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THE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF  
OVERSEAS-EDUCATED MICRONESIANS

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By

David M. Thompson

Thesis Committee:

Royal T. Fruehling, Chairman  
Carl Daeufer  
Edward Beauchamp

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Rae J. Daenig

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## Chapter I

### Background of the Study

In the geopolitical area of Micronesia currently administered under the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI)<sup>1</sup>, large numbers of high school graduates have been traveling abroad in recent years for post-secondary training. There is considerable debate among Micronesian leaders, educators, and lawmakers as to the effect the resulting influx of returned students has both on the students themselves and on those with whom they interact. This study examines the social adjustment of Micronesian students who have returned from colleges in the United States to three of the TTPI's six states, Palau, Yap, and Truk.

This chapter's first section describes the ways various Micronesians, including political leaders and legislators, perceive the rising numbers of overseas-educated students as problematic to their societies. Its second section explains the study's general purposes. The third section presents an introduction to the study, to its historical background, to its principle aims and foci, and to the specific research questions it investigates. A fourth and

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<sup>1</sup>In this study and in common usage, the TTPI is often referred to as Micronesia, although anthropologists would include in the latter term the independent states of Nauru and Kiribati (formerly the Gilbert Islands) as well as the U.S. territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

final section defines significant terms and concepts as they are used in the study.

### The Problem

The TTPI government provides nearly universal high school education. Its 110,000 citizens are served by 25 public and private high schools graduating approximately 1200 students yearly.<sup>2</sup> Since 1973, sources of financial aid in the United States have enabled virtually any Micronesian accepted to an American college to make the costly journey. In 1965, only 279 Micronesians attended colleges; about half went to Guam, and the remainder to the United States, Fiji, or the Philippines.<sup>3</sup> Figures for the 1975-76 school year place this number at 2200, with two-thirds of the college students traveling to the United States.<sup>4</sup> In the Micronesian state of Truk, the number of students enrolled in post-secondary institutions has increased from 35 in 1965 to over 600 in 1978.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Office of Planning and Statistics, Bulletin of Statistics, Vol. I, No. 1 (Saipan: December 1977), Tables 36A and 37, pp. 30-31. These figures do not include the Northern Marianas, now a separate entity from the TTPI.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of State, Eighteenth Annual Report to the United Nations on the Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Department of State Document 8064, 1966), p. 140.

<sup>4</sup>Douglas Harlan, The College of Micronesia: The President's Report to Congress (a report mandated by Public Law 94-255, 94th Congress, H.R. 12122, 1977), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>Francis X. Hezel, S.J., "The Education Explosion in Truk," typescript, 1978, p. 1.

With the United States' Trusteeship for Micronesia scheduled to terminate in 1981, the various Micronesian governments will have greater control over the sources of financial assistance for overseas education. As part of their overall social and educational policies, these governments may want to encourage the continued movement of students overseas through financial aid or loan schemes. They may want to discourage overseas education on the other hand, by limiting educational assistance grants or even by restricting the issuance of passports.

In making these decisions, Micronesians leaders face conflicting claims made for and against overseas education. The most important of these claims are detailed in the remainder of this section.

Among overseas education's critics, one major concern centers on the fact that Micronesian economies cannot provide jobs for all those who will return from U.S. colleges. This concern seems justified considering that overseas students do not choose courses of study which promise to expand Micronesia's local production or decrease its dependence on expensive imports. For example, students in agriculture and marine resources account for only 4.0 percent of those in post-secondary institutions abroad. Those in engineering and law, two service-related fields in which expatriates still hold many jobs, combine for another 4.4 percent. The most popular fields of study are business (21.2 percent), education (16.8 percent), political and social sciences (12.7 percent),

and health services (11.7 percent).<sup>6</sup>

Many Micronesians and American observers of Micronesian life also criticize overseas education for the cultural orientation they believe it instills in students.<sup>7</sup> They argue in part that Western education alienates Micronesian students from the rural lifestyles they must adopt if, upon returning, they are to effect development goals. For example, an army of agriculture graduates will do nothing for agricultural production if they are only content to work as government extension agents but are unwilling to farm. These critics also suggest that returned students hold expectations so high that nothing short of white-collar employment can satisfy them, and that returnees become more, not less, dependent on the government for their livelihood.

Similarly, many Micronesians maintain that returned students become "Americanized." They charge that many students bring back ideas which conflict with those of other Micronesians, and meet resistance from kinsmen and co-workers when they try to change others' ways of doing things. They claim that returnees, thus caught in a cultural cross-fire of

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<sup>6</sup>Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Bulletin of Statistics, 1977, Table 38A, p. 32. The reported figures for "productive" fields of study are probably overstated. The researcher found that students who began in the fields of science or business often changed to a liberal arts course without reporting the shift.

<sup>7</sup>An excellent discussion on the social and cultural effects of Western schooling on Micronesian youth can be found in Conference on Youth, "Micronesia's Youth Today" (Kolonia, Ponape: Micronesian Seminar, 1977).

conflicting demands and desires, become frustrated by their inability to apply their overseas training or to effect changes. They also believe that returnees present an undesirable model of behavior for younger Micronesians.

In the critics' worst scenario, growing numbers of returned students, alienated from traditional lifestyles, drift to the district centers to seek increasingly scarce salaried employment. Cut off from traditional supports, they squander their potential talents in alcohol and drug abuse, violence, even suicide. Instead of contributing to economic development, they become recipients of expensive social services. Some observers have suggested that disgruntled graduates, underemployed and understimulated in their home islands, may either emigrate in large numbers or form a reservoir of incipient political radicalism which may overflow in a flood of social disruption.<sup>8</sup>

Concerns like these lie behind the current trend in Micronesian educational policy to limit opportunities for overseas education by limiting the funds available to prospective students. A 1978 Congress of Micronesia (COM) report stated:

...it should be made clear to all students from the

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<sup>8</sup>One of the strongest criticisms of overseas education and of the Micronesian education system is David Nevin, The American Touch in Micronesia (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977). Nevin concludes that "expectations in Micronesia have risen so far beyond the possibility of satisfying them as to destroy hope, and hope destroyed is the root of social misery." (p. 28).

start that only the best students will be eligible for scholarships to college. The present system of student assistance wherein any student who can gain admission to any college to take any course of study for any length of time he desires should be terminated immediately.<sup>9</sup>

In fact, the COM had become concerned some years earlier with its loss of control over the numbers of students traveling to the United States, as well as over the students' choice of fields of study, and ceased awarding full scholarships to new students in 1975. The TTPI Department of Education's budget for FY 1978 allocated \$600,000 for financial aid to be divided among approximately half of the 1900 students who applied for assistance.<sup>10</sup> Individual states within the TTPI have similarly begun to tighten requirements on their own assistance grants. The Truk Legislature passed a bill in March, 1979 to limit eligibility for its grants to those students who enroll in one of six "productive" fields of study: agriculture, marine sciences, engineering and technical skills, law, health services, and business and accounting.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Congress of Micronesia, House Committee on Educational and Social Matters, Report on the Trust Territory Educational System (Saipan: February 1978), p. 65.

