consulting with program experts (Federal Programs Division, 2012).

The focus of Hypothesis 2 was to examine if ethnicity has a significant effect on grade three students SAT-10 reading scores. As part of NCLB, the federal government required states to set standards, test students, and report results by subgroups—socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, and English levels (Bloomfield & Cooper, 2003). Thus, for this study, the researcher identified the three largest ethnic populations in GDOE public schools, which include Chamorro, Filipino, and Pacific Islander. The results of this study showed a significant difference in grade three SAT-10 reading scores based on student ethnicity. The findings indicate that Filipino students perform significantly better on the SAT-10 reading as compared to Chamorro and Pacific Islander students regardless of reading program. While Lyon and Chhabra (2004) state that students can learn to read despite their ethnicity or background if reading programs are built on scientific background and teachers understand how reading is actually developed and taught, the results of this study does merit further exploration as to why Filipino students outscored their Chamorro and Pacific islander peers. Such research can assist educators in selecting and modifying reading programs to meet the diverse needs of their student population.

Hypothesis 3 examined if an interaction between reading program and student ethnicity has a significant effect in grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores. The findings indicate that no significant effect exists. This means that when the factors of reading instructional program and ethnicity are combined, the grade three students' SAT-10 reading scores are not significantly different from one another. A plethora of research indicate that effective reading is due to an individual's experience, learning, and thinking that require reflection, judgment, analysis, synthesis, selection, and critical evaluation of what is being read (Dechant & Smith, 1961). Moreover, a student's success on the SAT-10 reading test is also dependent on the type of instructional methods and strategies used to teach reading skills as noted by Burke, Fiene, Meyer, and Young (2008). Teachers need to use multiple methods in teaching reading but must also understand the pedagogy of reading if they wish to help students develop the necessary skills for reading (Burke et al., 2008).

Implications

In order for all students to succeed in reading, teachers must understand the development of scientific knowledge and how it is used to guide the implementation of instructional methods and strategies (Lyon & Chhabra, 2004). Language and early reading skills can be developed in students' early elementary years if teachers have a solid foundation of how to teach reading using a systematic approach (Lyon & Chhabra, 2004). Likewise, Tracey and Morrow (2012) indicate that teachers' awareness of the proper usage and understanding of learning theories can have a positive influence on the effectiveness of their instruction.

The results of this study can assist GDOE leaders in making appropriate decisions about the type of elementary reading curriculum that can accommodate all learners and help them to become successful readers. Evidently, students attending schools with a structured, scientific research-based reading program have better results on the SAT-10 reading assessment versus students attending a non-researched based program school where structure and accountability may be less rigorous, and materials are outdated or lacking at the school site. Therefore, prior to GDOE investing monies for various programs to be implemented at the public elementary schools, GDOE should look into quality, effectiveness of programs and curricula which are proven to work based on research. Furthermore, the results of this study will encourage GDOE to provide continuous teacher support, training, and assistance in teaching reading so that all students will be successful readers at the early stages of learning and beyond. Providing quality training and professional development to educators in which an in-depth understanding of how learning theories, information-processing, and the essential components of reading are correlated with the methodologies and approaches to successfully teach reading, are an essential component of student performance.

This study also revealed significant differences in students' performance in reading based on ethnicity. Filipino students showed better results on their reading scores versus Chamorro and Pacific Islander students. GDOE leaders should look carefully into programs that are flexible and beneficial for all types of ethnic backgrounds present in Guam. According to Lyon and Chhabra (2004), students can learn to read despite their ethnicity or background if reading programs are built on scientific background and teachers understand how reading is actually developed and taught. Similarly, Wilber (2000) explains that all readers—especially struggling readers, can learn to read with exposure to good instruction.

Recommendations

Recommendations for further research include replicating the study by examining student performance in reading using the district's chosen state assessment from grades 1-5 to determine if the results will differ or be the same. This study can also be replicated by examining student performance in another subject area to get a better idea of how reading programs and ethnicity affect academic achievement in other subject areas. Future studies should also consider analyzing students' performance on specific types of reading skills; that is, identify reading skills that students perform better or poorly on with state assessment tests. The results will help determine which components of reading require more attention in student learning. Finally, conducting a qualitative study examining teacher perceptions with type of instructional program implemented at the school site should be done to better understand the effect teacher perception has on implementation of reading programs and, thus, on student achievement.

Summary

The findings from the study show that a scientific research-based program backed with years of research and proven student reading success seems beneficial to GDOE public elementary school students. Currently, the adoption of the Common Core State Standards by GDOE is slowly shifting its focus from implementing just a research-based program to utilizing effective research based instructional strategies. GDOE school leaders should take into consideration using unified research-based instructional strategies and methods to improve student performance in reading and academic achievement. Based on the findings of this research study, student success in reading will benefit from instructional approaches and theories that show evidence of student success through proven research. Additionally, the move towards the Common Core State Standards and its implementation in GDOE should be consistent and uniform at the school sites with research-based instructional methods, rather than having schools determine their own expectations. Such endeavors can bring clarity in instruction and reduce inconsistencies in student achievement.

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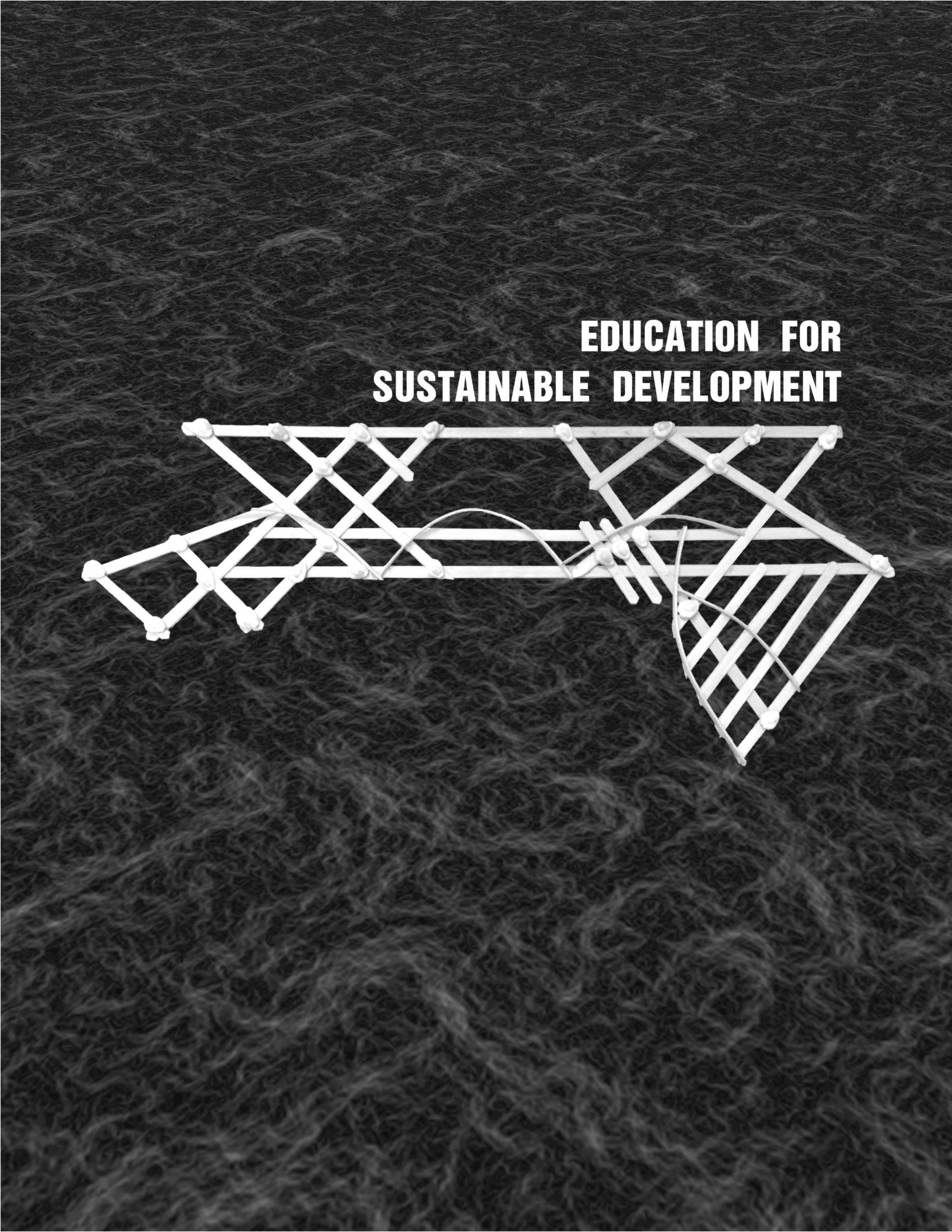
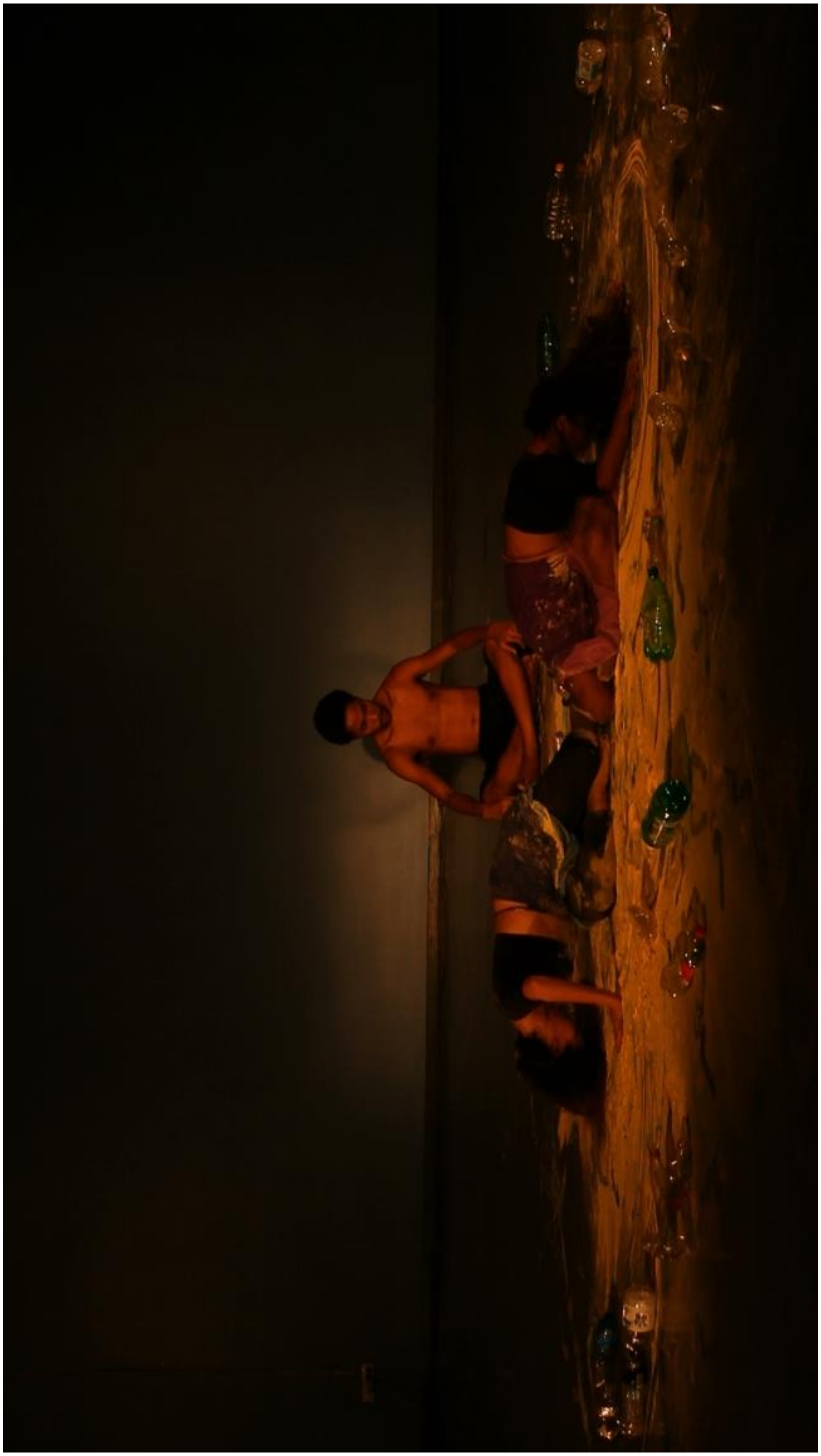
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT





The Leap by Eleni Tabua and Kathleen Waqa – Dance performance art piece

Getting to the 'Heart' of the Matter: Health, Well-being & Education for Sustainability. Introducing Health Promoting Schools in Fiji

Cresantia Frances Koya

Introduction

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is based on a global vision of 'sustainability' that is a goal; a value; and, a philosophy. It provides an overarching umbrella framework that is encompassing with opportunity for interconnectivity of all other mainstream educational instruments which have been ratified and which form the basis for educational development in Fiji. These include the *Millennium Development Goals* 2000 - 2015, *United Nations Literacy Decade* 2003 – 2012, and *Education for All* (Jomtein, 1990; Dakar, 2000).

With the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development nearing its end (2005 – 2014), it is disheartening to find that for many people, ESD remains poorly defined and reserved largely for scholarly and developmental discourse. Others see ESD as separate and distinct from other educational instruments – an additional instrument that needs to be mainstreamed or integrated. Still others believe that ESD has the potential to bring together diverse interests and agendas under one principle vision – of sustainability and education for the future. However one chooses to view ESD, it is undeniable that the movement has become a dominant discourse in education with focused international, regional and national debates on how *best* to devise curricula for mainstreaming sustainability in basic education both formally and non-formally.

A case may be made for ESD as both a philosophy and a methodology. As a philosophy it guides vision-making and helps to set the broader goals of education. This is relatively easy to do. As a methodology however, there are real pedagogical implications– that is *what* and *why* teachers' do what they do and *how* they do this. In the wider Pacific context, the challenge of *curriculum-full* and *resource-empty* realities pose a threat to realizing the vision of education for a sustainable future. A potential outcome of such a reality may very well be "Education *about* Sustainable Development" rather than ***"****Educating for Sustainable Societies".* In the former, the emphasis is learning about what SD is, i.e. SD content curricula is identified, taught and assessed. In the latter, sustainability, including both SD and sustainable livelihoods are seen as long-term learning outcomes of the schooling experience.

From the onset, the paper argues that a "Healthy" society is at the heart of ESD. Healthy populations are essential to ensuring Sustainable Societies, Economies and Environments – the three pillars on which SD and ESD are constructed upon. This paper provides some insight into *Health and Well-being* as central to the broader ESD Mainstreaming effort within formal education. It also provides a theoretical framework for curriculum mapping of ESD within the *Health Promoting Schools* Program in Fiji.

