Dialogue

Melanesianist Anthropology in the Era of Globalization

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Pacific-Based Virtual Communities: Rotuma on the World Wide Web

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T he modern dispersal of Pacific peoples—the diaspora that has taken place since the end of World War Two—has been well documented in the recent literature. A number of scholars have explored the ramifications and future implications of this phenomenon, which has taken Pacific Islanders to cosmopolitan centers in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Europe, and Asia, as well as to emergent cities in the region itself. The long-term trends of transnationalism for the future of Oceanic cultures remain obscure, however. Will intensified, firsthand exposure to world capitalism lead to the complete demise of the Pacific's unique cultures? Will it result in utter fragmentation, with enclaves in different countries evolving into thoroughly transformed communities, tied to "home" islands only by vague historical connections? Or will new global communities emerge, well grounded in the cultures, histories, and languages of the Pacific Islands? This paper is an exploration of the last possibility—a possibility enhanced by the potential of the World Wide Web to establish and maintain virtual communities through electronic communication. I offer evidence from the case of Rotumans, an island-based population for which I established a website in November 1996.

The concept of "community," always somewhat problematic, has increasingly been called into question, in large measure as a result of computer-mediated communication. On the one hand are commentators who are comfortable with a notion of "virtual community" applied to any set of ongoing social relations bound together by a common interest (Michalski 1995); on the other are skeptics, like Nessim Watson (1997), who accuse Internet chatters of assigning the concept to any and every online discussion group. Howard Rheingold's take on this issue is perceptive: "When a group of people remain in communication with one another for extended periods of time, the question of whether it is a community arises. Virtual communities might be real communities, they might be

pseudocommunities, or they might be something entirely new in the realm of social contracts, but I believe they are in part a response to the hunger for community that has followed the disintegration of traditional communities around the world" (1996, 418). The debate has focused on groups that were formed online, whether in the form of chat room, discussion group, or MUD (Multi-User Dialog) formats. In the instance discussed here the issue is related, but different. The key question is whether the Internet will allow a measure of continuity to what were "real-world" (physical) communities that have dispersed over the globe. In this case bonds of kinship or friendship precede electronic communication.

I would argue that maintaining such a community in any meaningful sense requires a core group of participants who engage in a frequent exchange of news and information (in addition to exchanging goods and services when called for), and a sense of collective history built from continual exposure to common lore and shared interests. Interested individuals outside the core have the option of engaging only marginally, just like members in a "real-world" community.

Prior to World War Two the relative isolation of the Pacific Islands made it difficult for emigrants to keep in contact with their home communities, and to the best of my knowledge many, if not most, effectively disappeared as far as their homebound relatives were concerned. Rotumans, at least, are not great letter writers. Absences were made all the more poignant by occasional returns to the island by relatives who had been absent and out of contact for years. Improved transportation and telephone services in the last few decades have greatly alleviated this isolation, resulting in a vast increase in the volume of visits to and from home islands and regular telephone contact between kin in far-flung lands. It is nevertheless questionable whether the increase in visits back and forth, along with occasional telephone calls, is sufficient to sustain a common culture. Such contact tends to be costly, hence episodic. The fact that so many Pacific Islanders are willing to allocate a significant portion of their resources to sustaining relations with geographically distant friends and relatives indicates a commitment to maintaining cultural communities in the face of formidable obstacles. The sheer volume of remittances in the form of money and gifts that emigrants send home is remarkable testimony to the power of that commitment. My argument, however, is that letters, repetitive visits, and telephone calls are not, in themselves, enough to sustain internationally scattered communities in the long run. Cheaper,

more frequent communication is required, and it is becoming increasing available to Pacific peoples via the Internet. The Internet not only provides an opportunity for people to exchange email on a daily basis at very low cost, it offers the possibility of creating spaces on the World Wide Web that can be visited daily—spaces where people can obtain news, exchange gossip and information, express views, look up historical and cultural information, and feel in touch with one another. I created the Rotuma Website with that vision in mind.

THE ROTUMAN DIASPORA

The population of Rotuma, a small island some 450 kilometers north of Fiji, reached a nadir of approximately 1,900 people following a virulent measles epidemic in 1911. As a result of a declining death rate, coupled with high fertility, the population has increased rapidly ever since, and now stands at approximately 12,000, of whom only about 2,600 live on the island.