<sup>10</sup>David Ramarui, Trust Territory Director of Education, personal communication, October 4, 1978.

<sup>11</sup>Pacific Daily News (Guam), "Incentives Needed," April 1, 1979, p. 11. The value of these ranged in 1979 from \$75 to \$170 a year per student, depending on the distance the student must travel to reach his school.

Some Micronesians, including many returned students, are much more supportive of overseas education and critical of these restrictive trends in financial aid policies. This group believes that certain criticisms of overseas education are overstated. For example, they argue that the charge that frustrated returnees are prone to suicide is belied by the preliminary findings of TTPI mental health researchers. These researchers discovered that most suicides were committed "by males whose education had not progressed very far and had never been outside the islands."<sup>12</sup> One observer has marvelled how:

...in the past few years, several hundred Trukese graduates, displaying powers of readjustment greater than many of us would have imagined possible, have settled back into their island communities with apparent good grace.<sup>13</sup>

In fact, supporters of overseas education claim that students frequently value their own culture more once they have been able to compare it with another.<sup>14</sup> If so, far from causing alienation, overseas education may help students realize the value of many aspects of Micronesian cultures. Overseas experience may acquaint them with cultural alternatives, yet still impress them with the importance of cultural integrity.

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<sup>12</sup>Teresa Sullivan, "Trouble in Paradise - Suicide," Pacific Daily News (Guam), December 11, 1978, p. 8.

<sup>13</sup>Francis X. Hezel, "The Education Explosion in Truk," p. 12.

<sup>14</sup>Moses Ramarui, Student Assistance Officer, Palau, personal communication, October 12, 1978.

Individuals with this awareness could provide needed leadership for Micronesians in a time of social change.

### Purpose of the Study

This study's primary purpose is to supply information which will help Micronesians and their policy-makers determine a suitable level of support for overseas education. Such information is particularly useful now that Micronesia's impending free association status with regard to the U.S. is likely to give its leaders closer control over the movement of students overseas.

The study attempted to analyze the kinds of conflicting claims detailed in the previous section and provide educational policy-makers with a clear evaluation of the social adjustment of returned students. The study focuses on social adjustment, not on overseas education's relevance to Micronesia's manpower needs. The region's manpower needs, development options, and potential resources are in many cases unclear. What is more certain is the challenge that change presents to Micronesians. Thus overseas education must be judged on not only how well it serves economic development, but how well it prepares people to deal with the changes which economic development brings.

### Introduction to the Study

This study examined the social adjustment of college-

educated returnees in three Micronesian states: Palau, Yap, and Truk. These three states combine with three others (Ponape, Kosrae, and the Marshall Islands) to form an area currently administered by the U.S. and known as the TTPI.<sup>15</sup> The TTPI is in political transition. The United Nations Trusteeship under which the U.S. administers the area is scheduled to terminate in 1981, at which time each of the established political entities is likely to enter some form of free association agreement with the U.S.<sup>16</sup>

This section will introduce the present study by discussing the historical and social background to the rise in overseas education, by enumerating the study's principle aims, and by specifying the research questions it investigated.

#### Historical and Social Background

The TTPI's 110,000 people inhabit about ninety scattered coral atolls and volcanic islands in the Western Pacific just north of the equator. Although spread over 3 million

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<sup>15</sup>The Northern Marianas separated from the TTPI in 1975 and will officially attain the status of a U.S. Commonwealth in 1981 when the Trusteeship is terminated.

<sup>16</sup>The Agreed Principles for Free Association were initialed in April 1978 by representatives of the U.S., Palau, the Marshalls, and the Federated States of Micronesia (comprised of the states of Yap, Truk, Ponape, and Kosrae). The Micronesian states will exercise control over internal affairs and some foreign policy while the U.S. will provide financial assistance and retain responsibility for defense and certain foreign policy matters. The arrangement is comparable to that now existing between New Zealand and the Cook Islands. The Agreed Principles for Free Association are reproduced in The Honolulu Advertiser, "Micronesia and the U.S.", April 11, 1978, p. A8, cols. 1-2.

square miles of ocean, these islands' total land area is not quite 700 square miles. The population is young--46 percent are under the age of fifteen, according to the 1973 Census<sup>17</sup>--and is growing at a high annual rate of 3.6 percent.<sup>18</sup> Despite the wide expanses of ocean which separate Micronesia's many islands, its population is increasingly "urban," with 46 percent of its people living in one of the nine district or sub-district centers.<sup>19</sup>

Although the U.S. began its formal administration of these islands in 1947, the expansion of the education system (with some of whose effects this study deals) did not begin until 1962. In that year, President Kennedy declared education "the key to all further development" in Micronesia and asked the U.S. Congress to lift its \$6 million ceiling on annual budgets for the TTPI. In 1963, Kennedy launched the \$3 million a year Accelerated Elementary and Secondary School Program to build and staff a system of universal education for Micronesians.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Bulletin of Statistics, 1977, Table 1, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup>Alan Kay, "Population Growth in Micronesia," South Pacific Bulletin, Third Quarter 1975, p. 46.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., Table 2, p. 50. (according to the 1973 Census)

<sup>20</sup>A recent recounting of the history of education in Micronesia under the U.S. administration is found in David Nevin, op. cit.

The developing nature of Micronesia's secondary schools and the scarcity of financial aid limited the enrollment of Micronesians in post-secondary institutions throughout the 1960's. COM scholarships and assistance grants from the TTPI government were the principle financial aid sources during these years. Enrollments in U.S. colleges began to increase in the late sixties as more Americans came to work in Micronesia as Peace Corps Volunteers or contract workers for the government. Many of these Americans took Micronesian students back to the U.S. to sponsor them in high schools and colleges. In addition, Guam's model of rapid social change and economic growth led Micronesian youths, especially those living in Palauan or Chamorro communities on Guam or nearby Saipan, to aspire to higher education.<sup>21</sup>

However, the major increase in overseas study came after 1973, the year the U.S. Congress made Micronesians eligible for benefits of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments. This enabled Micronesian students to apply for Guaranteed Student Loans (from commercial banks), National Defense Student Loans (from schools), College Work/Study monies, and the various Educational Opportunity Grants.