UNESCO defines the vision of ESD as *providing opportunities* for people to develop attitudes, skills and knowledge to make informed decisions – for personal and community benefit both now and in the future. Pacific leaders reiterate this vision in the *Pacific ESD Framework* (2006) with the following goal. "*To empower Pacific peoples through all forms of locally relevant and culturally appropriate education and learning to make decisions and take actions to meet current and future social, cultural, environmental and economic needs and aspirations"* (PIFS 2006, p3).

Pacific Health Priorities through ESD

Across the Pacific, health is recognized as a serious issue of concern. Eight of the ten most obese countries in the world are Pacific island countries including Nauru, FSM, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Samoa, Palau and Kiribati (Streib, 2007). Diabetes is said to be nine to ten times more prevalent in PICS than in the developed world (WHO, 2003). Malaria, filariasis, cervical cancer, breast cancer, heart disease, mental illness and suicide are also on the rise. WHO (2002) findings indicate that six out of ten deaths in the western Pacific are attributed to diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer (cited in Dorovolomo 2010, p127). Even more alarming is the fact that STIs, HIV and AIDS numbers continue to grow (Sladden, 2009).

Regional frameworks and policies reflect these health concerns. For example, the Pacific ESD framework (PESDF) is premised on the UNDESD goals whilst building on the ideals of the Pacific Plan. To this end, it emphasizes the need for "transformative education" stating that *"Education is critical for promoting sustainable societies and improving our capacity to address environment and development issues"* (p4).

> ESD provides a critical mechanism for achieving long term change to improve environmental sustainability, health, education and training, gender equality, youth involvement and the recognition and protection of cultural values, identities and traditional knowledge (p2).

PESDF highlights eight specific areas of relevance in the region including health (p4). Further to this, the *Pacific Plan* (PP) identifies *"Improved health"* as a major priority under the "sustainable development" pillar. It calls for the development of national "*…initiatives to enhance the health of Pacific people, and support the fight against HIV/AIDS and STI, non-communicable diseases and other health threats"* (PIFS 2007[105], p36). A year later, the 2008, *Action Plan for the Implementation of the PESDF* was endorsed by Pacific Leaders presenting a guiding action framework for national efforts in the Pacific islands. The action plan highlights the need for ESD Mainstreaming to "*provide ESD input to national curriculum development initiatives".* In addition to developing courses and materials covering ESD content in schools at all levels (ECE to Tertiary level), it also highlights the need to *"enhance the capacity of curriculum developing units to integrate ESD input into curriculum reforms factoring in the views of different stakeholders; e.g. health, gender, HIV/AIDS…"* (PIFS 2008, p6).

Prioritizing Health in Fiji

In Fiji, the *Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development 2009 – 2014 – A Better Fiji for All* (Ministry of National Planning, 2009) provides a bleak picture of the socio-cultural situation. It stresses,

> Most of the social indicators have worsened in Fiji over the past three decades. These include the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in relation to the proportion of the people living in poverty, maternal and child mortality rates. The HDI is a widely accepted measure of a country's progress in attaining satisfactory levels of education, health and income. Fiji's ranking was 42nd in 1975 but dropped to 61st in 1997. Its position further eroded in the late 1990s. Based on the 2007/08 UNDP Human Development Index, Fiji currently is placed 92nd out of 177. Samoa and Tonga — which had rankings similar to those of Fiji in the 1970s — have performed much better than Fiji in recent years, with rankings of 77th and 55th in 2007/08 respectively (pxii).

The Fiji Ministry of Planning 2009 Report further provides a telling depiction of this health crisis.

> Health continues to be a growing and increasingly complex field of competing priorities from all perspectives – from the individuals to governments, businesses, health professionals and the health services system. A healthy and productive population is a key for sustainable economic development. Despite consuming a major portion of government's budget (>3% of GDP and 9% of

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[105] The 2007 version of the PP is referenced here.

> total budget), health care funding continues to be lower as compared to other countries in the region.
>
> Inadequate allocation of resources has now led to debilitated state of facilities in the health sector. There is a need to reallocate resources in response to areas with the greatest burden to the economy and the only possible way is for the need to have evidence to support effective decision making. As such, the importance of National Health Accounts (NHAs) is increasingly becoming important in the management of resources and review of health policies.
>
> The key development constraints and challenges in the health sector include: efficient and effective use of resources in health service delivery; responding to the increasing numbers of **HIV/AIDS and STIs** cases; reversing the deteriorating rates of child **mortality, infant mortality and maternal mortality**; reduction in the incidence of **Non- Communicable and life-style diseases**; emigration of **skilled health care professionals**; limited capacity for **policy analysis and research**; improving physical and financial access to **good-quality health services** in depressed domestic and global economy; the increasing **demand and cost for health care**; the need to improve stewardship over policy formulation, health legislation, regulation, resource mobilization, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation, strengthen the national health system and improve its management, and to improve the availability and management of **health resources** (financial, human, infrastructure, and so forth); reducing the disease burden attributable to priority diseases and health problems; **increasing consumers' awareness of their health status and poor lifestyle**, and fostering effective collaboration and partnership with all health actors, NGOs and CSOs (Ibid, pxiii).

The same report also presents the national educational goal to make Fiji *'a knowledge based society".* To achieve this, it calls for a progressive and responsive curriculum. While many may interpret this as a call for directed focus on academic pursuits, it is clear that a healthy and able bodied society is essential in growing a knowledge-based society.

> Access to **quality education for all** will remain a priority for Fiji. Improved quality of teaching supplemented by **progressive and responsive curriculum** will ensure the achievement of an educated and skilled workforce. School dropouts and skills gaps will be addressed through initiatives such as the strengthening of the National Youth Service Scheme, enhancement of vocational and community based informal education, and alignment of training to national priorities. Critical will be the need to establish a Modular System of education at secondary schools to provide **broad based education for all students** while at the same time giving students choice to develop their potential along their areas of interest (pxv).[Emphasis added]

In line with this futures-thinking approach, the Fiji Ministry of Education's vision[106] highlights an ESD – EFA philosophy that is future-based and critical consciousness[107] focused.

> To provide a *holistic, inclusive, responsive and empowering education system* that enables all children to realize their full potential, appreciate fully their inheritance, take pride in their national and cultural identity and contribute fully to sustainable national development (Ministry of Education, 2009).

This philosophy of critical consciousness is central to the discussion of *Health Education* and *Health Promoting Schools* as mechanisms for empowerment through education. Given the time constraints, a full theoretical examination of education for empowerment of the masses is not permissible. However, it is relevant in this discussion of Health Promoting Schools in Fiji, to contextualize the notion of 'critical consciousness' as an educational theory. Paulo Freire refers to the need for conscientization within a broader discussion of 'education for liberation'. In Fiji, the call for transformative education is aligned with this ideology. Sanders (1968), explains conscientization in the Freireian literacy method as:

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[106] See http://www.education.gov.fj/

[107] Theoretically based on Brazilian Philosopher and Educational Theorist Paulo Freire who refered to 'Conscientization' as the outcome of education for empowerment and critical thinking premised on life-long learning, life skills and transformative societies.

> an 'awakening of consciousness', **a change of mentality involving an accurate, realistic awareness of one's locus in nature and society; the capacity to analyze critically its causes and consequences, comparing it with other situations and possibilities**; and *action* of a logical sort aimed at transformation. Psychologically it entails an awareness of one's dignity (p. 12). (cited in Nyirenda 1996, p5)[108]. [Emphasis added]

If this theoretical approach is taken, it will be equally significant to situate the discussion within the wider conversation of *Education for All* (EFA). The Delors' report[109] provides the four pillars of Education for the 21st Century as "*Learning to 'know', 'do', 'be'* and *'live together'"*. These all inform the agendas of education in the Pacific and Fiji is no exception to this.

Searching for *Sautu* – The Good Life

In western thought, the notion of the 'common good' is a recurring theme that has been applied to ESD discourse. In this view, sustainability is seen as the basis of catering for the 'common good. In the Fijian context, the iTaukei concept of 'Sautu' defined by Nabobo (2006) simply as 'the good life' can be applied to the discussion of sustainability and sustainable societies. Baba (2010) further argues that Sautu is the "*basis of sustainability"* (p38). This paper takes the view that health is an essential component of Sustainable Societies. It further asserts that education, awareness and advocacy are all critical to this goal.

ESD as a philosophy provides the basis of sustainable living and livelihoods. *ESD as a goal* presents a future-oriented focus for life-long learning; to preserve and conserve limited resources for the betterment of all. *ESD as a value* promotes a perspective of 'quality life' through a sustainability lens. As a methodology, it further promotes a message of hope for positive futures. This pedagogy of hope is reflected in the Tokyo HOPE Declaration (2009) which outlines a four item checklist in planning, implementation and assessment. The HOPE declaration states that good ESD practices are by definition holistic; ensures community ownership; are participatory; and, are aimed an empowerment of communities and individuals. This empowerment alludes to agency and self-determination in shaping the kind of societies we aspire towards.

In education, it is important that students are provided with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes required for behavioral impact in their daily lives and life choices. The Health Promoting Schools Project in Fiji (HPS) has the potential to provide these essentialities to Fiji students. It may even be argued that health is an essential literacy within the basic education framework where education is viewed as a basic human right. Further, health awareness and education may be seen as a critical literacy required by all for living sustainable, healthy lives.

The Fiji Health Promoting Schools Project (HPS)

The HPS Initiative is a reinforcement of the commitment by the Ministry of Education to provide a meaningful learning experience for students in Fiji. That the HPS effort is a multi-sectoral effort between the Ministries of Health, Education and Agriculture is even more promising. It brings to the fore the shared national vision for '*holistic, inclusive, responsive and empowering education'.*

A recent global school-based health survey jointly undertaken in 2010 by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and the World Health Organization in Fiji[110], presents crucial evidence that the HPS initiative is timely and critical to improving the overall health and well-being of students in Fiji schools. The survey sampled 1, 673 students from 25 schools across the country and results show alarming trends amongst young teenagers between the ages of 13 to 15 years. Students reported that peer-pressure influenced their decision to consume alcohol and drugs with boys indicating higher levels of consumption than girls. Similarly, about two thirds of the sample admitted to taking up smoking before the age of 14.

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[108] See http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/africanjournals/html/issue.cfm?colid=100

[109] See "Learning the Treasure Within" http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001095/109590eo.pdf

[110] Draft Survey Report cited in August, 2013.

Just over one-third of the sample showed a weight risk with slight differences between the underweight category and the overweight category. Sadly, one in ten students reported being hungry because of limited access to food in their homes. Although all students said they were aware of healthy dietary needs, just under forty percent of the sample said they ate the recommended servings of fruit and vegetables daily indicating a number of factors at play. This includes socio-economic status and poor health choices in Fiji homes.

Mental health results were alarming with students reporting that stress affected their sleeping patterns. Forty five percent reported that their teachers verbally abused them leading to stress and fear. Additionally, physical abuse was highlighted as a stress factor with just under half the sample stating that they had been abused or bullied in one form or another. While physical attacks appear to be more prevalent among young boys, many students said that intentional damage of property and theft occurred at school.

In terms of physical activity, students reported high levels of regular exercise. Interestingly, about two-thirds of students sampled said that they exercised to manage their weight, that is, to lose weight or to prevent weight gains. It was also disturbing to note that a group of these young teenagers report sexual activity has already begun. It is clear that boys are more likely to engage in sexual intercourse than young girls at this age.

What the global health survey indicates on the whole is that adolescent males are more vulnerable to peer-pressure and health risks then their female counter parts. This presents an interesting gender -parity concern for educators and health professionals alike.

A Suggested Curriculum Approach to *Health for Sustainability* in Fiji Schools

Sustainable Health is an area of ESD not fully explored in Pacific discourses of ESD and in transformative education approaches. An interesting perspective worth considering is provided by Gocotano, et.al (2003),

> Sustainable health is the state of complete physical, spiritual, mental, emotional, social and environmental well-being and not just the absence of infirmity and disease at the personal, family and community level, but within the context of local, national and global – *economic equity, *good politics and governance, * cultural and social accords, *gender and education equality, *security, peace and human rights, and * biosphere balance and harmony (p22).

They conceptualize Sustainable Health at personal, family, community, local government and national levels. Taking on this approach, it is clear that a holistic mapping of National health needs, barriers and strategies will go a long way in identifying the Health educational needs in Fiji. For effective curriculum coverage and holistic learning experiences, it is essential that curriculum mapping is undertaken.

From a curriculum perspective, there are three main phases of development which require attention. Porter (2004) provides a useful categorization of curriculum work which enables careful planning and delivery. These are the *intended curriculum* including the syllabus/manifest curriculum, i.e. curriculum documents and materials; the *enacted curriculum* including instruction or pedagogies for teaching and learning; and the a*ssessed curriculum* including student achievement tests and standardized testing through assessment for and of learning approaches.

These theoretical guides are essential for curriculum planners as they will ultimately inform the curriculum reform process. It is easier to devise the intended curriculum in isolation of the enacted and assessed and unfortunately this is often the case. As a word of caution, we need to recognize that a well-constructed curriculum package may be developed but if implementation, assessment and evaluation are not considered during the earliest conceptual phase, they have the potential to compromise the overall success of the program. Figure 1 below presents the idea of HPS within the curriculum context. It presents a series of questions relating to the philosophy of HPS and to the three phases of curriculum practice. These questions provide an entry point into the discussion on curriculum mapping for effective program development.

Table 1. Curriculum Planning for holistic conceptualization of HPS in Fiji

Curriculum Philosophy of HPS: HPS for what?	
HPS for what? What do we hope to achieve? What are the 'hoped for' outcomes?	Is the vision of HPS achievable? Have the 3 Rs been considered? Relevance, Readiness and Resources Are the outcomes measurable? How does the vision inform curriculum practice? i.e. teaching, learning and assessment.
The Intended Curriculum: What kinds of learning opportunities are we planning?	
How much of the vision links to content knowledge? What about skills, beliefs, attitudes, values, and/or behaviour?	What kinds of learning experiences do we want students to have within the HPS program? Who is involved in curriculum planning of HPS?
The Enacted Curriculum: How are teachers implementing these learning experiences?	
Do teachers, parents and students share the vision of HPS? Have teachers been trained? Do they have support? Resources? Is this an added pressure on their normal teaching load?	Are teachers involved in the planning of HPS? Have they been consulted in the development of materials, content and resources? How flexible or rigid is the HPS program? Do teachers feel 'free' or 'restricted'? Do teachers feel like they are being assessed?
The Assessed Curriculum: How are we assessing the learning outcomes of HPS?	
What are we assessing and why? How are we assessing student learning? Are cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains assessed equally?	Are teachers involved in the planning of assessment? Are teachers adequately prepared and well versed in the kinds of assessment tasks required? What is the role of the wider community in assessment and evaluation?