Significant emigration began soon after European intrusion; Rotuman men gained a reputation as excellent crewmen aboard European vessels and shipped out in comparatively large numbers (see Howard 1995 for details). Most of these early sojourners either returned to Rotuma after varying lengths of time at sea or settled elsewhere in the world and lost touch with their homeland. Emigration to Fiji, with which Rotuma has been politically affiliated since cession to Great Britain in 1881, began as a trickle and started to increase after World War Two. Fiji censuses show 6 percent of the Rotuman population resident in Fiji (away from Rotuma) in 1921; the percentage rises to 10 percent in 1936, 17 percent in 1946, 32 percent in 1956, 44 percent in 1966, 63 percent in 1976, and 70 percent in 1986, the last year for which census data are available (Rensel 1993, 225). The vast majority of Rotumans who have moved to Fiji live in urban centers; thus 87.8 percent of Rotumans living off-island were classified as "urban" in the 1986 census, representing 61.9 percent of the total Rotuman population.

Population data for Rotumans outside Fiji are sketchy at best. Extrapolating from a survey Jan Rensel and I conducted on Rotuma in 1989, we estimated approximately 378 Rotumans in Australia at the time, 154 in New Zealand, 140 in other Pacific islands, 91 in the United States, 70 in Europe, and 42 in Canada (Howard and Rensel 1994, 253). Subsequent

data suggest that the figures for Australia, New Zealand, and the United States are probably low.

For present purposes, it is important to note that a growing number of Rotumans in Fiji, and many who reside abroad, have access to computer facilities that make it possible for them to log on to the Internet.

The Website

Not long after getting wired for email myself, I began to share news concerning Rotuma with a few colleagues who had also done research on the island. The network expanded through firsthand contact with Rotumans, or spouses of Rotumans, who were online. Eventually, in 1995, I started ROTUMANET, a list of interested parties with whom I share news from any of the scattered Rotuman communities. Information is sent to me via email, fax, or regular mail, and I relay it to everyone on the list, which now numbers more than sixty email addresses. The population served by ROTUMANET is considerably larger, however, since many of the recipients print out copies of the news they receive for friends, kin, church groups, and Rotuman organizations.

The positive feedback received from Rotumans in various localities provided the incentive to develop a website that would serve as a clearinghouse for news and information about Rotuma and Rotuman communities around the globe. When, toward the end of 1996, technological developments reached the stage where relatively unsophisticated computer addicts like myself could put together a website, the temptation was too great to resist. My inclination was given impetus by visits to early Pacific websites, including Kava Bowl: The Pacific Forum <www.pacific-forum.com/kavabowl> from which one can access discussion sites (ie, message boards) for a number of island-centered communities (eg, the Bula Forum: Fiji, or the Tongan History Association).[1] Since then Pacific websites have proliferated (and deserve a separate paper assessing their impact).

Constructing the initial site took several weeks, using the recently released software package, Claris Home Page, on my Power Macintosh. Since I had a good deal of information concerning Rotuma on disk already, it was largely a matter of cutting and pasting material into Claris Home Page, which provided HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) tags that formatted it for web browsers. I also scanned a number of photo-
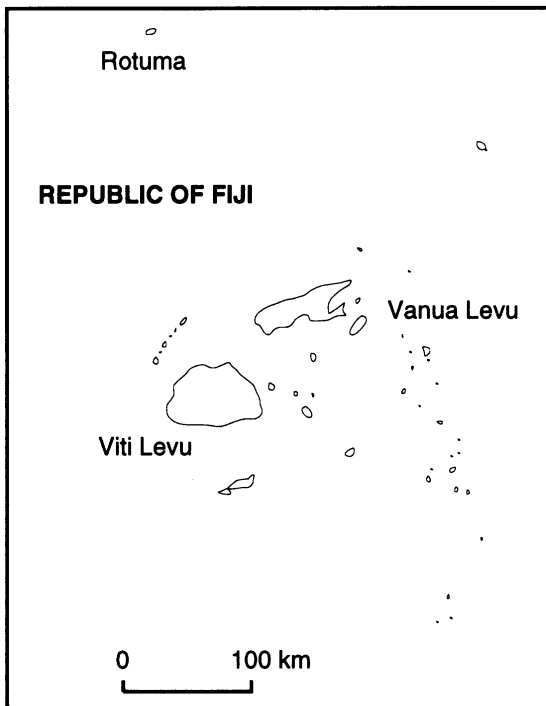
FIGURE 1. Rotuma and Fiji

graphs showing scenes and activities on Rotuma to include in a photo album. Photos illustrating activities discussed in the text were linked, so that one can shift from description to illustration, or vice versa, with the click of a mouse. Much of my time during the early phase of construction was spent organizing the information into appropriate packets and in creating a design that would be easy to navigate.