In particular, the Educational Opportunity Grants have enabled large numbers of Micronesians to travel to the U.S. for college training, and eroded the TTPI government's

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<sup>21</sup>Dr. Carl Daeufer, University of Hawaii, personal communication, June 8, 1979.

control over the movement of students overseas. The Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BEOG), for which virtually every Micronesian high school graduate is eligible, were worth up to \$1600 a year for four years and are applied for on behalf of the student by the admitting school.

Since the BEOG program guarantees institutions not only students to fill their classrooms but tuition payments and administrative expenses totaling four percent of the grant, it is a boon not only to students but to financially-strapped small colleges. This has led to complaints about the quality of the overseas training some Micronesians receive. Douglas Harlan, in a report commissioned by the U.S. Congress on higher education in the TTPI, described many of the American colleges which Micronesians attend as "low quality institutions that are dependent on federally-aided students for a large part of their income."<sup>22</sup>

#### Aims of the Study

Micronesians' eligibility for financial aid sources like the BEOG is likely to end with the Trusteeship. Micronesian governments will then largely regain control over the movement of students to U.S. colleges. This study's purpose was to help them determine a suitable policy regarding overseas study by providing an evaluation of the social adjustment of students who have already returned to Micronesia

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<sup>22</sup>Douglas Harlan, The College of Micronesia, p. 17.

from U.S. colleges.

In order to achieve this purpose, the study employed written questionnaires and lengthy interviews with returnees in the Micronesian states of Palau, Yap, and Truk. The study focused on those students who left Micronesia after 1970 to work toward their first post-secondary degree.

Besides examining the social adjustment of overseas-educated Micronesians, the study attempted to link these adjustments with certain aspects of returnees' experiences. An examination of previous studies of the foreign-trained led the researcher to identify three key factors in students' experiences which influenced their readjustment to their home cultures.<sup>23</sup> These factors are:

1. the extent of one's orientation to a second culture.
2. the occupational roles one fills upon returning.
3. the reception given by one's reference group, by significant friends, co-workers, or family members.

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<sup>23</sup>These studies are discussed more fully in Chapter II. They include Ingrid Eide, ed., Students as Links between Cultures (Oslo: UNESCO, 1970). In particular, they include those studies sponsored in the 1950's by the Social Science Research Council's Committee on Cross-Cultural Education: Ralph L. Beals and Norman D. Humphrey, No Frontier to Learning: The Mexican Student in the United States (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957); John W. Bennett et al., In Search of Identity: The Japanese Overseas Scholar in America and Japan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958); Franklin D. Scott, The American Experience of Swedish Students: Retrospect and Aftermath (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956); John and Ruth Hill Useem, The Western-Educated Man in India (New York: Cryden Press, 1955); Jeanne Watson and Ronald Lippitt, Learning Across Cultures: A Study of Germans Visiting America (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1955).

## Research Questions

The specific research questions which the study attempted to answer are listed below. The questions are subsumed under the general headings of social adjustment and the three factors which affect that adjustment: second-culture orientation, occupational roles, and reference groups.

### Social Adjustment

1. How have students' values changed as a result of their exposure to a different culture?
2. Do their values continue to change after they return? Do they show concern for ideas and events in cultures other than their own? Do they revert to their original attitudes and beliefs?
3. What evidence is there that returnees are either alienated from or, at the other extreme, reaffirmative of their cultures?
4. In what ways and to what extent do returnees act as cultural interpreters?

### Second-Culture Orientation

1. In what ways and to what extent are Micronesian students oriented to American culture before they go overseas? What kinds of involvement do they have with Americans and American culture while in the U.S.?
2. What are students' reasons for going overseas to college?

### Occupational Roles

1. How successful are returnees in finding jobs commensurate with their training and ability?
2. Are returnees able to contribute ideas and suggestions where they work? Are they satisfied with the amount of influence and involvement they have?

3. To what kinds of jobs do returnees aspire?
4. Do some jobs more than others create cultural conflicts for returnees? Which jobs are these?

#### Reference Groups

1. How much do Micronesians criticize or, on the other hand accept and expect new, different, or "Americanized" behavior from returnees?
2. Who are the returnees' friends? Do returnees insulate themselves from cultural conflict by interacting with a "binational third culture," including other college-educated persons or expatriates?

#### Definition of Terms

In order to achieve its central purpose, this study examined the social adjustment of returned college students in Micronesia. Because much of the controversy surrounding overseas education and its effect on students is couched in terms of broad concepts like "alienation" or "useful perspectives," more specific and operational criteria with which to evaluate social adjustment had to be developed for this study. The concept of social adjustment as employed in this study and the three principle factors which affect social adjustment are defined in this section.

#### Social Adjustment

The social context into which Micronesian returnees must fit themselves differs from that in other societies where returned students have been studied. Unlike Japan, Mexico, or Sweden, the various districts of Micronesia are not

independent states, but are tied to the economic and educational systems of their most recent colonial overseer, the United States.

Thus, Micronesians are members of acculturating communities that are changing as a result of contact with outside institutions. Micronesians must mediate the demands not only of indigenous political, economic, and social institutions, but of imported institutions as well. Studies of individuals in acculturating communities have shown that the effects of dealing with different sets of demands are stressful, especially on those who have developed some commitment to the newer demands. In this study, social adjustment referred to the manner in which individuals accommodated this stress and conflict.

A special kind of social adjustment is exemplified by the cultural interpreter. The term is borrowed from Malcolm McFee, who used it to refer to certain of the members of an acculturating community of Blackfeet Indians.<sup>24</sup> In that society, certain individuals educated in schools of the dominant culture returned to act as mediators between the community's more traditional and its more modern-oriented members. The cultural interpreter provides a conduit for communication because he or she "can talk to and better understand both sides."<sup>25</sup> The interpreter respects society's traditional

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<sup>24</sup>Malcolm McFee, "The 150% Man, A Product of Blackfeet Acculturation," American Anthropologist, 70 (1968), 1096-1103.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 1100.

members and is perceived by them as one who has not been "Americanized." The interpreter nevertheless desires change, but realizes that borrowed models of modernity are culture-specific and cannot be transplanted without creating distortions. The interpreter desires a strategy by which a community can change on its own terms. Thus the cultural interpreter who leads the way to a selective kind of culture change, who helps redefine traditional culture without undermining it, is a valuable resource to a community.