The Importance of Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum mapping was first introduced in the 1980s and focused primarily on teachers treatment of content – *what* to teach, *when, where* and *how*. Within the last three decades however, the definition and application of CM has expanded to include national planning and continuous curriculum review and development. In an early work, O'Malley (1982) explains that *"Curriculum mapping can serve as both an instrument and a procedure for determining what the curriculum is and monitoring the planned curriculum"* (cited in Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development 2001, p1). More recently, Hale (2008) posits "two fundamental academic questions" in CM.

- *What learning expectations or instructional practices are in place that consistently proves to be in our students' best interest?*
- *What learning expectations or instructional practices need to be started, stopped, or changed to enable or enhance our students' success?* (p5).

The question that we need to ask is "HPS *for what*?" and "*for whom*?" If the intended outcome is a transformed society, as expressed within the general vision of ESD and EFA, then curriculum practice must be reviewed from development at the Ministry level to enactment in the classroom.

CM has the potential to capture an overview or a 'snapshot' of current content, practice and assessment. A comprehensive CM process will uncover gaps, overlaps and potential areas for integration. In the case of HPS, the ensuing curriculum map would enable curriculum developers to identify specific content areas which already cover health issues. Such areas may include Home Economics, Physical Education, Health Science, Human Geography, Biology, Basic Science, Values Education and others. The next phase, then, is determining how to build on what currently exists. This includes additional content, pedagogy (approaches to teaching and learning) and assessment tools and resources. CM may also lead to the discovery of "knowledge-heavy" and "skill- or value- deficient" learning opportunities. It may also go some way towards uncovering unsuccessful and less-successful pedagogical and assessment practices, as well as good practice efforts. These may be documented as case-studies for teachers and schools within a resource toolkit on HPS in Fiji. The next section presents a brief overview of a three step developmental process that may prove useful in both curriculum mapping as well as in the curriculum development process.

Educating *for* Healthy Societies

As a final offering, I would like to present a three-fold construct as a platform for the development of HPS. The three ideas within this construct as Education *about*; Education *for* and Education *through* (adapted from Kerr 1999). This triadic lens poses a series of questions at all levels of curriculum work from the philosophy or vision, as well for content selection, pedagogy and assessment. It is argued that a holistic education system should invariably include aspects of all three 'about', 'for' and 'through'.

The three education perspectives are related to Habermas' theory of learning comprising three cognitive interests; technical knowing, hermeneutic or communicative knowing and, critical knowing. For the most part, the last four decades has seen much emphasis on technical knowing which prioritizes low levels of thinking and passive recall of facts and figures. Using Kerr's model, this rests entirely within the education 'about' scope. The rote-learning, content-driven system was clearly highlighted in the Fiji 2000 Education Commission Report. In order to move beyond this, if there is a genuine interest in education for and through sustainability or health, there must be concerted efforts to transform our pedagogical approaches to education *for* and *through* sustainability/health.

It is only when teachers themselves, are clear and confident in the various strategies required for dialogic approaches through active student engagement and community participation, that we may move towards hermeneutic/communicative knowing. This then, paves the educational learning experience pathway towards more student-directed learning and inquiry that prioritizes problem-solving approaches and other high level strategies that encourage critical and creative thinking and knowing.

Education *about* Health

In the interest of education for 'critical consciousness' through 'empowerment' for transformed societies, HPS must move beyond knowing facts and figures. While this is a critical first step, knowing about something does not necessarily imply an impact on beliefs, attitudes, values or behavior. Education about Health captures content-selection on the basis of what is deemed most relevant, useful and how these come together into the whole curriculum. The intended curriculum within this stage of HPS should include issues such as general well-being, basic hygiene, dental (oral) health, diabetes, dengue, malaria and filarisis, nutrition, malnutrition, obesity, physical exercise, mental health, substance abuse including glue sniffing, smoking, alcohol and marijuana, sexual and reproductive health, STIs, HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancies, stress, and balanced healthy meals.

Discussions about the increase in noodle consumption and the risks of eating raw noodles and consuming large amounts of fizzy drinks should also be incorporated into the syllabus. These may include a chemical analysis of the nutritional value of foods and drinks. The predicted outcome is knowledgeable individuals who know about healthy choices but don't necessarily make them. *For example*, being aware that unprotected sex may lead to unplanned pregnancy, STI or HIV contraction but choosing not to take precautions; or, knowing that there is a correlation between mental health problems and marijuana but making the decision to smoke regularly with friends.

Education *for* Health

If the major intended outcome of HPS is a society where people are concerned about well-being and healthy living, then a significant component of the program should include life-skills. This approach assumes a skills-for-life or lifelong learning philosophy and must therefore provide an opportunity for dialogue and debate about healthy life choices. Education for Health implies a strong stakeholder collaborative effort which may in this case include Ministry of Health representatives providing school health talks, or health counseling services. Other resource persons may be drawn from the community to share their stories such as those living with HIV, those affected by diabetes or living with mental health problems, and the like. These stories may be compiled into multi-media resources or in student and teacher workbooks. Examples of these are available through FJN+ - the Fiji Network of Positive Persons and PIAF – the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation. Predicted outcomes include critical thinkers who are able to apply what they 'know' with what they have 'seen' and 'experienced' to real life choices.

Education *through* Health

This approach is seen as a connector between Education *about* and Education *for* Health. Education *through* Health would incorporate into the HPS program, health promotion initiatives. Some of these already exist in Fiji schools such as the *dental health program* and *hand washing campaigns*. Similar programs that provide real life experiences may be initiated for students, such as site visits to the School for the blind, Disabled Society, Special School, CWM hospital or visits by community members living with diabetes, HIV, Filarisis and so forth.

The Education through health approach requires a community service or community engagement component. Predicted outcomes include increased awareness and genuine concern about health issues and how these have concrete impact on a person's daily life, as well as that of the family and the wider community. Other examples may include a 'walk for life' initiative within the school program or aerobics, swimming and other fun activities that provide opportunities for students to become more active without a seemingly imposed 'exercise' regime that few if any enjoy. It is important to note student interest in such physical activity programs and it is equally crucial that students of all abilities are included such as students with disabilities, under- and over-weight children and others.

The Question of Assessment in HPS

Across the region, there is increased discussion about and emphasis on assessment *for* learning (AfL). Many perceive the value of AfL supersedes that of assessment *of* learning (AoL). From a curriculum standpoint, both forms of assessment are significant to the teaching-learning process. AoL which is a summative approach to assessment takes place at the end of a specified period of time. They provide both the teacher and the student with essential information about how much of the intended curriculum has been learnt. AoL includes unit tests, quizzes, term tests and final examinations. An overemphasis of AoL within the HPS would mean that the main approach is Education *about* Health and assessment then prioritizes low order thinking levels of 'memory-recall' and 'comprehension'.

AfL, on the other hand, refers to the formative assessment strategies that are put in place to help strengthen or enhance the student learning experience. If devised effectively, students are presented with research projects, debate, presentations, creative tasks and so forth, which engage higher order thinking, moving beyond recall and comprehension, to 'application' and 'synthesis'. An overemphasis of AfL leads to student fatigue in the sense that they are burdened with excessive project work and tasks to the point that it is no longer an enjoyable, skill or knowledge building experience. This results in a situation where students are focused on 'completing the tasks' in order to get it done rather than taking time to reflect on the learning experiences provided. In Fiji, the internal assessment initiative introduced in the last decade shows a tendency towards this student and parental lethargy (Koya, 2008). In such instances, AfL does not correlate to the development of critical thinking or knowledge acquisition and in fact simply reverts to a 'rote-learning' pedagogy which defeats the purpose of authentic learning experiences.

As a critical component of effective teaching and learning, the role of assessment in HPS will need to be examined. Health Promoting Schools will need to seriously consider the kinds of program learning outcomes being set and how they seek to measure the achievement of these outcomes.

Conclusion

A quality education for the 21st century must provide educational opportunities for empowerment so that everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve a basic 'quality of life'. The HPS initiative is filled with promise and premised on the hope for a better future. This is a future where all Fiji nationals have access to *quality basic education* that contributes positively to the development of a *critical national consciousness* towards a shared vision of a sustainable future that ensures quality of life for all.

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Going Green is a Focus in College Coursework

Yukiko Inoue-Smith

Abstract

Universities and K-12 schools have a crucial and fundamental role to play in preparing the young for a lifetime of sustainable living. In a case study reported here, students, mostly in-service teachers, enrolled in a graduate research course developed and conducted a green lesson. The students conducted their own green lesson projects based on inquiry-based learning. This case study report is itself based on an inquiry-based learning approach. The inquiry-based approach requires the following five stages: *ask* (articulating problems); *plan* (designing strategies within a certain time frame); *explore* (exploring resources for solving problems); *construct* (synthesizing resources and providing solutions); and *reflect* (discussing the implications for further enhancement). Each stage involves separate goals and activities that the students in the course accomplished. Sustainability education is just a beginning—and it is an ongoing business.

Keywords: *sustainability education, green lesson plan, 3Rs, inquiry-based learning*

Background

Almost daily reminders of vanishing polar ice caps, rising sea levels, and horrific weather patterns give us every reason to wonder if we are doing enough to assure a sustainable future on this planet (Johnston, 2009). Sustainability "represents an interconnectedness of factors and force—environmental, economic, and social—that require new and more sophisticated analyses, teachings, and interventions" (Timpson et al., 2006, p. 9.). And yet, "sustainability requires integrating the knowledge base of individual disciplines to create a holistic program that brings together the economic, social, and environmental understanding" (Berry, 2006, p. 103).

"Safeguarding the environment ranks high on political and social surveys" (Marschall, 2006, p. 12); nevertheless, "a yawning gap exists between good intentions and reality. Although Americans express strong support for reducing air and ground pollution, few give up their cars or recycle their AA batteries instead of throwing them in the trash" (p. 12). In terms of changing habits and thinking green, the following passage by Joachim Marschall (2006), a freelance science writer in Germany, is intriguing and worth reading:

> The theory of planned behavior assumes that we carefully consider pros and cons, which may be true in novel situations such as moving to a new city. But the theory neglects an important point: in everyday life we tend to be creatures of habit. We may have to overcome many habitual or automated acts to exhibit greener behavior. The decision to leave the lights on as we walk out of a room or to check the recycling symbol on a plastic container instead of just throwing it away may rarely involve conscious consideration. (p. 13)

Marschall argues further: "Other characteristics, such as age, also influence how ecologically minded a person may behave. Although young people express concerns for the environment, they are, somewhat, less likely to behave in an environmentally sustainable way than are older people" (p. 13). Young people, especially high school or college students, have to understand that people are an integral part of nature. Teaching sustainability *is* thus essential.

If Higher Education Does Not Lead…., Who Will?

One of the most important roles of universities, according to Joyce Berry (2009), the dean of Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University, "is to provide the programmatic leadership that will educate tomorrow's environmental leaders….Only by teaching sustainability as a broad-based, and outward-focused leadership endeavor will we be able to attain our ultimate goal of a better, more sustainable, and just world" (p. 104). Furthermore, "everything that happens at a university and every impact, positive and negative, of university activities shapes the knowledge, skills, and values of the students" (Cortese, 2006, p. xi).

In order to achieve the educational experience in which all students are aligned with the principles of sustainability, Anthony Cortese (2006), the president of Second Nature, wrote:

> Higher education will form partnership with local and regional communities to help make them healthy, socially vibrant, economically secure, and environmentally sustainable as an integral part of higher education's mission and the student experience…. The issue is not the ability of higher education to take on this challenge. It is the will and the timeframe of doing so. If higher education does not lead the sustainability effort in society, who will? (p. xiv)

Timpson et al. (2006) support Cortese's point as follows: "The university is a microcosm of the larger community… its daily activities are an important demonstration of ways to achieve environmentally responsible living and to reinforce desired values and behaviors in the whole community. These activities provide unparalleled opportunities for teaching, research, and learning" (p. xiv). "The most successful changes are those in which the formal curriculum is an integral part of the other functions of higher education" (Timpson et al., 2006, p. x).

David Foster (2012), the executive director of the BlueGreen Alliance, advocates the development of a green curriculum throughout higher education, arguing that: "it is important to reiterate that the green sector—and therefore green education—is not separate from healthcare…information technology or any other field. While there are certainly generalized green skills to learn, the clean economy will also require training unique to each sector" (p. 3).

Tim Beatley (2009), a professor of sustainable communities, notes: "The curriculum to follow challenges students to overcome the passivity of our times and it gives them the knowledge and tools to become the kinds of ecological citizens we need more than ever today. I'm looking forward to seeing in my lifetime the changing awareness…" (p. xiv).

As a professor, the author of this report feels the same way, and hopes to promote increased awareness of sustainability issues among students. One important question is, "How can college professors incorporate sustainable practices into teaching about sustainability?"

Case Description: A Five-Stage Approach

Inquiry-Based Learning

"An old adage states: Tell me and I forget; show me and I remember; involve me and I understand. The last part of this statement is the essence of inquire-based learning…" (Educational Broadcasting Corporation, 2004, p. 1). Certainly people learn best by 'doing' and students *are* responsible for their own learning. As noted by Lim (2004), inquiry-based learning consists of five stages: Ask (articulate problems); Plan (design strategies within a certain time frame); Explore (explore resources for solving problems); Construct (synthesize resources and provide solutions); and Reflect (discuss the implications for further enhancement).

The study documented here was carried out based on these five stages: Stage 1: through the literature review, approaches to be used were identified; Stage 2: the course syllabus articulated the content of a green project, emphasizing the 3Rs (*re*duce whenever possible, *re*use as often as possible, and *re*cycle as much as possible); Stage 3: promoting awareness among 16 students enrolled in the graduate course regarding environmental issues and the sustainability ethic, the green project was explained on the first day of class; Stage 4: the project consisted of a lesson plan and an actual report (how the 3Rs were adopted in the lesson); and Stage 5: this allowed the author, serving as the course instructor, to reflect on experience derived from the sustainability-based course project, and to address the following question: What knowledge does one gain by incorporating sustainability into the curriculum?

Stage 1

Youth spend many hours a day at school. Teachers' behaviors and attitudes must reflect green school behaviors and sustainability-centered education. Two underlying principles for this sustainability-based project were based on the author's following perspectives: 1) *experience is the best teacher*: students, mostly in-service teachers, in this research course would be required to develop a lesson integrating a sustainability ethic into teaching and to conduct the lesson; 2) *a journey of one thousand miles begins with one step*: if the author could become a positive influence on in-service teachers, they in turn could become a positive influence on their school children, for teaching environmental issues.