The home page includes a mission statement declaring twin purposes: to provide information about Rotuman history, language, population, and culture; and to provide viewers with news from Rotuman communities around the world. The history, language, population, and culture sections include texts adapted from my own and Jan Rensel's writings on Rotuma. The culture section provides an overview for visitors looking for a general summary, and more detailed sections covering such topics as economy, land tenure, political organization, arts and crafts, music and dance, religion, and mythology. Three maps were posted, one showing Rotuma's relation to Fiji (figure 1), one showing Rotuma's division into districts, and a larger one showing the location of villages on the island.

Sometime later a fourth map, sent by a Rotuman in Fiji, was posted showing the districts color coded.

Also included is a section describing recent publications, consisting of a list of current articles and separate pages describing each of several new books about Rotuma. The book pages provide information about the publisher, the book's contents, and how to purchase.

The news page was a natural extension of ROTUMANET. In addition to sending news by email I posted it on the website, in some instances with photographs scanned from my files. Feedback concerning the news postings has been extremely gratifying. Rotumans in several different locations have reported that they visit the website frequently, print out the news, and circulate it to other Rotumans in their area. A number of individuals have become regular correspondents, sending news periodically from their communities for posting. Past news is accessible in a news archive, which contains previous postings on a month-by-month basis.

Promoting a sense of community was the purpose of installing a message board, on which visitors could post their own messages and respond to previous postings. It was well used for a number of different purposes, including locating friends and relatives, announcing upcoming events, expressing views on various issues, and engaging in humorous banter reminiscent of family gatherings on Rotuma. Individuals and groups made their presence known from such faraway places as Hong Kong, Laos, Sweden, and Nanaimo (Canada), as well as from places with well-established Rotuman enclaves. It was heartwarming to see friends and relatives who had been out of touch discover one another and exchange messages. In a few poignant instances individuals requesting help in locating long-lost relatives were duly rewarded. In other cases web contact led to actual reunions or attendance at cultural events. Messages were mostly in English, although many contained a mix of Rotuman and English, and some were exclusively in Rotuman.

The influence of cyberculture was apparent on the message board; for instance, most participants used aliases instead of their actual names (eg, vixen, *wee wee puaka* 'little pig,' *filou lelei* 'good head'). While the majority of the interactions were benign and bore the unmistakable stamp of Rotuman cultural patterns, especially in the role that humor plays, the venue came to be dominated by a small group of users who posted a series of offensive messages marked by foul language, nasty personal attacks, and disrespect for Rotuman customs. When repeated pleas for

civility failed to have an effect, and in response to complaints from a number of regular visitors, I reluctantly decided to remove the message board and replace it with a managed bulletin board that requires users to send messages directly to me for posting. Hopefully the purposes of community will be better served in this format.

FURTHER ELABORATIONS

Archives

Positive responses from Rotumans who accessed the website encouraged me to expand its scope and to add new features. For example, I had long wanted to make obscure published materials about Rotuma available to Rotumans, and had even pursued (unsuccessfully) the possibility of establishing an archive on the island. The website offered an alternative. I scanned a number of key nineteenth-century publications and posted them in an archival section. Together they incorporate several hundred pages of published documents. Since virtually all these materials are buried in publications generally inaccessible to the Rotuman community, posting them constitutes a form of documentary repatriation.

Having taken this step I then decided to add Gordon Macgregor's field notes from his 1932 field trip to Rotuma. Macgregor spent six months on the island and interviewed a number of Rotumans about a wide range of topics, but he published little. Sometime before his death he deposited his field notes at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu. In exchange for copies, I entered into an agreement with Bishop Museum to edit and publish the notes, with the object of rendering them accessible to Rotumans and interested scholars. That was nearly ten years ago; for a variety of practical and personal reasons I placed the project on hold until recently. The development of the Rotuma Website reinvigorated my interest in pursuing the matter, since it provides a more appropriate medium for making these valuable materials available. On the web they are likely to be accessible to a much broader audience than a published volume, and without cost. Anyone can now download the notes and print them out for their personal library. If the printed copies are borrowed by a friend or relative and not returned (a frequent fate of loaned materials), they can be easily reaccessed and reprinted. Bishop Museum agreed to the arrangement, provided appropriate credits and guidelines for citation were posted. My task was made easier by the fact that Hans Schmidt, a linguist who has

worked on Rotuman language, had typed Macgregor's notes into a computer, so scanning was unnecessary. I completed editing the notes in August 1997 and posted them on the website.