#### Key Factors Affecting Social Adjustment

The previous section identified three factors in a returnee's experience which influence social adjustment:

1. the extent of one's orientation to a second culture.
2. the occupational roles one fills upon returning.
3. the reception given by one's reference group.

The following discussion briefly treats each of these factors, describing its purported effects on readjustment and on the returnee's ability to act as a cultural interpreter.

Second-Culture Orientation. The degree of difficulty one experiences in returning to one's own culture depends in part on the extent to which one has identified with another culture while away. Micronesians who associate largely with their compatriots while in the U.S., and are thus relieved of the trials of adjusting to a new and alien situation, will adjust more easily when they return. Those who do have to go

through some process of culture learning, and especially those who become deeply involved with Americans, are likely to have greater problems when they return.

The returned student's social adjustment will also depend on one's objectives in going overseas, and on one's success in realizing those objectives. Students who go to college to improve their job prospects approach their sojourn in the U.S. and their return to Micronesia with different expectations than those whose primary motivation is simply to travel outside. The former students are presumably more needful of prestigious employment to be satisfied. The latter students, because of their initial desire to learn about cultural differences, may import more foreign ideas and behaviors, which may place them in a situation of potential conflict with Micronesian mores.

Occupational Roles. Returnees are more likely to be satisfied and to remain open and sensitive to innovations and the ramifications of culture change if they find jobs commensurate with their training. Some jobs will be more satisfactory than others according to the amount of innovation and participation in decision-making they permit the returnee, and according to the degree to which they enmesh the returnee in conflicting cultural demands. To perform some jobs properly, a returnee may have to defy certain cultural practices and experience stress as a result.

Reference Groups. Whether friends, family members, or

co-workers, the returnee's close acquaintances wield the most powerful sanctions for or against novel values and behaviors. Returnees who meet resistance or even ridicule will have greater problems reentering their culture than those who deal with more tolerant persons. Some returnees may try to insulate themselves from conflict and criticism by building their own subculture in which they will be accepted.

## Chapter II

## A Review of Related Literature

This study engaged three areas of research. First, it examined studies of acculturating communities, defined here as groups of people who must adapt their accustomed ways of life to newly contacted patterns of political, social, and economic organization. Second, the study looked at other investigations of the readjustment experiences of returned students. Third, it drew on ethnographic studies of Micronesian cultural values.

The literature on acculturating communities was examined in order to better understand (1) the typical adjustment problems members of these communities face and (2) the roles returned students might play in such communities. Micronesia is itself a group of acculturating communities. Unlike people in other countries where returnees' readjustments have been studied, Micronesians have recently experienced significant social, political, and economic change in contact with foreign colonial administrations, most notably those of Japan and the United States. Since overseas education has not been restricted to an elite segment of Micronesian society, as it has in many countries, and overseas students have thus been drawn from all levels of Micronesia's acculturating communities, students' readjustments must be studied with a view to the roles these students play in their respective communities.

The literature on returned students was investigated

to identify those factors which influence returnees' social adjustment.

Finally, material on Micronesian cultural values was searched in order to seek an understanding of the types of conflicts in values or behavior returnees might experience when they come home.

Accordingly, this chapter has been divided into three sections. The first examines theoretical views of the acculturation process, describing the kinds of stress associated with acculturation and the manner in which members of acculturating communities respond to this stress. Special attention is paid to the community's more acculturated or modern-oriented segment, that segment of the community most likely to include many returned students. Literature on the relationship between acculturated individuals, especially those who act as cultural interpreters, and less acculturated members of the community is examined in detail.

The second section describes three factors which influence returnees' readjustments, while the third section presents a summary of several important Micronesian cultural values.

One additional purpose of the literature review undertaken in preparation for this study was the determination of suitable instruments and measures. These are discussed in Chapter III.

### Studies of Acculturation

Theoretical formulations of the "acculturative process" generally examine the ways that the individuals involved experience tension or stress and then change certain of their accustomed ways of life to reduce this stress. George and Louise Spindler studied culture change among the Menomoni Indians and described what happened when a people's "conditions of survival" were altered by contact with alien institutions.

...the established sociocultural system breaks down in some degree and its effectiveness as a set of instrumentalities for survival is vitiated. ...The requirements of the traditional system tend to become dysfunctional and therefore threatening to the individual who is trying to adapt to the new situation.<sup>1</sup>

No theoretical explanation communicates effectively the affect such change has on the individual. One's established behaviors may no longer elicit expected responses, either from foreigners in a superimposed power structure, or from others in one's own family. The collection of shared meanings which constitutes one's bond of communication with one's cultural fellows is disrupted.

David Born, who developed a general model of acculturative stress<sup>2</sup> drawing on Anthony Wallace's concept of mazeway

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<sup>1</sup>George and Louise Spindler, "The Instrumental Activities Inventory: A Technique for the Study of the Psychology of Acculturation," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 21 (1965), 4.

<sup>2</sup>David O. Born, "Psychological Adaptation and Development under Acculturative Stress: toward a General Model," Social Science and Medicine, 3 (1970), 529-547.

("nature, society, culture, personality, and body image, as seen by one person")<sup>3</sup> and David Aberle's notions of "relative deprivation",<sup>4</sup> believed that the individual whose society is undergoing vast material, political, and economic change finds oneself in a shifting role structure. One discovers that friends, relatives, and others in the personal reference group do not respond in expected ways to one's accustomed behaviors.

The new scheme of institutions, events, and relationships might even forbid certain accustomed behaviors. Ben Finney has shown how urbanization and the introduction of cash into the Tahitian culture altered the economic and social niche for young men. When commercial stores replaced gardens, and food could be obtained by payment instead of labor, the young man's roles and responsibilities in food gathering began to disappear, and the communities actually began to devalue their young men.<sup>5</sup>

The young are often the people most unevenly rewarded in an acculturating community in terms of their performing habitual or traditional roles. Confusion about role was the summary reason given for Micronesia's youth problems by a

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<sup>3</sup>Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," American Anthropologist, 58 (1956), 266.

<sup>4</sup>David Aberle, "A Note on Relative Deprivation Theory as Applied to Millenarian and other Cult Movements," Reader in Comparative Religion, ed. W.A. Lessa and E.Z. Vogt (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 627-531.