Small steps could lead to big changes in the direction of green school behaviors eventually. At Stage 1, the author realized that raising awareness of sustainability issues among students in the course could become the first step in a 'journey of one thousand miles.'

Stage 2

What does the word sustainability mean to college students? "The answer probably is 'not much'….To most, climate change, biotic impoverishment, decline of land seats, deforestation, pollution, poverty, terrorism, and so forth seem very distant from the problems they face every day including those of drugs and violence" (Orr, 2006, p. ix). Students in the course were asked to express their opinions about sustainability. Some of their opinions were:

- "Green education must be done while at the young age to help them understand the values of our environment. This should not consist of typical policies and rules to follow, but instead must instill the values that can benefit them in long run."
- "Introducing students to hands-on experiences in an environmental education is so critical. Yet conserving resources are things that should be taught at home."
-

Sustainability-based Coursework

Emphasizing the 3Rs, the format of a lesson plan, below, was developed by the author.

Instruction: Develop a 'green' lesson plan applying the 3Rs to your teaching. If your school has a lesson plan form, use it. If not, use the format below.

1. *Subject* (content area, level, and so on)
2. *Learning Objectives* (what will students be able to do during this lesson? How will students demonstrate that they have learned and understood the objectives of the lesson?)
3. *Materials/Media* (a complete list of materials, including full citations of textbooks used, worksheets, and any other special considerations are most useful. What materials or media will be needed? What textbooks or story books are needed?)
4. *Lesson Description* (this section provides an overview of the lesson in terms of topic focus, activities, and purpose. What is unique about this lesson? How did your students like it?)
5. *Lesson Procedure* (this section is divided into introduction, main activity, and closure.)
6. *Assessment/Evaluation* (this is done by gathering students' work and assessing the work using some kind of grading rubric that is based on lesson objectives. Have students practiced what you are asking them to do for evaluation?)

A sample lesson plan, shown in Exhibit A, was drawn up by Student M. This student expressed her goals as follows: "After completing the M.Ed. program in this university, I will pursue a doctorate degree in education. While the basis of my career has been teaching for the Guam Department of Education, my long-term goals include teaching at a university." Although only one student's lesson plan was included in this report, all students developed their own plans.

Sustainability means different things for different people. Yet the following definition by a student may be representative: "Environmental sustainability is what human beings must continuously support in our surroundings, so that we can prevent issues in the future and continue to improve our living today." This definition reminds the author of the following words by Margaret Mead, the American anthropologist and proto-environmentalist: "We have to learn to cherish this earth and cherish it as something that's fragile, that's only one, it's all we have" (Newsweek Green Rankings, 2010, p. 24).

Stage 3

The author provided students with several handouts, including the one below.

I trust that you are making good progress in your project. I look forward to your final report. Included in this handout is a list of green teaching websites. I hope that you can get some useful information from these websites. By the way, did you know...

- For every ton of paper that is recycled, the following is saved: 7,000 gallons of water; 380 gallons of oil; and enough electricity to power an average house for six months.
- By recycling just one glass bottle, you save enough electricity to power a 100-watt bulb for four hours. The more we throw away, the more space we take up in landfills.
- You can run a TV for six hours on the amount of electricity that is saved by recycling one aluminum can. (Source: http://www.gogreeninitiative.org/content/WhyGoGreen/)

◊ Green Teacher <http://www.greenteacher.com/>**(A magazine that helps youth educators enhance environmental and global education inside and outside of schools)**

◊ Green Teacher <http://www.greenteacher.com/>**(A magazine that helps youth educators enhance environmental and global education inside and outside of schools)**

◊ Green Teacher! <http://www.greenteacher.org/>(ENVIS website on environmental education)

◊ Teaching Green <http://www.teachinggreen.org/>(Founded in 2006, the mission of *Teaching Green* is to enable a sustainable future for life on earth through comprehensive and empowering environmental education for all)

◊ Green Kids Online <http://greenliving.suite101.com/article.cfm/green_kids_online/>(Provides resources for teaching children green habits)

◊ Teach Children ESL<*http://www.teachchildrenesl.com/*> (A great web*site* for teachers. Worksheets for ecological food choices)

◊ Green Teacher (Environmental education in South Carolina) <http://eeinsc.org/net/org/info.aspx?s=80650.0.0.37431>(Publishes resources to help educators, inside and outside of schools, to promote global and environmental awareness among young people, from elementary through high school)

◊ Teaching Green Links <http://www.idec.org/greendesign/tglinks.html/>(Maintained by Georgia Tech's Sustainable Facilities Infrastructure)

◊ Green-Schools Home <http://www.greenschoolsireland.org/>(An international environmental education program that promotes and acknowledges whole-school action for the environment)

At Stage 3, students in the course worked on their midpoint project self-assessment, and thus, they wrote their progress report. The progress report by Student M is shown in Exhibit B. Most of them indicated they were making progress and were looking forward to the results of their green projects. Furthermore, they mentioned that many people are nowadays focusing on sustainable living: for example, by practicing the 3Rs as often as possible; by educating people on green behavior; by disposing of waste properly; by driving a car only minimally; by reducing power consumption, particularly in the household; and by having reusable shopping bags.

Stage 4

Good classroom teachers use project-based learning as a supplement to their regular course of instruction (Kraft, 2005). Project-based learning and inquiry-based learning are related, in terms of searching for answers to the problems. In project-based learning, students make decisions within a prescribed framework, design the process for reaching a solution, are responsible for accessing and managing the information they gather, and regularly reflect on what they are doing. Students' inquiry-based projects described in this report provide such an example, and the students completed their final reports based on the format given below.

Instruction: Your final project report (single-spaced, 5 pages, not including appendences) must be written based on the research format below.

1. Project title
2. Abstract (your project summary, 100 words)
3. Purpose (and research questions if any) of the project (including background of the project, and particularly why you were interested in the topic of your project)
4. Brief review of the literature (using, at least, 4-5 references)
5. Method (including the project procedures, that is, how you conducted your project)
6. Results (you can create tables or figures here, or you can summarize people's opinions or behaviors if you conducted interviews or observations)
7. Discussion (implications of the results or findings)
8. Conclusion (including what you have learned through your project)
9. Appendix (any additional materials)

Inquiry-based learning, which is rooted in the scientific method of investigating phenomena in a structured and methodical manner, makes use of this case study framework: problem statement, data collection, analysis, and conclusion. At Stage 4, students in the course fulfilled an important goal: writing a final project report. Their final reports were evaluated based on the grading rubric. Additionally, using such skills as creative thinking and problem solving, students enhanced their knowledge of teaching sustainability. It may be the first step for most of the students to think about sustainability as a problem that connects them to the environment, the economy, and society. All the students submitted their final project reports. Another excerpt from the final project report by Student M is shown in Exhibit C.

Stage 5

Stage 5 focused on reflection which is an important component for improving future work on similar projects. Reflection further serves to reinforce the method, so that students can repeat the process in any problem-solving situation. Students indicated two types of opinions in the reflections of their completed projects. One is that by enhancing their knowledge of a sustainability ethic, they have realized that teaching sustainability *is* their own task as teachers. The other is that they have learned the research process and they can apply the skills of research methodology to future assignments in any courses when they promote inquiry, or project-based learning. This case study was tempered with creative thinking and innovative approaches.

Just as currency in the research literature helps instructors to ensure that their teaching is up to date, teaching gives direction and purpose to one's own research program. Teaching this sustainability-based coursework and guiding students' individual 'green' lesson plans, in particular, informed the author's research endeavors. Also, as mentioned earlier, it is important that teachers in higher education raise awareness about serious environmental problems. They can do this in part by encouraging students to consider the environmental impact of their day-to-day activities, and by helping students adopt lifestyles that sustain, rather than deplete.

Conclusion

James and Lahti (cited in Hembd & Silberstein, 2011) identify seven steps toward sustainability. The first step is finding the fire souls, which are community citizens who have a burning interest in sustainable development. In this sustainability work, 'fire souls' were students in the course. The second step is education and raising awareness. The author created with students a common understanding of what sustainability means, and assigned them to design their projects based on guided steps, and to implement their lessons. The third step involves official endorsement of sustainability operating principles. This work was supported by the going green initiative of the university where the author teaches. The forth step involves the implementers. Students' projects were monitored constantly through the progress reports, class discussions, and electronic communication. The fifth step applies the sustainability framework. Students in the course realized that the behavior of their K-12 students can be changed by implementing the process with a shared sustainability language. The sixth step involves whole plan endorsement. Under proper leadership, students are able to participate in sustainable lessons or other activities and trust the same rules. The seventh step keeps it going.

"What knowledge does one gain by incorporated sustainability into the curriculum?" is the question that the author established at the beginning stage of this sustainability work. The answers to the question include that the author has deeply learned that teaching for sustainability is an ongoing business, and probably there is no ending as long as we live on this planet.

Universities' missions focus on teaching, research, and community service. This case study addressed all three of these missions, such that students, teachers, and the community will benefit from learning how principles of going green may be applied in coursework. Instructors in particular will find that, just as teaching a course is one of the best ways to learn the material in depth, teaching students how to build sustainability into what they do provides the instructor with valuable experience in the same ways.

Note

The author is grateful to all the students enrolled in the course who worked on the green project. One student's project, included in this report with the student's permission, has been edited for brevity.

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Exhibit A: Lesson Plan (by Student M)

1. *Subject*: Fine Arts; Secondary (Grades 9-12)

2. *Learning Objectives*: Students will identify the effects of littering. After collecting litter around the campus, they will be able to identify the most frequently littered items, and will develop an anti-litter campaign to help reduce littering on campus.
3. *Materials/Media*: Chalkboard, trash bags, gloves, poster boards, and markers.
4. *Lesson Description*: Students will collect litter, conduct an analysis of the results, and develop an anti-littering campaign to reduce littering on campus. Two to three weeks after implementing the campaign, students will repeat the litter collection activity and compare the results to see if there is a reduction in the amount of litter on campus.
5. *Lesson Procedures*. *Introduction*: Begin the lesson by asking students to define "littering." Lead students in a discussion on the effects of littering and the reasons people litter). *Main activity*: First, divide the class into small groups and assign each group a specific area of the school campus to collect litter. Second, have each group categorize the litter (e.g., aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and paper) and identify the most frequently littered items. Third, record the data on the chalkboard and have each group present their findings to the class. Fourth, after each group has presented, discuss the overall findings and the ways in which littering can be managed or prevented at the school. Fifth, have students develop an anti-littering campaign. Sixth, have each group create a poster emphasizing the importance of proper litter disposal. Finally, have students place the posters around the school campus. *Closure*: After 2-3 weeks, repeat the litter collection and compare the findings. Have students discuss the implications of their findings.
6. *Assessment/Evaluation*: Through discussions students will be evaluated on their knowledge of the effects of littering; students will be evaluated on the litter collection activity based on the presentation of their findings and on the anti-litter campaign based on the posters they create. Rubrics will be used to grade students' posters and campaign messages.

Exhibit B: Progress Report (by Student M)

1. *What part of the project do you like the most?* What I enjoy most in my lesson is having students create posters and flyers for the anti-litter campaign. They use their creativity to present facts about littering and to encourage other students to dispose of their litter properly. This part of the project allows them to think critically to convey a positive message that will impact student behaviors.
2. *What part of the project do you like the least?* My lesson focuses only on waste reduction. The project could incorporate the 3Rs. The lesson can cover methods to effectively reduce waste, and learning more about recycling or reusing items.
3. *How does the project relate to environmental issues or sustainability education?* It helps students promote behavior in support of a sustainable living. By creating an anti-litter campaign, they will develop an appreciation for the environment and natural resources.
4. *Is your project successful so far? How do you know?* Yes. I have seen that my students make a conscious effort to dispose of their litter properly and encourage other students to do the same.

Exhibit C: Final Project Report (by Student M)

Green Lesson: Reducing Litter on School Campuses

Abstract

This lesson examined the effects of an anti-litter campaign. Forty-five students participated. The students were tasked with collecting litter around the school campus before and after the implementation of an anti-litter campaign. For the campaign, the students placed posters around the school emphasizing the importance of proper litter disposal. The results revealed a decrease in the amount of litter collected on the campus after the implementation of the campaign, suggesting that providing students with an awareness of proper litter disposal can reduce the amount of litter on school campuses.

Purpose

By promoting the concept of going green in our schools and teaching the importance of the 3Rs, we can develop positive behaviors and attitudes in our students that will contribute to the preservation of the earth. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of an anti-litter campaign on the amount of litter present on a school campus. It was hypothesized that the amount of litter collected before the implementation of an anti-litter campaign would be greater than the amount of litter collected three weeks after an anti-litter campaign was implemented.

Literature Review

While there are numerous environmental issues, littering is indeed a prominent one. Litter is aesthetically unpleasant and has detrimental effects on the environment. Littering is not only harmful to people and animals but also causes damage to our waterways and costs money to clean up: 94% of people consider littering to be a major environmental problem; yet, it continues to persist ("Litter," 2003). Tackling the issue of littering should begin with education. And thus, educating people about ways to prevent and reduce litter can help to resolve this problem.

Schools can implement litter or waste reduction programs to encourage students to dispose of trash properly and to promote the use of reusable items. Hatch Elementary School in Chicago is just one of many schools that teach students and parents about zero-waste concepts. The School has set up a composting station for uneaten food scraps and has placed trash bins around the campus for recyclable and non-recyclable items. The School is also working towards purchasing reusable items for students to use for lunch (e.g., reusable trays and silverware). In line with the school's efforts, the teachers have learned to tie the zero-waste concept into science and environmental lessons ("Students Save," 2010).

In Long Beach, California, over 70 public and private schools have green programs that incorporate recycling and litter reduction into the classrooms. The schools' efforts have helped to lower the city's total amount of waste and divert 69% of material from the waste stream to recycling and conservation programs. Because the district requires environmental education to be incorporated into the school curriculum at all grade levels, the city's Environmental Services Bureau offers schoolteachers curriculum lesson plans and recycling bins. Parents and faculty members have also grouped together to create their own recycling and litter reduction programs in an effort to reach out to the community (Peters, 2010).

Implementing a "green" program would be extremely beneficial for schools in Guam. Yet this will take some time and planning before it can take effect. Instead of waiting for such a program to be implemented, teachers can begin taking smaller steps to educate students on environmental issues and the importance of going green. Like the teachers at Hatch Elementary School, teachers in Guam can tie environmental concepts into their lessons and have students participate in activities that promote environmental awareness. Such lessons can include teaching students to turn rubbish into a resource by recycling and reusing items. Teachers can also educate students about the negative effects of litter and have them implement an anti-litter campaign on campus ("Curriculum & Lesson Plans," n. d.). There are many ways that teachers can incorporate environmental issues into their classes. What is important is for teachers to create awareness about the environment and assist students in developing "green" attitudes and behaviors.