Macgregor's field notes are multivocal insofar as he identifies his Rotuman consultants, each of whom is a source of specified items of information. This presented a dilemma. Should his consultants be identified on the website, or should the anthropological custom of keeping purveyors of information anonymous rule? The issue was complicated somewhat by the fact that Macgregor not only identified consultants by name, but had in his files an assessment of each one, including, in some instances, his opinion of the veracity of their statements. In addition, I was able to identify most of his consultants in my demographic files, making it possible to place them genealogically as well as geographically (within districts). The decision to include their names, along with Macgregor's assessments and my registry information, was based on three considerations. One was that they are all now deceased and therefore beyond embarrassment. It is possible, of course, that some of their descendants might be teased for what they are reported to have said, but teasing is endemic to Rotuman society and, in my opinion, essentially harmless. Besides, the material is generally not of an embarrassing nature. A second consideration was the fact that the information on consultants allows knowledgeable Rotumans to place them not only in time and space, but genealogically as well, and since such contextualization of information is central to Rotuman epistemology, it seemed appropriate to include it. Finally, there is the issue of credit. In fact the information in the notes "belonged to" Macgregor's consultants and I believe they should be given proper recognition. The notes are structured in such a way that a viewer can click on the name of a consultant (attached to each entry) and find a brief biographical note composed of Macgregor's comments and my registry data.

To facilitate finding information on specific topics anywhere in the site, the home page of the website includes a search engine that allows a visitor to enter keywords and find all the pages on which they appear.

I have also posted caveats regarding the use of website materials for publication. Visitors are advised that any information obtained from the website that is used for publication should be acknowledged by citing the website address, date of acquisition, and information pertinent to original authorship. They are also warned that archival documents should not be

taken as accurate copies of the originals since they were digitalized by scanning, a process subject to errors. Scholars intending to use these materials for publication are urged to check originals prior to final submission.

Interactive Dictionary

Research Jan Rensel and I have conducted in Rotuman communities abroad has made it clear that perpetuating the Rotuman language is a matter of high priority among emigrants. Rotumans abroad have inter-married at an astonishingly high rate (estimated at 70–80 percent in Australia by Michael [1991, 8–9]; rates elsewhere outside Fiji appear to be comparable). This means that Rotuman is not generally the first language of children growing up abroad, and that keeping it alive requires conscious effort. I therefore felt it would be a service to emigrant communities to provide an English-Rotuman dictionary online. The only published dictionary of the Rotuman language is by C M Churchward (1940), but for many years it has been out of print and copies are not readily available. Furthermore, it is from Rotuman to English only, so people wanting to find the Rotuman equivalent for an English word receive little help. For our own purposes, Jan and I typed Churchward's entries into a database several years ago, making it possible to create an English-to-Rotuman word-finder list. Eventually we turned over our database to Hans Schmidt, and he, in conjunction with two Rotumans (Elizabeth Inia and Sofie Arntsen), has reworked the corpus for publication (Inia and others 1998).

The website offered an opportunity to make this information available in an interactive format. Viewers can type an English word into a form on the screen and bring up all the Rotuman words that contain it as part of the translation. Or they can do the reverse—put in a Rotuman word and bring up English glosses.

Proverb of the Week

Jan and I have also been working on preparing a book of Rotuman proverbs compiled by Elizabeth Inia (Inia 1998). She began recording the sayings in 1977, while preparing materials for school reading lessons in the Rotuman language for the Fiji Department of Education Curriculum Development Unit. The sayings have provided valuable insights for our ongoing study of the Rotuman people; we have used them to illustrate

and explain Rotuman culture in various presentations and publications (see, for example, Howard and Rensel 1991).

They are a good source for learning Rotuman (Mrs Inia's original purpose) and are, after all, prime culture carriers insofar as they condense the historical wisdom of cumulative experience. So we initiated a "Proverb of the Week" feature, usually with a humorous graphic attached. It is one additional feature, we hope, that will keep the website interesting enough for repeat visits.

The Rotuman Forum

Not long ago I received an email message from someone in Vatukoula, Fiji, site of the Emperor Gold Mines, which employ a significant number of Rotumans. He reported that every day at lunchtime a contingent of Rotumans goes to company headquarters where they access the Internet and visit the Rotuma Website. This particular message was from a European employee at the mine. He relayed the text of a letter to the editor of the *Fiji Times* that presented a unique view of Rotuman history, one favored by the self-declared "King of Rotuma," a New Zealand–based karate master whose kin group has given him the title of Lagfatmaro. The letter, by one of Lagfatmaro's followers, embellished this history, rendering it even more "interesting." The implicit request was that this view of Rotuman history should be circulated to the broader Rotuman community by posting it on the website.