<sup>5</sup>Ben R. Finney, Polynesian Peasants and Proletarians (Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1973), pp. 85-89.

Conference on Youth sponsored in 1977 by the islands' Catholic missions. Micronesian youth, brought up in an educational system which rewards vocal participation and enforces coeducation, want greater independence, social respect, and responsible jobs. The Conference report observed that while Micronesian adults agree that their children should be well-educated in the Western academic tradition to enable them to leave the subsistence economy, they also demand that they be loyal to traditional manners, deferential to elders, regular in church attendance, and moderate in the use of alcohol. The elders contribute to role confusion when, in the midst of such conflicting demands, they are inconsistent in rewarding youth for proper behavior.<sup>6</sup>

Born, the Spindlers, and other observers of the acculturative process agreed that it is associated with stress, and that individuals cannot tolerate stress indefinitely.

Whenever an individual...receives repeated information that his mazeway does not lead to action which reduces the level of stress, he must choose between maintaining his present mazeway and tolerating the stress, or changing the mazeway in an attempt to reduce the stress.<sup>7</sup>

Some degree of consensus is discernible among researchers regarding the principal kinds of responses the members of an acculturating community make to such stress. As the Spindlers

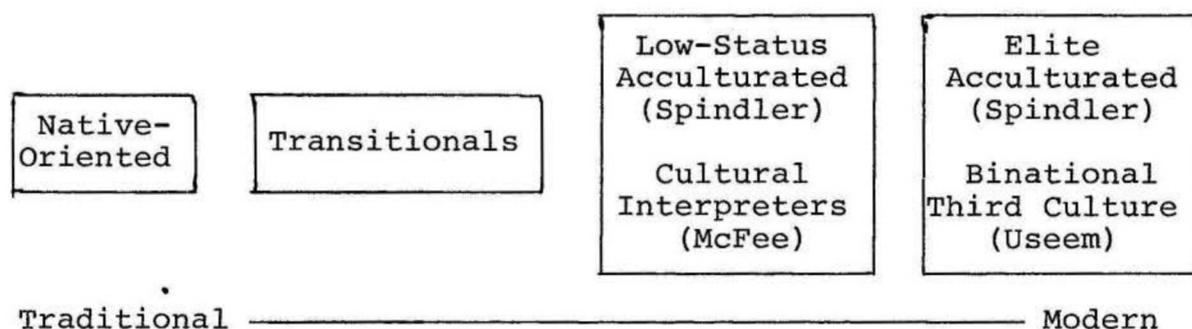
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<sup>6</sup>Conference on Youth, "Micronesia's Youth Today," ed. Francis X. Hezel (Kolonia, Ponape: The Micronesian Seminar, 1977).

<sup>7</sup>Anthony Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," pp. 266-267.

observed, "new alternatives are perceived and reacted to differently by different individuals."<sup>8</sup> A changing community holds several subgroups each of which displays a different kind of acculturative response. Figure 1 provides a model of these subgroupings displayed according to their orientation to either traditional or modern values and goals. The model's basic format has been borrowed from Spindler and Goldschmidt<sup>9</sup> who used a similar formulation to illustrate acculturative groups among the Menomini Indians.

Figure 1 - Segments of an Acculturating Community



The following discussion examines each group in turn. While this study lacked an instrument suitable to determine the group membership of individual returnees studied, it is nevertheless useful to understand the basic structure of the

<sup>8</sup>George and Louise Spindler, "The Instrumental Activities Inventory," p. 4.

<sup>9</sup>George Spindler and Walter Goldschmidt, "Experimental Design in the Study of Culture Change," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 8 (1962), 73.

acculturating communities into which overseas students return.

### The Native-Oriented

The native-oriented in Spindler and Goldschmidt's study constituted a true group, with a defined membership and activities centered on religious observances. They referred to these individuals as "native-oriented." Voget, who studied the Montana Crow, called them simply "native."<sup>10</sup> The native-oriented response, (termed variously as "retreatism" by Born,<sup>11</sup> "encapsulation" by Baldauf and Ayabe,<sup>12</sup> and as "nativism" by Wallace<sup>13</sup>), involved an affirmation of the traditional in spite of its apparent dysfunctions. Individuals in these groups dealt with stress-inducing elements in their mazes--alien people, customs, and values--by ignoring or excluding them.

The "native-oriented" category in Figure 1 includes groups like the Peyote cult which George and Louise Spindler observed among the Menomini. These groups represent a rather rare response to acculturation, a withdrawal into a supernatural or millenarian orientation. The Spindlers regarded this

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<sup>10</sup>Fred Voget, "Acculturation at Caughnawaga: A Note on the Native-Modified Group," American Anthropologist, 53 (1951), 220-231.

<sup>11</sup>David Born, "Psychological Adaptation," p. 538.

<sup>12</sup>Richard B. Baldauf, Jr. and Harold I. Ayabe, "Acculturation and Educational Achievement in American Samoan Adolescents," Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 8,2 (July 1977), 243.

<sup>13</sup>Anthony Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," p. 267.

group as a "special deviant type" and noted that its response was much less common than the nativistic affirmation of the traditional.<sup>14</sup>

Researchers generally found the native-oriented to be older, less educated, and more often from rural areas than members of the other acculturative groups. However, Thomas Fitzgerald observed a "backward acculturation" among some educated New Zealand Maoris that led them to a native-orientation.<sup>15</sup> Fitzgerald argued that older Maoris, given the changes in their economic environment after the arrival of the Europeans, had no choice but to acculturate. Since their "latent" or traditional way of life became dysfunctional in New Zealand's European-dominated society, they adapted to the money economy and world of work and took on new "manifest" roles. To maintain their latent culture under these conditions required too much of an economic sacrifice. However,

...whereas the [older] Maoris may be willing to scrap much of the manifest and latent Maori culture in order to achieve economic security, today the Maori graduates' success in the larger New Zealand society, in one sense, has allowed freedom of choices unattainable [to their elders]. "Backward acculturation," for this group, becomes a characteristic of an emergent middle class.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>George D. Spindler and Louise S. Spindler, "American Indian Personality Types and their Sociocultural Roots," Annals of the American Academy of Social and Political Sciences, 311 (May 1957), p. 156.

<sup>15</sup>Thomas K. Fitzgerald, "Maori Acculturation: Evolution of Choice in a Post-Colonial Situation," Oceania, 44 (1974), 209-215.