Method

Forty-five students volunteered to participate in this study. All participants were students (from grades 9 through 12) in a fine arts class. For this study, the following materials were used: a chalkboard and chalk, paper, pen/pencil, trash bags, gloves, poster boards, markers, glue, scissors, and glitter. The study began by asking the students to define "littering." After receiving several responses, the students were led in a discussion on the reasons people litter and the effects of littering. Following the discussion, the students were divided into small groups (nine groups of five). One person in each group was chosen to be the recorder; the rest of the group members would be responsible for collecting litter around the campus and reporting the type of litter collected to the recorder. The recorder needed a pen or pencil and a sheet of paper to keep a log of the type of litter (e.g., plastic, paper, and aluminum) and the amount collected. The students were given trash bags and gloves and were led around the campus.

After collecting litter, each group presented their findings to the class and the data was recorded on the chalkboard. When each group had presented, the students discussed their findings and the ways in which littering can be managed or prevented at the school. Students participated in developing an anti-litter campaign. Each group was given two poster boards, markers, scissors, glue, and glitter. On each poster board students presented a message that emphasized the importance of proper litter disposal. Students placed the posters all around the school campus. After three weeks, the litter collection activity was repeated. Students were in the same groups and were given the same amount of time to complete the activity. Students then compared their overall findings with the previous findings. They discussed the implications of their findings.

Results

A comparison was made between the amount of litter collected before the implementation of the campaign and after. Students divided the litter into nine categories: plastic, paper, aluminum, glass, metal, Styrofoam, rubber, cigarette butts, and other (rope, socks, rags, pencils, etc.). The results of the litter collection before and after the anti-litter campaign are presented in Table 1. A graph of the results is presented in Figure 1. A comparison of the data revealed, as predicted, an overall decrease in the amount of litter collected after three weeks of the anti-litter campaign being implemented (a difference of 495 items). With the exception of glass, which increased by two items, there was a reduction in the number of items collected in each category.

Table 1. Number of the litter collected before and after the anti-litter campaign

Category	Before the campaign	After the campaign
Plastic	277	113
Paper	200	67
Aluminum	37	8
Glass	3	5
Metal	27	5
Styrofoam	5	0
Rubber	17	2
Cigarette Butts	106	24
Other	60	13
Total	732	237

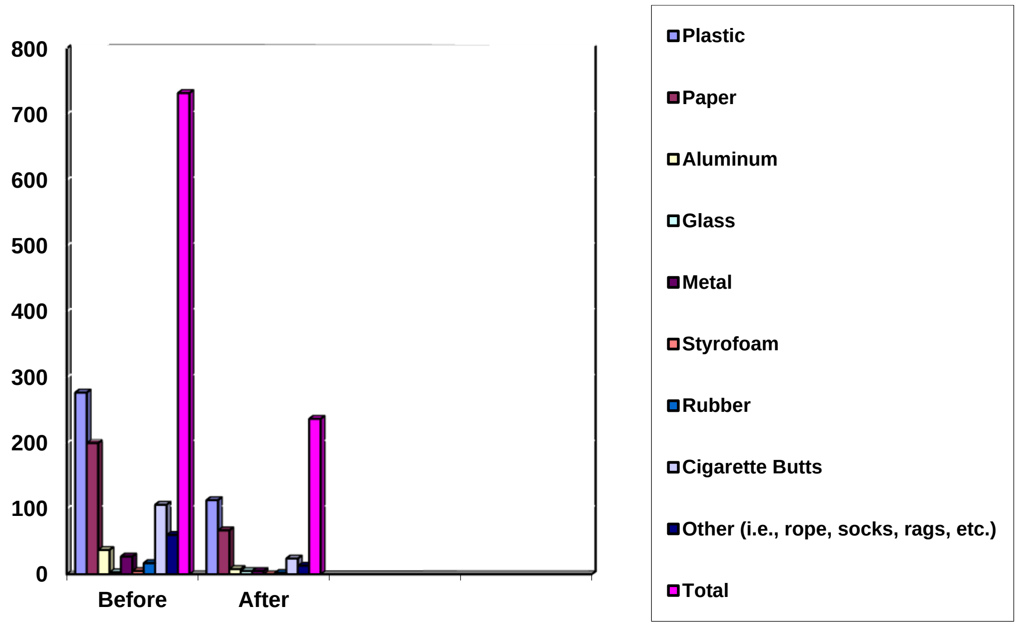

Figure 1. Results of the litter collection before and after the anti-litter campaign

Discussion

As predicted, the total amount of litter collected before the implementation of the anti-litter campaign was greater than the amount of litter collected three weeks after. The number of items collected in each category, with the exception of glass, decreased after the anti-litter campaign was employed. Perhaps, by allowing more time for the anti-litter campaign to take effect, there might have been a decrease in the amount of glass items collected. While extraneous variables may have had an effect on the results (subject variables, and situational variables, for instance), based on these findings, it can be concluded that providing students with an awareness of the importance of proper litter disposal can reduce the amount of litter produced on school campuses. To expand on this study and further promote going "green" in schools, teachers can also incorporate the concepts of reusing and recycling. By promoting the concept of going green in our schools and teaching the importance of the 3Rs, we can develop positive behaviors and attitudes in our students that will contribute to the preservation of the earth.

Conclusion

This study focused on waste reduction and sought to address the environmental issue of littering. It helped students to develop an understanding of the environmental hazards of littering and to promote behavior in support of a sustainable environment. By surveying the amount of litter on campus and creating an anti-litter campaign, students in this study developed an appreciation for our environment and natural resources. They exercised proper litter disposal while encouraging other students to do the same. By taking the time to educate students about environmental issues like littering, and incorporating environmental awareness into lessons, teachers can begin to make a difference and eventually change the world.

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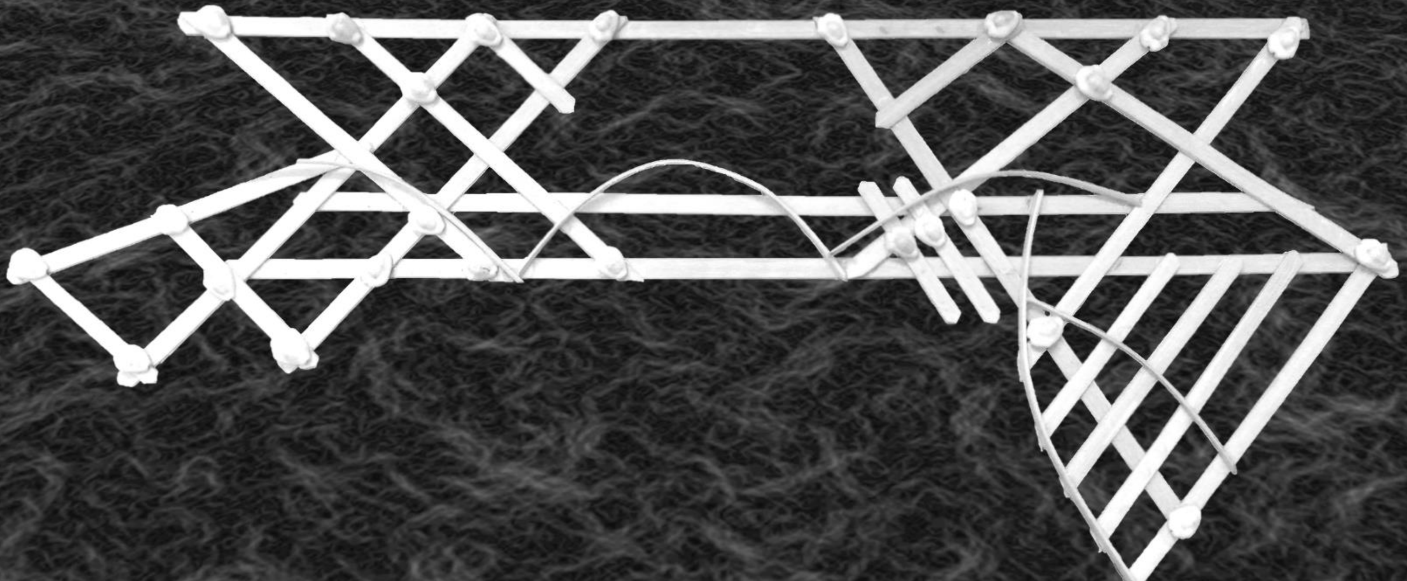
CRITICAL ESSAY



Continuing the Conversation

Francis X. Hezel, SJ

Introduction

Some months ago I picked up a book that purported to offer a new and challenging view of education in Micronesia. The book, *Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific: A Genealogy from Micronesia* by David Kupferman [2013], was much less a view of what education in the islands was, or even what it could be, than what it was not. By the time the author had finished "disassembling" education, there was nothing left to work with except the vague suggestion that somehow island people might be better served by reverting to the informal education– on the beach, in the home, in the canoe–that had served them so well for so long.

Kupferman, like many others these days, is so determined to spare us the curse of colonization that he leaves island educators almost nothing to work with. What, then, can be salvaged of an education so contaminated with colonial power is the question we must ask by the end of his book.

Kupferman's book, done with true postmodernist flair, reminds me of what I have been missing these past several years. I've always picked up articles and books in the hope of gaining a clearer understanding of how Pacific societies work today or did work in the past, how island institutions operate, and perhaps even a suggestion on where to begin in the work of improving them. But I find myself disappointed and increasingly irked by the failure of contemporary authors to deliver. Not that they *can't*–many of them may have a deeper understanding of how these societies work than I do–but because they *won't*. Do they see something that I, a relic of an older age, am missing? Or is it just that they're so busy disassembling and deconstructing that they never get around to putting the pieces back together again?

Much of the writing on the Pacific today reveals an obsession with deconstruction–picking apart a literary or visual representation of a piece of the island world to show how flawed it is. Kupferman, for instance, targets the education system in Micronesia, attempting to show us as he "disassembles" that the system is not what it was presented to be – an institution that will train the young to be responsible and informed adult islanders.

But the targets of deconstruction are many. The target could be an institution (education), a social phenomenon (suicide), a geographical name (Micronesia) – anything that lays claim to presenting life as it is and the islands as they truly are. It could even be the stuff of popular magazines or movies – the way in which photos in the *National Geographic* depict islanders, or the treatment of ukulele-picking Hawaiians in movies–as well as serious island histories written a generation or two ago. Anything pretending to present as reality some aspect of island life, past or present, is fair game for deconstruction.

Deconstruction

Why the obsession with deconstruction? Perhaps a generation of young scholars with roots in the islands may have simply grown tired of seeing themselves continually misrepresented in one way or another. Rather than dismiss this with a smile, as many Islanders might have done in the past, they have decided to fight back. Not just against the stereotypes – the caricature of the islander as easy-going to the point of laziness, the licentious male and the easily available female, the ever friendly and empty-headed local boy – but against representations that have posed a much more real danger. The country reports and the development plans that foreign officials, agents for international agencies, and finance managers bring with them lay out the social and political terrain and plot the course of development. "We know who you are, and we are here to help you grow into something even better in the future," they seem to say.

Yet, the metaphors, the models and the very standards used to define Pacific societies are imposed by the West. Is feudalism, with its referent to medieval Europe, an accurate term to describe the Polynesian chiefly system, Islander scholars may ask. Does dependency theory, originating as it did in Latin America to describe economies supported by transnational corporations, offer the best model for understanding a Micronesian economy today? Must Pacific Island nations be held to the same standards of governance obtained in other nations, even if this demands a measure of political transparency that may be at odds with traditional island norms? It is difficult to miss the dismissive tone that underlies such assumptions and privileges the West in nearly all cases. If island feudalism is an obsolete system under which much of Europe once labored, the implication is that the same is true of chiefdoms and monarchies in the Pacific. Furthermore, land rights divided and layered, as in feudalism and land ownership in many islands of the Pacific, are an obstacle to development. Even reciprocity, a cardinal value in all island societies, may be seen as the keystone of a "primitive" system and a value all too liable to degenerate into corruption, as much of a threat as an asset when measured by the sound governance practices invoked today [Huffer & So'o 2005, 312-3].

In a publication of mine I once suggested that what is known as the MIRAB economy might be a reasonable development route for resource-poor island nations to take [Hezel 2006]. While islanders might recognize remittances from the family abroad as an entirely acceptable form of support, development economists usually view this as a manifestation of economic dependence rather than a legitimate economic strategy. Since development economists and the financial institutions that support them define what is legitimate and what is not, islanders and those others who try to view life through the eyes of island peoples are at a decided disadvantage in a difference of opinion.

And then there is the problem of understanding gender roles and power in the islands for Westerners who are accustomed to measure the strength of women's power by the number of seats they hold in the national legislature. The same applies when one tries to explain to some reform-minded consultant from Geneva or Atlanta that a 911 call might not be the best way to ensure protection for a woman who is being threatened by her husband even if she has blood relatives in the area. Yet again, if one Or tries to explain to an outraged advocate of gender equality why the respect behavior a young islander shows to her "brother" by stooping or even crawling on her knees, is not an act of utter debasement.

If you were a Pacific Island scholar, what are the chances that you could hold your head high and keep ideals untarnished while attempting to do local history or anthropology or economics or social analysis in the face of deprecating assumptions such as these? It's not surprising, then, that the field of academic inquiry is as often as not seen as a battleground, with Pacific Islanders defending their own territory from the presumptuous and faulty assertions of the outside establishment [eg, Wood 2006, 33ff]. With weapons in hand, they strike back at the "totalizing" enemy, parrying the enemy's interpretation of their island past and present, rather than striking a decisive blow by offering a better one.

Under such conditions, it's no wonder that Islander academics and those who sympathize with them devote so much of their time and energy to dissecting the misleading representations of their own island world. They engage in the work of deconstruction – the attempt to take apart the misrepresentation of their world that is implied in the Western development model, the diagnosis of social ills offered by the overseas consultant, the snapshot of island life presented in a popular American magazine. In the minds of these Islanders, the struggle for independence continues, long after most of the Pacific Island nations have achieved their political autonomy. The contest today is being fought over the legitimacy of the standards that once served the islands so well even if they vary at times, from those embraced by the West. The message delivered is: "You don't own us anymore. In fact, you don't even understand who we are."