Up to that point there was no suitable location. I have to admit I was reluctant to grant this missive the privileged status I have given other interpretations of Rotuman history (including my own). On the other hand, I want the website open to all viewpoints, no matter how disingenuous I, or well-educated Rotumans whose opinions I value, consider them to be.[2] Toward this end I established the Rotuman Forum, a set of webpages where viewpoints on Rotuman history, culture, language, and politics can be posted. The purpose of the forum is to give Rotumans and other interested parties an opportunity to share their views regarding matters of concern to the Rotuman community.

I have extracted exchanges from the message board addressing issues of general interest for posting in the forum, including discussions of Rotuman identity, tourism, problems of youth on the island, the ecological integrity of the island, and the issue of political independence for Rotuma. Placing these discussions in the forum (edited for spelling and grammar),

gives them a more permanent place on the website than they had on the ephemeral message board.

Linked Weather Page

A link to a page with up-to-date weather reports from the meteorological station on Rotuma was added late last year. It includes a five-day forecast as well as the current weather. This provides another incentive for Rotumans abroad to visit the website, whether to track storms that may be a threat to the island, or simply to relish the tropical climate of Rotuma vicariously during a Swedish or Canadian winter.

The Rotuman Register

The most recent addition to the website is the Rotuman Register, an interactive database that allows users to fill out a form providing information about themselves so that friends and relatives who have lost track of one another can get back in contact. Users can provide information about their home district and village on Rotuma, their gender and age, and their parent's names, in addition to current location, and mailing and email addresses. The option of providing additional information about oneself or one's family is also available. The format allows individuals to modify and update data, and to search for others using several different criteria.

Planned Additions

Several additions to the site are currently in process, and others are planned. Soon to be posted is a piece on Rotuman marriage customs, prepared by Elizabeth Inia. She describes the sequence of ceremonial events leading up to a marriage, rituals during the wedding day, and post-wedding nuptials in considerable detail. Her account is heavily laden with Rotuman terms; to accommodate non-Rotuman speaking audiences the page will include a scrollable sidebar with a glossary, so that readers can easily look up Rotuman words while reading Mrs Inia's account.

A larger project, one that will take somewhat longer to complete, is to make all of my published papers, and Jan's, available in full. So far this amounts to twenty-seven articles published between 1961 and 1998. Scanning is almost complete, but incorporating tables, charts and graphs, plus proofreading the entire corpus, takes time. Future plans include the addition of all significant published and archival sources not yet posted. If

all goes according to plan the website will become a major resource for research concerning Rotuma.

Thus far the website contains no audio or video segments, but eventually they will be incorporated. Audio clips of spoken Rotuman, in some instances associated with written texts (eg, the proverbs), would be a valuable asset to those wanting to learn more about the language. Video clips of ceremonies, dances, agricultural practices, or just scenes depicting life on the island, are already available and await digitization. As the technology improves, and clips can be seen and heard without time-consuming download delays, the incentive for undertaking such projects will be amplified.

Perhaps the most ambitious project is to provide access to a comprehensive demographic database I compiled from birth, marriage, and death records between 1903 and 1960. Since people who died after 1903 may have been as old as eighty years or more at their time of death, the records include individuals who were born as far back as the 1820s. These records have proved invaluable to Rotumans wishing to trace their genealogies; rendering them accessible online would make it possible for individuals to do their own genealogical research.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

The diaspora of the Rotuman population has resulted in a transformation of the community. Once confined to the island of Rotuma, it now transcends national boundaries and has become increasingly diffuse. Rotuman enclaves—communities in their own right—have sprung up in several cities in the Pacific and on the Pacific rim. If we define community as a body of persons having a common history or common social, economic, and political interests (Merriam-Webster 1993, 233), then it is fair to say that an international Rotuman community indeed exists. It is a community whose focal point is the island itself, in which membership depends on, to some extent at least, an interest in Rotuman history, language, and culture. More important, it is a community defined by a common interest in one another's lives by virtue of kinship, marriage,[3] friendship, or shared experience. Most people with attachments to the island want to stay in touch with friends and relatives; they want to share news and stay informed of what's going on in Rotuma and in overseas enclaves where they have kin, schoolmates, or friends.