<sup>16</sup>Thomas K. Fitzgerald, "Maori Acculturation," p. 211.

### The Transitionals

This group may represent the most common acculturative response. In one of their studies, an experiment in methodology whose results they admitted were only provisional, the Spindlers contended that the transitional type represented the modal personality among Menomini males.<sup>17</sup> Elsewhere, the Spindlers described the transitionals as "suspended between the White and Indian ways of life" but not firmly identified with either.<sup>18</sup> Other studies of transitionals have associated this group with mental health problems and alcoholism, stemming from an identity crisis caused by a sort of cultural lag between their overt roles and lifestyles and the deep psychological core they developed while growing up in more traditional circumstances.<sup>19</sup>

The Spindlers included in the transitional category individuals of a "reaffirmative native type." Somewhat like Fitzgerald's "backward acculturated" Maoris, these individuals "rebound" from their experiences within a dominant culture and

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<sup>17</sup>George D. Spindler and Louise S. Spindler, "A Modal Personality Technique in the Study of Menomini Acculturation," Studying Personality Cross-Culturally, ed. Bert Kaplan (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), pp. 479-492.

<sup>18</sup>George and Louise Spindler, "American Indian Personality Types," p. 155.

<sup>19</sup>Richard B. Baldauf, Jr., "Relationships between Overt and Covert Acculturation in American Samoa: (PhD dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1975), pp. 7-8; George and Louise Spindler, "American Indian Personality Types," p. 155.

develop an intense but, the Spindlers claim, largely superficial attachment to traditional culture. The Spindlers attributed this variously to the experience of barriers in adaptation to the dominant culture, or to a lack of strong motivation to adapt.<sup>20</sup>

### The Acculturated

The more modern-oriented or acculturated segment of the changing community is of special interest to the present study since it is likely to include many of those who have traveled outside to study. The acculturated response has been labeled variously by Born as "innovation,"<sup>21</sup> by Dohrenwend and Smith as "reorientation,"<sup>22</sup> and by Baldauf and Ayabe as the "modern man approach."<sup>23</sup>

George and Louise Spindler, in their studies of Menominee acculturation, and John and Ruth Useem, in their studies of overseas-educated Indians, have discerned two distinct groups within the larger acculturated category. These two groups, which the Spindlers term "elite acculturated" and "low-status acculturated," are differentiated below.

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<sup>20</sup>George and Louise Spindler, "American Indian Personality Types," p. 155.

<sup>21</sup>David Born, "Psychological Adaptation," pp. 540-547.

<sup>22</sup>B.P. Dohrenwend and R.J. Smith, "Toward a Theory of Acculturation," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 18 (1962), 30-39.

<sup>23</sup>R.B. Baldauf and H.I. Ayabe, "Acculturation and Educational Achievement," p. 243.

Elite Acculturated. In their studies of overseas-educated Indians,<sup>24</sup> John and Ruth Useem described an elite acculturated group whose members belonged to what they termed a "binational third culture" (see Figure 1). This "third culture" consisted of

the complex of patterns learned and shared by communities of men stemming from both a Western and a non-Western society who regularly interact as they relate their societies, or sections thereof, in the physical setting of the non-Western society....These composite patterns differentiate a third culture from the cultures it transcends.<sup>25</sup>

The Useems further specified these "composite patterns" as including "standards for interpersonal behavior, work-related norms, codes of reciprocity, styles of life, networks of communication, institutional arrangements, world views, and on the individual level new types of selves." They termed this new bicultural synthesis a "modernizing status role." Individuals come to hold this new self- and social identity through "socialization" to a cognitive, rational, and pragmatic approach to problems, a reliance on information, scientific method, and practical application instead of traditional or inherited solutions. This modernizing group showed marked

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<sup>24</sup>John Useem and Ruth Hill Useem, "American-Educated Indians and Americans in India," Journal of Social Issues, 24, 4 (1968), 143-158; John Useem and Ruth Hill Useem, The Western-Educated Man in India (New York: Cryden Press, 1955); John Useem, Ruth Hill Useem, and John Donoghue, "Men in the Middle of the Third Culture: The Roles of American and Non-Western People in Cross-Cultural Administration," Human Organization, 22,3 (Fall 1963), 169-179.

<sup>25</sup>Useem, Useem, and Donoghue, p. 170.

cognitive flexibility, "a broader perspective, an enlarged world view growing out of having personally experienced contrasting cultural milieus."<sup>26</sup>

Stephen Bochner also studied members of such a "third culture" and wondered how they were spared the alienation and loss of identity of the transitional or "marginal" man. In a study of Asians educated in the U.S., Bochner asks:

What is it that distinguishes the two types of man-in-the-middle situations, so that diametrically opposed outcomes can emerge, personal maladjustment in the "marginal case," and personal growth in the "multi-cultural instance."<sup>27</sup>

Bochner concluded that the answer had to do with the resolution of role strain, the stress which affects individuals in a changing culture who are caught in a crossfire of conflicting expectations. People may fill roles in which they can satisfy the expectations of one group only by violating those of other groups, including groups in which they consider themselves members. For instance, one may have to satisfy certain obligations to kin, like attendance at traditional rituals, to the detriment of other modern involvements like schooling or employment.

Members of a "third culture" escape role strain because they choose to interact with, and are accepted by, a

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<sup>26</sup>Useem and Useem, "American-Educated Indians," pp. 151-152.

<sup>27</sup>Stephen Bochner, The Mediating Man: Cultural Interchange and Transnational Education (Honolulu: East-West Center Culture Learning Institute, 1973), p. 49.

group of people who do not require response to two or more incompatible sets of demands. Instead, members of a "third culture" combine elements of both the native and Western cultures to form a cultural configuration with its own distinct patterns. The individual's successful resolution of stress is further assured when this modernizing "third culture" has the wider society's support.<sup>28</sup>

While the Useems described the existence in Indian society of a self-conscious community of foreign-educated and modern-oriented individuals, they also showed the limits of this community's influence. For example, although the legitimacy of the community's modernizing mission was generally accepted, tensions did exist. Even among the foreign-educated themselves, "it reflects on the individual to become known... as a person who runs after the foreigners."<sup>29</sup> Others who have studied the experiences of returned students have found similar sanctions enforced against innovations, behaviors, and mannerisms identified with the country in which those students were educated.<sup>30</sup>

The Useems suggested that the "third culture" community

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<sup>28</sup>Bochner, The Mediating Man, p. 49.