Foucault and Postmodernism

It's not surprising, then, that these young island academics might fall in line behind Michel Foucault, the prime cult figure of postmodernism. Foucault, the author of two illuminating volumes on the social history of the West – *Madness and Civilization* and *Punish and Discipline*–shows how those who exercise power in a society can establish as orthodox a view of reality that may be used to control others in that society. The definition of madness, he proposes, might become a catch-all category to include many forms of social deviance. This, in turn, could legitimize sweeping up such deviants in a medical treatment net and sending them off to a mental institution for the rest of their lives. Foucault, who discovered he was gay at a time when it was unthinkable to admit this publicly even in liberal society, had good reason to contest the way that reality was defined. In his uncompleted series on the history of sexuality [Foucault 1978-1986], he exhibits repeatedly his conviction that the "privileged" (in this case, the majority) have defined the subject in such a way as to marginalize homosexuals and put them at risk of punishment, just as European society had done for years with those it defined as mad or as criminals. Foucault's growing conviction, expressed in the anthology *Power/Knowledge* [1980], was that systems of knowledge are inevitably means of exercising power – weapons used to force the submission of others and to control them.

Postmodernism, begun in the early 1960s as a reaction to colonialism in all its forms, also attempts to protect beleaguered minorities from those who assail them. If knowledge is a form of power, if conceptual schemes can be used as systems to control those at the fringes of society, then postmodernism challenges our confidence in knowledge at its philosophical core.

Postmodernism rejects as illusory the belief that a single thought system–whether philosophy or theology or any other conceptual framework–might be broadened sufficiently to encompass the world. Postmodernism, in its early French expression, is founded on a "distrust of totalizing systems of knowledge which depend upon theory or concepts" [Young 2004, 41]. Much of the effort of its adherents, then, goes into the deconstruction of traditional assumptions: "disassembling established structures, deflating pretensions, exploding beliefs, unmasking appearances," as Tarnas [1993, 401] puts it. Jacques Derrida, one of the foremost prophets of postmodernism, warns that one culture's *logos*, or reason, is another culture's myth [Derrida 1982, 213]. In his view, what those in the Western tradition would call "reason" is so contaminated by Western bias that we can only despair of finding a thought system that all people hold in common or can be applied to all. Indeed, there is no empirical "fact" that is not inextricably bound up with interpretation, and there is no interpretation that can be called final.

Hence, any attempt at a universal history which would collapse non-western experience (the "Other") into the history of the dominant tradition (the West) is dismissed as a colonialist project. The "Other," because it is radically other, may not be folded into the dominant conceptual framework. Even beyond this, the "Other" is resistant to the best attempts of anyone outside that tradition to understand it. We can "gaze" at it without ever hoping to penetrate it, never mind fathom it. The best we can do is to offer a decidedly limited history–or "discourse," if you will–which may bounce off others like balls on a billiard table rather than interact with them in a more generative fashion, as atoms might combine to form different molecular structures.

The Impasse

Foucault and postmodernist thought with which he is linked may offer necessary cautions to those of us too quick to impose our view of reality on those we study. The dangers of imposition of an ethnocentric definition of reality on the "Other"–to use the term so dear to those schooled in this tradition–are too great to ignore. All of us positioned between cultures, islanders and expatriates alike, have struggled again and again with these dangers. My quarrel with postmodernism, however, is a serious one: to the extent that it presents the "Other" as veiled in mystery and inaccessible, it would seem to deny the possibility of a serious conversation between oneself and the "Other." The exchange that should result in a shared understanding of one another's viewpoint – the growing familiarity with one another that commonly occurs between individuals–is categorically dismissed. Instead, the encounter between cultures, framed as it is in terms of power, is defined as nothing more than a contest between oneself and the "Other."

Foucault has identified the danger that the systems of thought may be used to shape reality in such a way as to relegate certain groups to the fringes of society or even term them as miscreants. He has clearly established the point that systems of knowledge can be employed to exercise power over others. Indeed, those who invoke Foucault today assume that the attempt to define reality constitutes a power play on the part of these people. But is that truly what these systems were intended to do? Might there not be a more innocent function of such thought systems?

Representations of reality in the form of a worldview, even if they are distrusted as "totalizing systems of knowledge," answer to the fundamental human need to get a handle on the world. As we name things by imposing on them words, create concepts, and organize these systematically into a worldview, we are drawing a map and building structures that forge a bond between individuals, at least in our own culture, through a shared understanding of life. To define reality in this way is to craft the tools necessary for understanding the world, but these tools need not become weapons, I would like to believe. Admittedly, this shared understanding does not extend over the whole globe. Yet, it is unlikely that this was intended as exclusionary, much less as a device to marginalize those who operate within other systems

As one group after another constructs its own worldview–or sense of reality–we are faced with the problem that Derrida pointed out: "one culture's reason is another culture's myth." There are any number of "Others" on the table, each with a claim to reason and reality. Must we think of these "Others" as impermeable pockets of mystery, incapable of being partially understood and respected, even if never totally probed? Is it possible that knowledge is not just a tool for control, as Foucault would have it, but a bridge for crossing the chasm between one and the "Other?"

Moving Beyond Deconstruction

The problem with deconstruction is that in the end we are left with a dismemberment of the original work, the vital organs scattered all over the morgue slab. It's helpful to know what the cause of death was for the unfortunate victim, but shouldn't that translate into sounder health practices for the living? There is the danger that our social scientists and historians and social critics today have become literary coroners. Don't we have a right to expect that today's practitioners will attempt the type of constructive work that is needed to replace, or at least to correct, the works they have so avidly dismembered? In too many instances, the "re-membering" of the body parts that is promised is not delivered.

Individuals like Kupferman may feel obliged to "disassemble" education in Micronesia, if only to make the uninitiated aware of the range of differences between education in the West and what passes for education in the islands. But let's hope that it is not done simply to keep the screen of opaqueness unbreached and so to defend the islands against new modern-day forces of colonization. Such authors may wish to write at length about how the very notion of education in the islands differs from that in the West, how the curriculum may serve the purposes of agents of modernization more than the simple villagers, how higher education especially has dampened interest in traditional island skills and the simple life they supported, and how education might be responsible for reshaping the island nations today. The situation needs to be laid out as seriously and as clearly as possible, but do so with the understanding that this will constitute an invitation to others to respond.

Another topic that baffles outsiders is suicide, a subject that greatly interested Foucault, who is reputed to have made a few attempts on his own life in his younger days. Westerners often descend on the islands with the confidence that they have the tools required to help Micronesians reduce the high rates of suicide in their islands. In my experience, there is a great deal of deconstruction that is needed, for in the minds of these well-intentioned psychologists there is an almost necessary link between clinical depression and suicide. In their reasoning, such a desperate act must be occasioned by a mental condition that persists over a period of time; the depression almost certainly is caused by one's perceived failure as a person. After all, they suppose, the individual sense of self-worth is based on personal attainment rather than on the strength of the person's social identity. This may be wrong and the assumptions might be inapplicable to island societies, however solid the assumptions are in the West. Even so, it could be helpful to both parties to carry on the conversation rather than to simply dismiss the consultant. Likewise with other sensitive topics. The objections to using the term feudalism to describe the land systems are certainly valid. To attempt to capture the complexity of island systems by equating them to a medieval system is less than satisfying. But the people who use such terms are doing what we all do – explain by way of a rough analogy something complicated and unfamiliar. Still, this approximation, as rough as it is, sheds a bit of light on a subject that baffles many of us who have lived here for years. Better some light on the subject than none–unless people fear that they will be forever pinned to the board by the term "feudalist."

The results of the conversations that ensue between the Westerner and the "Other" can be many. The outsider with his metaphors, his analytical framework and his conceptual schemes will be forced to redraw his map of reality. Islanders will profit by having to articulate their own cultural values and patterns, and possibly even picking up an idea or two that they hadn't considered before. All this, of course, can only be done if both parties believe that such a conversation will eventually yield a closer approximation to what we have always called truth.

Conclusion

My problem with deconstruction, as should be clear by now, is that it often serves to end the conversation rather than extend it. All too frequently the message sent by such works as Kupferman's volume on Micronesian education is that the terrain is off-limits to all but the initiated. The effect of invoking the "Other," as Kupferman repeatedly does, is to post a "No Trespassing" warning to all outsiders.

While nearly everyone would agree that the "Other" can never be plumbed to its depths, never fully measured, many of us would like to think that we can come to an ever richer appreciation of it as it gradually reveals itself to us. We learn to understand human persons, over the course of repeated encounters with the individual (s), through relationships that passes from mere acquaintance to friendship and love. Isn't it reasonable to assume then that we can depend on much the same in our attempt to understand cultures and histories?

The best of the traditionalists among those academics working in the Pacific accept that what they wrote was necessarily blinkered and partial. Yet, they wrote in the belief that their narrative, with all its limitations and partiality (in both senses of that word), opened wider windows on the society and its past. The best of them expected that their works would have to be redone every generation or two, but that the result of this ongoing process would be an even more faithful and penetrating understanding of the islands. In other words, they believed that we might asymptotically approach the truth, although never quite reaching it and certainly never encapsulating it.

As one who has spent nearly his adult life "on the beach"–that is, in that middle ground between the local and the foreign–I have persisted in the belief that the "Other" is not thoroughly opaque. My own life's work has been to promote the conversation between Islanders and outsiders, as among Micronesians of different linguistic and ethnic groups, in the hope that all would be enriched with an appreciation for what each group has to offer. At the end of it all, I hoped, the worldview of all would be larger and more detailed and much more representative of what we so cavalierly refer to as reality. For this to happen, however, the "Keep Out" signs have to be taken down, the conversation has to be resumed, and the deconstruction has to proceed to reconstruction.

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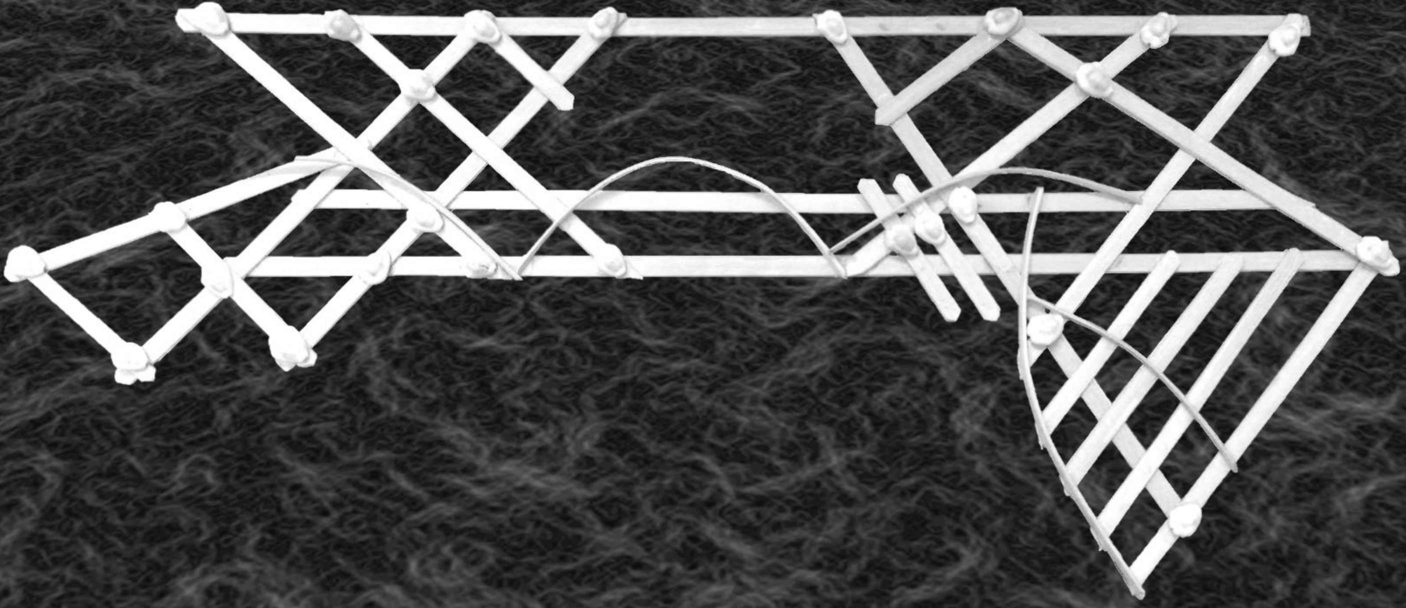
Father Francis X. Hezel, SJ *was born in Buffalo in 1939. After graduating from Canisius High School, he entered the Jesuits in 1956. Not many years later he was assigned to teach at Xavier High School in Chuuk for his regency. After his ordination in 1969, Fr. Hezel returned to Micronesia where he taught and later became director of Xavier High School in Chuuk. In 1983 he became the full-time director of a research-pastoral institute known as Micronesian Seminar. After serving as Jesuit mission superior in the islands for six years, he continued heading Micronesian Seminar until 2010.*

During his years with Micronesian Seminar, Hezel organized dozens of conferences on a variety of public issues and gave personal presentations at many other conferences. He produced over 70 video documentaries for local broadcast, including a seven-hour series on the history of Micronesia. He also introduced a popular website that offers Micronesians everywhere the opportunity to access MicSem products and to discuss contemporary issues with one another.

He has published ten books and more than eighty articles on Micronesia. Most recently he completed a survey of FSM migrants abroad at the request of the FSM government. He has received honorary doctorate degrees from the University of Guam and Fordham University, his alma mater. His new book, Making Sense of Micronesia, has just been published by University of Hawaii Press.

TALANOA [DIALOGUE]
WITH THE PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF GUAM



An Interview with Dr. Robert Underwood

Donald Rubinstein: Thank you for agreeing to talk to us about some of your views on education in the region. We have a few questions and one has to do with—given the timing, that this coming Fall semester 2014 will mark the 18th year since the implementation of the Compacts of Free Association with the FSM Marshalls—that the University of Guam can anticipate growing cohorts of Micronesian students who were born and reared on Guam of immigrant parents who arrived after the 1986 COFA agreements went into effect. We wanted to ask you what role you see UOG playing in the cultural education in the second generation island students, many of whom have never lived on their parents' home island but have inherited a respect for Micronesian languages and traditions and certainly a curiosity to learn more about their heritage.

Robert Underwood: That's an issue that will continue to grow over time, and I think the response to that is to look at the University as having concentric circles emanating from the University; so, while the University has a commitment to a multi-cultural understanding, the University's mission makes a distinction between global understanding and indigenous knowledge. The University is committed to both. It's more than just making sure people get along; the commitment is to have a healthy respect for indigenous knowledge. Now where we go with that has not really been addressed. I'm hoping that, in our current process of thinking about it, that will grow, and I think I've tried to nudge people in that direction to some extent. However, there's also a social policy issue, that we're now experiencing—even before we deal with the children who were born of migrants coming in after the Compacts of Free Association—and that is the students who come here as children, in the third grade or fourth grade and stayed on, and they're not eligible for any kind of assistance. That's kind of a version of the DREAM Act problem in the U.S. that's applied here. We're not talking about just kids; we had one incident last semester, and I predict there will be several incidents over time, where a student assumed that "I've been here and my family pays taxes and we're not on any kind of public assistance program, we're kind of upstanding members of the society," but these students are not eligible for financial aid because they're not permanent residents and they're not citizens. So, what happens to those people? That's a particular public policy should be addressed. It's not like they're here illegally; they're here legally. I've asked some people on the University staff to prepare legislation to resolve that issue.