Adequate communication is a key to maintaining such a diffuse community in fact as well as in imagination, and the Internet may provide the most effective vehicle in the long term. At least I have reason to feel encouraged. In the first year of its operation the Rotuma Website's home page was visited more than fifteen thousand times.[4] My guess is that a large proportion of those visits have been from members of the international Rotuman community who access the website on a regular basis. I anticipate that the numbers will continue to grow as more and more people get computers and access the World Wide Web. In other words, I expect the Rotuma Website to play an increasingly significant role in maintaining the community at large.

Thus far, people residing on Rotuma have been excluded from participation by technical and cost factors. Although the island has satellite access, and can make use of long-distance telephone, access to Internet servers is prohibitively expensive and equipment (including computers and modems) is lacking. As Michael Ogden has pointed out in his discussion of information technology in the Pacific Islands, the perceived value of such gadgets must exceed their cost before people will be motivated to connect (1998). Until the costs become reasonable in relation to island economies, Rotuma, like other hinterland islands, will stay off the information superhighway. Still, it seems only a matter of time (and subsidization) before such islands are drawn into the web, for better or worse.

The Role of the Webmaster

Taking responsibility for maintaining a community's website requires an enduring commitment. In contrast to websites with a strictly academic orientation, a community website requires constant attention; it is first and foremost a matter of providing a service—one that members of the community come to depend on. Time demands are often considerable and academic rewards for those based in educational institutions are currently nonexistent. This may present a dilemma for anthropologists, historians, linguists, and others inclined to provide such a service but needing to satisfy requirements for tenure or promotion.

Fortunately I am in a stage of my career where tenure and promotion are no longer considerations. I have, however, had to choose which com-

munity to devote most of my remaining energies to—the academic community (which would require publishing for a primarily academic audience), or the international Rotuman community (which affords the opportunity to indulge my interest in historical and cultural inquiry while serving the people I have worked with for nearly four decades). The choice was easy, and has been made ever more comfortable by the continuing stream of encouragement I receive from Rotumans making use of the service.

The role of webmaster for a site of this magnitude requires making decisions on behalf of the virtual community being created. What should be considered news for posting purposes, which information should be given priority, what features should be added, when should postings on the message board be deleted? All such decisions require judgments that may affect the community. Particularly agonizing was the dilemma posed by the message board. While it served a useful function by allowing for spontaneous, unmediated interactions, the capacity it afforded nasty, antisocial behavior, cloaked behind a veil of anonymity, proved more disruptive than conducive to community formation. In making the switch to a managed bulletin board, I posted a message noting that healthy communities require people to respect one another, to take responsibility for their actions, and to interact as identifiable individuals, not phantoms. As a rule, messages on the bulletin board are posted with the proper names and email addresses of the senders affixed.

Making such decisions clearly requires an exercise of power that many postmodern critics abhor. But I consider myself a thoroughly committed member of the international Rotuman community and am prepared to accept full responsibility of membership, including the possibility of exercising leadership. The model for leadership I aspire to includes continual consultation, responsiveness to criticisms (but not necessarily capitulation), a compulsion to stay informed, and a commitment to multivocality. I undoubtedly fall short in some respects, but in my judgment, and hopefully in the judgment of most Rotumans who visit the website, more good is being done than harm.

For those readers who would like to judge for themselves, the address of the Rotuma Website is <http://www2.hawaii.edu/oceanic/rotuma/os/hanua.html>.

Notes

1 I was also inspired by Henry Lundsgaarde, who asked me to contribute something on Rotuma to his website, *The Central Pacific Islands Project* <lark.cc.ukans.edu/~henry>, and by Alex Mawyer, who was developing the Pacific film site <www2.hawaii.edu/oceanic/film> at the time. I am especially indebted to Alex, now a graduate student at the University of Chicago, for teaching me the fundamentals of site development.

2 A commitment to multivocality does not necessarily require an abandonment of discrimination based on a critical assessment of evidence, in my view.

3 Given the high rate of outmarriage, it is important to point out that a significant number of community members are non-Rotumans who have come to share their spouses' concerns for maintaining ties.

4 A counter on the home page records the number of times it has been accessed.

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Abstract

The recent dispersal of Pacific Islanders from their home islands poses long-term problems for maintaining a continuing sense of community. One possible solution is the World Wide Web, where virtual communities can be established to help perpetuate a common cultural heritage. This paper describes a website for the global Rotuman community that includes a number of features designed to serve this purpose.

KEYWORDS: diaspora, Internet, Rotuma, virtual communities