<sup>29</sup>Useem and Useem, "American-Educated Indians," p. 154.

<sup>30</sup>Ralph L. Beals and Norman D. Humphrey, No Frontier to Learning: The Mexican Student in the United States (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), pp. 101-113; John W. Bennett et al., In Search of Identity: The Japanese Overseas Scholar in America and Japan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958), p. 255; Richard Brislin and Paul Pedersen,

capable of sustaining a new synthesis of values and behaviors was quite small, amounting to "a small fraction of the men and women in the country who identify themselves and are identified by others as an integral part of the modernizing segment."<sup>31</sup> They remarked further that "third culture" members may not be people most informed or sensitive about their countrymen's social and economic problems. Their supporting "third culture" environment, while it insulates them from role strain and adjustment problems, also insulates them from a full understanding of the transitional and native-oriented elements in their societies.

This element of isolation makes the "third culture" or elite-acculturated response a relatively privileged one, and of limited use as a model for the community's less acculturated members.

Low-Status Acculturated. An alternative and more useful role is performed by a second group which the Useems found to exist among the overseas-educated. Similar in social position to the low-status acculturated segment noted by the Spindlers,

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Cross-Cultural Orientation Programs (New York: Gardner Press, 1976), pp. 110-111; Elizabeth Gama and Paul Pedersen, "Readjustment Problems of Brazilian Returnees from Graduate Studies in the United States," (Bethesda: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 138 892, 1977), pp. 12-14; Arthur S. Livingstone, The Overseas Student in Britain (Manchester: University Press, 1960), p. 47; Ingrid Eide, (ed.), Students as Links between Cultures (Oslo: UNESCO, 1970), pp. 183-184.

<sup>31</sup>Useem and Useem, "American-Educated Indians," p. 150.

members of this group have also traveled and studied overseas.

Unlike the elite acculturated, they

do not have regular interaction with foreigners but ... are modern oriented, have some commitments to the goals of the third culture and may actually be participating in some world-encompassing type of third culture....They are spread more widely throughout the society--in provincial towns and cities within the middle to upper socioeconomic strata. They have access to and knowledge of a broader sector of the total population than do the "hard core" members of the binational third culture. Significantly, the social capital and credibility of this aggregate are often higher within the first culture than... [that] of either the Americans or the nationals identified most completely with the binational community. These individuals often play strategic roles in creating a general atmosphere within sectors of society for the acceptance of new ideas.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, this second group of acculturated individuals, though committed to many of the "third culture's" or elite group's modernizing goals, is spread through more sectors of the community, is relatively closer to that community in its socioeconomic status, and is in closer touch with the aspirations and values of a broad segment of the total population.

The low-status acculturated category would include cultural interpreters, a group whose membership was defined earlier in this study. Malcolm McFee, who studied the Blackfeet and from whom the term cultural interpreter is adapted, described his Interpreter subjects as people who

...have received a good education in White schools and have had a wide range of experience in parts of White culture....Yet they are Indian-oriented....They tend to express Indian values and subscribe to Indian symbols. ...Yet, because of their training and experience in White

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<sup>32</sup>Useem, Useem, and Donoghue, "Men in the Middle," P. 177.

ways, they are capable of competing with the White-oriented and ...have gained some economic success and the respect of the White-oriented group.<sup>33</sup>

McFee regarded Interpreters as especially important to those in the native-oriented group, who "cannot remain economically and politically independent, but must work with the larger community in order to exist." The native-oriented need as their representatives Interpreters who "can talk to and better understand both sides," and who are bilingual, educated people, Indian-oriented people who can forward Indian goals..."<sup>34</sup>

Members of the Useems' "binational third culture" or of the Spindlers' "elite acculturated", on the other hand, may have prominent status in the first culture through kinship ties, but they are essentially oriented to modernity and to the world outside the reservation or the islands. Socially, they are at the community's fringe, and are likely to come and go all their lives.

The low-status acculturated are still committed to dealing with both the traditional and the modern cultures on their own terms. Because, as the Useems observed, they are more closely integrated in the acculturating community and have greater credibility among its less acculturated members than "third culture" types, they have greater potential to

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<sup>33</sup>Malcolm McFee, "The 150% Man, A Product of Blackfeet Acculturation," American Anthropologist, 70 (1968), 1100.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 1100-1101.

fill the vital role of cultural interpreters.

### Factors Influencing Social Adjustment

The previous section of this chapter described the social adjustments made by members of acculturating communities, and highlighted the roles most commonly played by college students and others with extensive experience outside these communities. This section will deal with the ways social adjustment is influenced by three factors: the extent of one's orientation to a second culture, the occupational role one fills upon returning, and the reception given by one's reference group. These three factors were defined and discussed in Chapter I.<sup>35</sup> This section describes the findings of selected studies of the foreign-trained which relate to their influence.

#### Second-Culture Orientation

The depth of a student's involvement with the culture of the country in which he studies will affect his readjustment to his own culture. However, investigators of the foreign-trained have had difficulty obtaining reliable information on ex-students' overseas experiences. They discovered, for one thing, that returnees' perceptions of the host country depended on the time elapsed since their return.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Supra, pp. 17-19.

<sup>36</sup>Ingrid Eide, Students as Links, pp. 58-59.

Contingencies acting on the returnees at home also colored their responses; often, returnees had to denigrate their host country to avoid being criticized by their compatriots for losing their culture.<sup>37</sup> One strategy which many Mexican returnees followed was to accentuate the quality of overseas professional training while distancing themselves from the host country's social and cultural milieu.<sup>38</sup> Recognizing these difficulties, the present study's examination of second-culture orientation was limited to a few very specific measures of the returnee's interaction with Americans and American culture.

#### Occupational Roles

In his study of Asian returnees, Bochner maintained that they had to find jobs commensurate with their overseas training, if they were to remain open to innovations and sensitive to the broad ramifications of culture change and modernization.<sup>39</sup> Other researchers found that many of the returnees' dissatisfactions stemmed from their work situations, where they may have encountered jealousy from less-educated co-workers and superiors, or where they were denied opportunities to

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<sup>37</sup>R.L. Beals and N.D. Humphrey, No Frontier to Learning, p. 108.

<sup>38</sup>Ingrid Eide, Students as Links, pp. 183-184.