Rubinstein: They're not eligible for Pell and SEOG?

Underwood: That part is questionable. They're eligible for Pell grants, but they're not eligible for work-study, and they're not eligible for Government of Guam scholarships either, so they're thinking, well, "Guam's my home and I'm not eligible for this support, but if somebody came from the Philippines in the 10th grade and became a permanent resident, they're eligible for it because Guam law allows for that." But Guam law doesn't allow for this kind of migrant status, so at some point in time people are going to have to make a call whether they want to take steps towards citizenship, because that's a broader policy issue of course: do you want a kind of a permanent group of people who are not citizens and just living here; one, they're not participants; two, maybe they should be; three, they don't want to be. What are the benefits of living in that society and how are those benefit distributed? So that's a problem that's going to grow, I think, over time, and that's a policy issue. But in terms of cultural commitments to indigenous knowledge, I think that's pretty much within the scope of the University's mission, because, in its statement, it makes that commitment. For people living in the U.S. or in the U.K. or in Australia or someplace like that, there's a kind of general statement about multicultural understanding and embracing people of all cultures. Obviously, we're on board with that mission, but in our particular case, the University mentions indigenous knowledge in our mission statement. Defining that indigenous knowledge in terms of the region that we inhabit and, more specifically, the region that we serve is not only an obligation of the University, but a potential strength.

Rubinstein: Do you see the University developing activities that would be similar, say, to the Oceanic Center at the University of the South Pacific that are really designed to work with students from the region and capitalize on their interest and cultural strengths and their curiosity about cultural learning and new ways of expressing culture?

Underwood: Instead of trying to look at the University of Guam as the institution that basically globalizes or westernizes them or introduces them to a "world of higher education" as we understand it, we should, in a way, be shaping higher education to reflect their experience; I think that's a very strong commitment. How we make that happen, of course, is an issue of our resources and our understanding of the region. The USP model is predicated on the assumption that people are putting something into the pot; so you have different islands that are putting resources into the pot. In the case of the University of Guam, which is basically funded by the Government of Guam, the FSM and Palau and other regional governments are not putting money into the pot. What does that do to the nature of the regional obligation of the University inasmuch as there is no specific regional support? I turn that around a little bit and say, well, part of the resource engine of the University is the fact that it is here in the region; we get a lot of grants and contracts and opportunities to establish research opportunities and centers because we're getting money to serve the region. If we were just getting money just to serve Guam, then the Marine Lab resources would dry up pretty quickly. So our resource engine is enhanced by the region. I point this out when some people in Guam find it hard to comprehend why we should give these people residential tuition when they don't put anything into the base operation of the University, and when we contract for services we have to chase them down to get them to pay. So there are those kinds of management and relationship issues to deal with, but even though the University of Guam is a Government of Guam unit, it benefits dramatically from the region. So I have no hesitancy in defending residence tuition and I have no hesitancy in defending the regional agenda because it strengthens the University. It's not debilitating to it in any way.

Rubinstein: On a related issue, how can UOG best contribute to the advancement of knowledge of Chamorro language and culture and the continuing vitality of Chamorro cultural identity and community cohesion?

Underwood: When we started Chamorro studies for the first time this year, many people thought it was a no brainer and wondered why it took us long. The University of Guam remains the honest arbiter of Chamorro cultural knowledge and main research venue and, now the certifier of knowledge. The emerging role for the University is not just facilitating research and allowing people to grow and to learn more but also kind of being an honest broker on competing views. And right now, so much knowledge is out there and you have Government of Guam agencies that are devoted to enhancing and protecting Chamorro language and culture, but they don't see their role as educational, they see their role as almost regulatory. They're the EPA for Chamorro culture rather than the facilitator, rather than the Humanities Council for Chamorro culture. So when you have these kinds of thing going on, they'll decide what goes in the museum, and they'll decide what's authentically Chamorro. From my point of view as an academic, that is a very curious and dangerous role. The faculty involved in the Chamorro studies program here perform a very unique role because they're going to be able to start bringing in and fleshing out knowledge: what is knowledge, what constitutes Chamorro knowledge, what is the corpus of Chamorro knowledge? They are going to be the ones deciding that. And beyond that, they're going to certify when somebody has that knowledge, they're going to certify that either through degree programs or granting certificates or engaging in online programs for Chamorro communities around the world, because you are the University. Not because you're the Department of Chamorro affairs of the Government of Guam, but because you're the University and you have the power to certify, you have the power to legitimate. So we'd better use that very very carefully, and not try to be a regulatory agency. That's the kind of thinking that I'm kind of worried about, because the regulatory function quickly becomes politicized, and in politics, we get a holiday declared all of a sudden, and all kinds of things happen that can be out of sync of a thoughtful kind of reflection.

Rubinstein: What's interesting to me, as a faculty member, is that what we used to call a Guam museum is no longer using the term "museum" to talk about themselves, and now "education" is the prominent term in that organization. Do you see ways that the Chamorro program and the University more broadly can interact with that effort?

Underwood: Of course, and they should, but initially the twist and turns of that are full of contradictions and assumptions. For example, when I hear someone say the Chamorros have been here four thousand years, it always makes me nervous, because I know people probably have been here four thousand years, but those people four thousand years ago had very little resemblance to what we call Chamorro today. The historical Chamorro surfaced in the 19th century and is very clearly a historical phenomenon. So now who manages that and who's able to create those levels of awareness, or are we just surrendering to a specific point of view? So for university professors, it's a tough road to navigate because you want the reflection and you want the support, and the Government of Guam has the resources right now and the interest in portraying this, but we run the risk of simplifying it to the point where it doesn't have any meat or substance and is purely celebratory and glosses over things. When you go to a museum and you see the educational experience, it doesn't just tell you a story; it allows you to peel layers of knowledge down and you keep peeling, and when you're there and you're experiencing it, you'd be able to continue to do that. There are some institutions that allow you to do that and there are other institutions that, for example, with the history of China, the People's Republic shows a pretty one-sided and ideological point of view in order to make a case rather than a present the past.

Rubinstein: There are no layers to peel over…

Underwood: There are no layers, yes. It's all here, so take it or leave it. That's not education. One example that I find interesting was, decades ago, there was an anthropology museum in Mexico, where the Mexican government was so insistent on making different regions of Mexico have equal time and place in the museum; however, obviously, some of the indigenous groups weren't as productive as the Mayans and the Aztecs, but they had the same space in the museum. So they had problems filling up certain spaces, and that's a political point of view that has nothing to do with peeling away the layers.

Unaisi Nabobo-Baba: Just trying to recap, Mr. President, on what you and Don talked about earlier. I'm interested in what we did with indigenous knowledge, in particular, in the industries where we can develop all of them, we can claim Micronesia and UOG can lead in that, I was wondering whether, in leading, we can promote some new thinking about the fact that we are a regional related people, such as maximizing the fact that the Chamorro nation identity extends right to Saipan, and in the fact that the Marshallese are also a part of us. In all this thinking and rethinking the future, do you see the role of the University as opening itself up to more than just being a national entity but to govern the region as well? That is to take from the region and to share the pot, so that if they are to be a part of it, they will have to contribute. However, looking ahead 50 years, I would like to see the leadership of the region coming from UOG and UOG embracing the region rather than, for example, Chinese dominance half way through the region, resulting in FSM turning out to almost be a Chinese university of sorts.

Underwood: I think that's a question that cannot be answered from Guam; it has to be answered in the region, and the problem is that people in the region obviously think of Guam as the wealthiest island in the region. We're sophisticated, we're kind of the metropole for the region, but now that's kind of breaking apart. Before the Compacts of Free Association, by inclination, by availability of technology of the time, and by immigration rules and regulations, Guam was the center for education. So basically, a big chunk of Micronesian political and social leadership went to school at the University of Guam. That's no longer the case. It's not because the University of Guam was found wanting, but because they had other opportunities. So how does that get reshaped? Well, it gets shaped through conversation and asking the governments of Micronesia what they expect of a baccalaureate institution, and the initial concern is that they will want to start their own. So just recognize that, as these governments get sophisticated and do say "we can start our own," they're not going to say "wow, we want to work with a collaborative regional institution." So in the meantime, you have, as you've outlined, a lot of young people from all parts of the region with opportunities to go to school elsewhere, and because of Pell grants and their own scholarship money, they can go to online universities so that a student can have more access to the world than, say, a student in California in the 1980's. Who would have imagined that they would one day have that access? I've heard that about 35 students from FSM are currently on full scholarship in China. So when they graduate—unlike those who go to the U.S., it is an open question of whether or not even get half of them to come back—all of the ones going to school in China will come back and all will be influential in the new government. So it's really a re-shaping of the regional identity through global pressure, and until the region itself wakes up to that, they'll continue to see that these are opportunities we can't pass up... However, really what's happening is that the region is becoming globalized in a way that is not interested in their local concern as much as they may be interested in penetration into the region. So, for the Chinese government, this is a great strategy. It is money that they have invested. The payoff is maybe 20 years from now or 10 years from now, but there will be a payoff. So that's really a vital and critical issue about how the governments and the people see themselves. So there is this thinking, for example, "well, those people at UOG, Guamanians, Chamorro, they're always looking down on us and they want to run this show," and so forth. I acknowledge that some of this thinking still occurs. There's some of that going on. But the reality is, given the scale of the University of Guam and given the size of the Government of Guam and the economy of Guam, what the University is able to provide is nothing short of a small miracle. This is a miracle actually when you think about what the University of Guam has become and what it can do. Somebody had the vision to make this all happen and, certainly we're all benefiting from it, but others don't recognize that. In connection with our regional mission, Guam tried in the 1980's to give a seat to a Micronesian on the Board of Regents, and that happened for 3 or 4 years. It was cumbersome and didn't work out, with questions again about law, such as who can sit on the board and take an oath and such, and the Board is not an extra GovGuam entity. It is a U.S. entity that is within the Government of Guam. So people need to stop looking to each other in a competitive way and instead try to find a way to pool their resources. And it does not have to be a lot, really; some of it could be as it is in the case of the U.S., some of it could just be token payment to be part of the gang, per se. But either way, that's a very important construct.

Nabobo-Baba: I say that also because, when you send people away, I think a lot of them come back to the region and impact the region depending on where they are trained. You see that a lot; we know for those of us with training in New Zealand there's a lot of impact after we come back. In sending new groups of people to China, for example, it'll open up new things.

Underwood: So for us the challenge for the University is to set up those opportunities to generate leadership, which we haven't. I tried to interest a regional company to support this idea, and they really didn't buy it. But what we need is a young people's leadership institute where we take people early in their career and we get them to understand what leadership is, how to make things work in this environment, what our regional identity is, and what regional connections are to each other. You have lots of these leadership programs and lots of universities where they take people early in their careers for this. Even with just, say, 10 or 15 students one summer, and the next year you did another 10 or 15 students, over time, that institute, that center, will take on a life of its own and will have an impact. People will say, "You're reflecting that, you have this institute training perspective, your point of view." We can still do that, and I think that's kind of the next step, to try to do that. So you take people who are young entrepreneurs and young people just becoming principals of various schools and young government bureaucrats, and you ask "what is leadership in this environment?", or "how do you exercise it?", or "how do you overcome problems?", and then they write papers answering these questions.

Rubinstein: Mr. President, we also wanted to ask you a question about a cohort of students different from the cohort we've been just talking about that you've identified as future leaders. Students who are entering the University of Guam who score very low on both the English and Math placement tests have a statistically miniscule chance of graduating with a bachelor's degree, and it's this cohort of students who have brought down the overall UOG 6-year graduation rate to a level that has warranted WASC concern. In your view, is there a better way we can train these students for appropriate careers other than through liberal arts education?

Underwood: I think there's a couple of things that the University needs to do. One is that we're an open admissions university, so people will think, well, since we are open admission, we don't have to recruit. We just wait until people show up and deal with them when they show up. That's really faulty thinking. First of all, if you are in the University, you need to go out and recruit the students you want. So if you're teaching chemistry or physics, then start having these relationships with high schools here in the region and say "we want to find out who's interested in this subject" and recruit them to come. We need to start talking to people and kids as early as 12 years old through available technology and introducing UOG into their vocabulary. So I've been an advocate of early testing. When you test somebody in the 10th grade or the 11th grade, and they know what their issues are, they're likely to work on it. Math is actually the bigger impediment these days than English. More and more people are scoring better in English. But once they know that they have issues in a certain subject, they take a class in it, and then they get ready. However, if they get here and they're not ready, they get into this cycle. And, admittedly, our own developmental programs are in need of development themselves. I think they may have finally decided that maybe live teachers work better than just putting a computer program in front of students. So, these are all pressing concerns, but the basic issue for me is that, since we get about 35% of the graduating high school graduate students, it's up to us to get the right 35%. If you want the bottom 35%, you do nothing, but if you want the middle and the upper 35%, you need to start talking to them. There are various programs to address that, and interestingly, we'll have an opportunity at the end of the month (May, 2014) where we're getting somebody from the U.S. Department of Education who's a Deputy Assistant Secretary for community colleges to come here, and his task in the Obama administration is to come up with good developmental Math and English programs. So that will be good for us, but still, the issue is, there are going to be some people that are never going to get out of that cycle we were talking about, and the question is how do you deal with them? Obviously, you have to have a better counseling system; you can't just say "hey, try it again next semester." How many tries do you get? There's a little bit of lack of responsibility on our part, which kind of goes "well, once you've tried it three times, maybe you should do something else." We're not exhausting all the possibilities we have to fix the situation, and on the other hand, we're not exercising the courage of our own ability and professional responsibility to say "no" to these students.

Rubinstein: Under the open mission policy, that's a difficult thing to say.

Underwood: Yes, but, for, example, we have people who need Math 085 (Fundamentals of Mathematics) who are seniors, and you're wondering "how did that happen?" Somebody's not saying "no" to them. Now, whose job is it to say "no"? Well, it should be the advisors, but we have lots of advisors on campus that don't want to say "no, you can't do it." We have rules, and the catalog says that you can't take an upper-division class under certain circumstances, and they're not being enforced. So we're not having the courage to do that as well. And Developmental Math and Developmental English are University programs. They're not programs of the English Department and the Math Department. They're over-arching programs; they're about whether people are ready for college-level work. So, obviously, that's a college-wide issue. It's not just a Math concern or an English concern. But, you know, try telling that to people in Math and English.

Rubinstein: On a related question, do you see ways in which UOG and GCC can partner to more effectively meet the educational needs of this segment of the island's students?

Underwood: I think so. And probably, GCC has a more open, flexible attitude toward it than we do. And GCC recognizes that and is quite willing to go out and give the tests early. And that level of collaboration that I talked about with K-12 also has to happen with GCC. And we also have to work closer with GCC in the articulation of programs, because their view of articulation of programs and ours aren't fully articulated. Although, there is supposed to be a transfer program, and in the catalog, it's explained how they're supposed to transfer, but there are also some counseling issues over there at GCC, as well. People believe that, after they've done two years at GCC, everything they've done automatically transfers, even though it says in the catalog that it doesn't, and even though it says which courses you need to take, some people are a little hard-headed.

Rubinstein: Has there been any discussion on UOG and GCC collaborating on some kind of bridge program for students who have completed high school but are not ready for four years of college?

Underwood: Well, that would be part of the developmental cycle. I think, to some extent, GCC and UOG are in competition for students. So, to some extent, that makes that kind of conversation, not impossible, but uncomfortable. Because, in reality, there's a little bit of competitiveness. And so, while we sometimes don't have a clear transfer provision for coursework, because we're almost co-located, students have determined their own transfer program. For example, they'll go to some courses over there and they'll go to some courses here because they know the courses are transferrable through each institution. If we had a community college and a baccalaureate institution ten miles apart, it would make that hard. But students say, "I can go over there in the morning for one class, and I'll come over here in the afternoon because I heard the professor over here is easier or more interesting," for example. So they're doing their own transfer program. And, again, that suggests that the University and GCC have to sit down and articulate that. But for high school students, overall, the national average is about 55% go on to some kind of post-secondary institution; here on Guam, it's about 40-45%, so we're still not getting a lot of them. And of course, we're getting an over-abundance of females. And that's another kind of issue. Some people say it's just temporary, but it is an issue, because, over time, it means that the males are not getting well educated, and their opportunities for advancement are going to be limited.

Unaisi Nabobo-Baba: The fact that we're an island, there's about 150,000 people, and we have GCC, we have UOG, we have also the Pacific Islands University, and I think there are sprinklings of other universities in a few sectors around Guam, I'm just asking, in some countries, there's what you call the Higher Education Commission to, not dictate, but to make sense of the offerings of these things, and if there are standards across them all, and if there are rules. Especially if GovGuam is going to put monies in these institutions, there needs to be that Higher Education Commission to kind of oversee some of these things. Is that kind of thing already here? I know that we've had to face that in the South Pacific. There are so many more providers, there's got to be a regulatory body that looks at these things, so that we don't duplicate, we don't compete, so that our roles could be defined a bit more.

Underwood: On Guam, we have a post-secondary commission. Now that post-secondary commission is really designed just to deal with online programs and programs that are coming in from foreign countries that purport to be offering college degrees on Guam. And that's a particular issue that is related in many ways to how people in Korea see Guam. Many people in Korea see Guam as a diploma mill because of this. So that is why that commission was created. But, you know, in the U.S. system, to have that kind of body is just not seen as…

Nabobo-Baba: Not legal?

Underwood: Well, it is legal to do that, but the other more likely thing that happens is that many states establish a P-20 commission or a P-16 commission, which oversees the articulation of K-12, which is now going to be P-12, and community colleges, and so on, and they set these broad goals. I think, about twice a year we have meetings with the tri-board, GDOE, GCC, and UOG, and I tell them that if you don't want an enterprising senator to come up with that P-20 commission or super board, we better start talking to each other a little bit more in depth, more than just saying "wow, we got problems" and then move on. So far, that has not been sufficient motivation. One of the things that I suggested is education records. Now we treat medical records as something that follow you. But education records don't follow you. They die over there, and administrators don't want to share them, and then to pull them out, you have to pull teeth. And so, why can't we look at records of 10th and 11th graders and start talking to them? Why can't we do that? Why can't we have that kind of access? We need that level of collaboration amongst ourselves. Our relationship to other colleges and universities, is supposed to be regulated by the Post-Secondary Commission if they are not US accredited. But you can't keep out a U.S.-accredited institution. So, if University of Phoenix or anybody wants to open up shop, they can do that.

Nabobo-Baba: I asked that because, as of yesterday, this week, I think GDOE is going ahead with a B.Ed. program at GCC. That's why I asked about not only the articulation, but the overall and overarching question of who does what and why on such a small island. That's why I asked that. So, why wouldn't GDOE go ahead and work with them on a grant to produce the next 200 teachers? So that's why I asked that, because I didn't understand it.

Rubinstein: Mr. President, you've been instrumental in driving the University's efforts to go from good to great and, in addition to the process that we've just completed, the re-prioritization of our academic programs. What are some of the avenues that you envision for making the overall educational experience of UOG students not simply good, but great?

Underwood: A student's experience in an institution is different from a faculty member's. One of the realities here is that we're really a commuter campus, and we don't have any kind of facilities that keep people here beyond classes. So, obviously, the first building I'm trying to work on is the Student Services Center, which will provide a focal point for life, but at the same time, I'm trying to deal with a couple of other issues. One of the things is that, if a student comes to the University of Guam straight out of high school, on Guam, especially, that student doesn't have an opportunity to travel. And, of course, travel, and leaving your home, is one of life's great experiences. Every human being has this bug. We want to find out what we're made of, if there are other places, and so on. So, I'm trying to encourage every program to have a travel component. I'm trying to use our financial aid money to make part of that happen in some fashion. So the travel component helps people build a kind of a broader attitude. And, in fact, the programs that already have a travel component are usually pretty well received, and the programs become transformational in nature. And then, of course, we're trying to do things in a disciplinary fashion, trying to recapture some of that in the regional flavors through Charter Day. Charter Day has an interesting trajectory. Charter Day as it existed in the University of Guam really became popularized after Chamorro Week started in GDOE, which I started when I was a high school teacher. So they had a small event here, and after that event, it just morphed into this regional celebration; a celebration of all the Micronesian region. It kind of became a "Micronesian Day". And so, that helped make people feel they belong. When I go around and I talk to alumni groups, for example, I talked to an alumni group in Majuro and I talked to an alumni group in Pohnpei, and I ask them "what's your favorite memory?", they always say "wow, Charter Day. I got up, I danced, people liked it"; it's really a very interesting phenomena. Some will say "I lived in the dorm, and on the weekends, I would walk down to the Marine Lab and swim, fish, then go back to the dorm." So people are having these experiences despite all the barriers that we've put up. So now, we're trying to figure out how to have a real student life, and how to create those opportunities. We don't have an institutional structured opportunity for students to benefit from each other. That's the missing link: for students to benefit from the fact that they inhabit a unique area of the world and how can they grow from that. We don't have that. A Student Services Center would allow people to have those interactions, and then, obviously, we build a travel component or we do something in the region and we require or encourage (I'm always mindful that I'm just President; I'm just the chief coordinator and I can't require anybody to do anything) people to have a travel component, then that will assuage some of those concerns that young people have like "I don't know what others are like."

Nabobo-Baba: That's really neat. I hate to say this again, but in the University of the South Pacific, we have a program for the summer: Because there are 300 islands in Fiji, and they look like Micronesia, Polynesia, and Melanesia, and since the countries bring their children, of course, to Suva, during their break, if they cannot afford to go back home, they can join what's called a "volunteer scheme", but faculty have to volunteer to be with them. For instance, say if I am interested in going to Majuro, then I can take 20 people and we will live with the community. We serve them, like service learning, except that the community hosts us and we need to learn not to put our noses up. You know, we train our students to appreciate different cultures. So when we go there, the University organizes rice bags and they go to some remote part of Fiji. I was wondering, how does one start something like that over here? It's not just the scholarship; we learn so much, and usually, when they come back, for example, when Solomon Islanders go to a part of Fiji close to Tonga, they come back with such a renewed sense of wonder. Some Fijians have never been to their own islands. So they go to these islands and…

Underwood: It's transformational.

Nabobo-Baba: Very transformational!

Underwood: Just sending people to Rota for a week is transformational for some people. And you say "wow, I never thought that those things existed." And yet, it's like we're not in touch with how students experience the world. We're pretty intent on how we experience the world and how we want to pass along or provide experiences that we had without allowing them to generate their own experiences so that they'll have these powerful memories of the University. So when I go around and I ask people who are alumni what powerful experiences they had at the University, on occasion, they might mention a faculty member, never an administrator (laughs), but almost always some kind of student exchange or interchange or experience that we take as kind of extramural or extracurricular and not central to the experience, but it is.

Nabobo-Baba: We went to Rota once with my multicultural class. It was fascinating! The students, they were fascinated with Rota. It's just something different. And then the Rota people, too, the exchange between them and the students, they appreciated the fact that university students have come to learn something. So yes, I totally agree with you. But then, we have to look after the legal liabilities.

Rubinstein: Well, in addition to, say, a summer program or a week in Rota, are there other vehicles that you would explore? Junior Year Abroad, or exchanges with other universities?

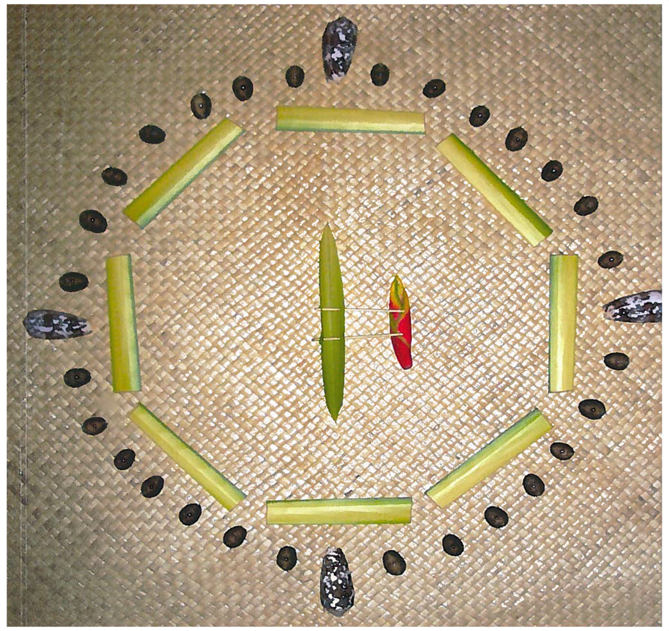
Underwood: Yes, of course, those are all part of the exchange programs that we're trying to negotiate with these universities. So, the thing is that, as we go and I talk to universities in Korea and China, a lot of people think we're trying to find ways to bring those students here so they can pay high tuition and that it's a revenue proposition. Well, it is, but mostly, I can tell you that every time I've had a conversation, one of the first things they ask for is a tuition discount or reciprocity. But, as long as there's reciprocity for our students to go there, then, in business and the economy, we've had a mature relationship with Japan. Now, Japan is a big part of our economy from tourism. But I'd venture to say that we don't have even ten local people who are conversant enough with Japanese culture, economy, and language to be our lead negotiators in any kind of arrangement. So now that we're contemplating having this kind of relationship with China, well, I want to have 25 or 30 people like that, but how are we going to get those 25 or 30 people? Well, we can ship them out to China, or we can have an exchange program so that these people can be conversant in those areas. For example, I ask people at the Guam Visitors Bureau, when you want to negotiate new arrangements with Japan, where do you get your people to represent you? "Oh, we hired Japanese consultants!" When you're in Taiwan, "well, we hire local consultants." And that's fine, we're benefiting from it, but I'm just thinking maybe we'd benefit a little bit more if we had cultivated our talent or our own consultants. So that's the upside. It's not just developing our students, it's enriching our own economic potential and guarding against exploitation, or whatever concerns we have. Because the best hedge on all of these changes is having an educated population. So, people ask me "what is the best policy we can have in order to preserve our environment?" Even 20 years from now, I'll still say "I haven't the faintest idea." But I'm going to put my money on 50 people we've educated who will be conversant enough to be able to protect us. That's where I would put my money. I'm not going to waste all my effort trying to figure out what environmental laws and regulations I can put in now. I want to put my money and effort in trying to find those people who are going to develop those rules and regulations in a way that's intelligent. So that's the same thing, and those exchange programs allow that. Now, we're part of a national student exchange. And so, some people have benefited from that. But to make those opportunities so that, when you go to the new Student Services Center, and a student says, "Gee, I want to spend a year in the UK. Is there some program that can do that for me?" When they go there, someone should be able to say, "yeah, have you looked into this…?" That's the kind of experience I'm talking about, and the University should not feel threatened by that, but rather, encourage it. And we will generate more students coming here.

Nabobo-Baba: I just wanted to go back on why we are focusing on culture: The next (current) volume of *Micronesian Educator* will focus on multiculturalism, diversity, and encouraging different ways of facing the world.

Rubinstein: Mr. President, we'd appreciate your views on the future directions of the University and education delivery in the region, challenges you see, priorities, and your ideas for future prospects, which might include tapping into Micronesia's heritage, cultural industries, and so forth.

Underwood: I thought we already discussed all that (laughing). Obviously, for the University, the challenges remain trying to shore up its standing as a regional institution, trying to establish supportive relationships with community colleges in the region, and then trying to be able to deal with program and course delivery models that use technologies that allow us to be the kind of research capital and research center for the region. And we do that by envisioning new areas of development. For example, we will soon hopefully get trunk space out of cable so that we can be providing information directly, and not necessarily having to use a telecom company, so that the University will start to grow technologically. And when it grows technologically, it expands its horizons. So right now, on campus, we have, for example, the ability to write an email from one part of the campus to another, and if one part of the campus is using another service provider, your email could go to Hong Kong, to Los Angeles, and then over to 200 yards away. And, in the meantime, you're wondering "where are we going with all of this?" And then we are trying to make sure that the faculty are aware of these opportunities and take advantage of them, because the students are ahead of all of us. It's kind of awkward (laughs). I like to tell people I'm just a 20th century person trying to survive in a 21st century world, and some of it's a little difficult to comprehend, but very challenging. So the University has a very bright future ahead of it. An enormously bright future, but there are some challenges.

To Be or Not To Be by Litia Rogo and Ren Slatter – Dance performance art piece



Heiwa: Heiwa is the pushing of the canoe on the unfolded mat to demonstrate how a canoe will actually sail in the ocean from the departure island to the destination island. The navigator uses one or more stars or constellations and uses the faunan etak (primary reference island) and possibly a fauan yatil (secondary reference island) in tracking the course. Heiwa is also used to explain the feeling of the canoe's movement caused by the waves and swells hitting the canoe.

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