<sup>39</sup>Stephen Bochner, The Mediating Man, p. 116.

innovate or help make decisions.<sup>40</sup>

### Reference Groups

Perhaps the most profitable area of inquiry concerns returnees' reference groups, the people with whom returnees most commonly interact. Whether they are kin or co-workers, the returnees' close acquaintances are in a position to wield the most powerful sanctions in support of or against their filling of "interpreter" roles.

The reception given returnees depends in part on their culture's general "openness" to importations from the outside world. Adair and Vogt illustrated this factor in their comparison of the different ways Navajo and Zuni communities received members who returned from military service after World War II.<sup>41</sup>

In addition, individuals who are significant in a returnee's life can affect his behavior. Beals and Humphrey found that social pressure forced Mexican returnees to repress Western ideas and behavior learned during sojourns in the

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<sup>40</sup>E. Gama and P. Pedersen, "Readjustment Problems of Brazilian Returnees," P. 14; R. Brislin and P. Pedersen, Cross-Cultural Orientation Programs, p. 111; A.S. Livingstone, The Overseas Student in Britain, p. 47; R.L. Beals and N.D. Humphrey, No Frontier to Learning, p. 104; Franklin D. Scott, The American Experience of Swedish Students: Retrospect and Aftermath (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956), p. 92.

<sup>41</sup>John Adair and Evon Vogt, "Navajo and Zuni Veterans: A Study of Contrasting Modes of Culture Change," American Anthropologist, 51 (1949), 547-561.

U.S.<sup>42</sup> Watson and Lippitt described how German visitors to America, though they returned home eager to innovate on the basis of their experience, soon "calmed down" and resumed their original attitudes and behaviors.<sup>43</sup>

McFee similarly discovered that the Interpreters among his Blackfeet subjects depended on a supportive reference group to maintain their roles:

...their knowledge of White ways is respected and seen to be useful, but they must not go too far in trying to 'live like a White man.' ...They must curb their economic ambitions in order to maintain their status. The very capabilities that make them valuable leaders within their group subject them to constant surveillance and criticism.<sup>44</sup>

However, reference groups may also impose sanctions against nativism or reaffirmations of traditional values. They may expect the returnee to be different. Fitzgerald noted that some of the "backward acculturated" Maori graduates whom he studied were criticized by many of their elders when they reaffirmed their traditional culture and passed up lucrative jobs. The elders felt they were out of touch with their people's economic aspirations, and consequently were delaying beneficial progress.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>R.L. Beals and N.D. Humphrey, No Frontier to Learning, p. 108.

<sup>43</sup>Jeanne Watson and Ronald Lippitt, Learning Across Cultures: A Study of Germans Visiting America (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1955), p. 60.

<sup>44</sup>M. McFee, "The 150% Man," p. 1100.

<sup>45</sup>T.K. Fitzgerald, "Maori Acculturation," pp. 209-215.

Similarly, when Sherwood Lingenfelter studied changing attitudes toward leadership in the Micronesian state of Yap, he found that the Yapese tolerated slightly different behaviors among the college-educated. When the American administration established a district legislature in Yap, the traditional leaders

recognized very early...that legislative skills were new, American-derived, and required special knowledge and capabilities. Traditional leaders, recognizing their own deficiencies, selected younger, educated men to fill these positions.<sup>46</sup>

In essence, the Yapese chose certain of their young men who were "knowledgeable in the ways of Americans, having some proficiency in English and prolonged contact with American leaders" to act as agents of culture contact, to "deal with Americans so as to obtain all the benefits possible for local constituents."<sup>47</sup> To this end, the Yapese tolerated behavior in a young, overseas-educated legislator they would not have accepted in a traditional leader. Lingenfelter concluded that such a legislator was permitted to be "more domineering and precocious than a traditional leader because of his special skills in dealing with Americans, and because of his indirect responsibilities to his people."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, Yap: Political Leadership and Culture Change in an Island Society (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1975), p. 224.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 226 (researcher's emphasis).

Returnees are likely to conform to the demands of social pressure regardless of the end to which it is exerted. The tendency of a dissident individual to submit under social pressure to majority expectations has been demonstrated experimentally by Solomon Asch.<sup>49</sup>

However, this tendency to conform is affected by many factors and varies among individuals. As Asch discovered, "disturbance of the majority's unanimity has a striking effect. ...The presence of a supporting partner depleted the majority of much of its power" over the dissenting individual.<sup>50</sup> Thus, returnees who can contact others with similar views may be able to retain values and behaviors learned overseas even in the presence of hostile social pressures.

#### Micronesian Cultural Values

This final section, which draws on ethnographies compiled by Western anthropologists, focuses on those institutions and values in Micronesian societies with which returnees are likely to experience conflict and which are thus relevant to their readjustment. Of course, there is no "Micronesian culture" as such; the region's physical setting of tiny islands separated by formidable ocean barriers has contributed to a pattern of small, isolated populations which have evolved

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<sup>49</sup>Solomon E. Asch, "Opinions and Social Pressure," Scientific American, 913, 5 (November 1955), 31-35.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

an array of institutions, beliefs, and practices. However, certain cultural attributes are common to the three states under study, and these are the subject of this section.

#### Orientation to the Past

One major cultural value with which returnees must deal is the fact that Micronesians look to the past for their models for successful living. The islands' delicate ecological systems and limited resources have been unforgiving of overexploitation and overpopulation. The knowledge of skills and rituals necessary for survival in this environment was developed over generations long past, and thus resides with the elders, who are the community's link with the past.

Micronesians are accordingly suspicious of innovations. Adults believe that the young, regardless of their experience, need their guidance and counsel, not the other way around. Purpose in life for the young consists, therefore, in learning the skills they will need as adults, and fulfilling their obligations to kin. Youths do not participate in important decisions. Authorities on Trukese culture have suggested that the limited role accorded to youth in those islands also stems from the necessity for ritual abstinence prior to the making of important decisions, and the allied belief that men cannot control their sexual desires until around age 40.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Thomas Gladwin and S.B. Sarason, Truk: Man in Paradise (New York: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, 1953), p. 131.

### Emphasis on Kin Membership

All Micronesians, including young people, operate not as individuals so much as members of extended families. Each person is linked into a large network of kinsmen with whom one practices a complex set of reciprocal rights and obligations. Cultural expectations dictate a role for each person according to age, sex, and rank. The role and the expectations which enforce it are violated at the risk of social ostracism. Each family member has a place in its hierarchy, and each family is bound by rules which dictate who is to make decisions and who is to obey them. Sisters, regardless of age, cannot question the demands of their brothers, nor young people the will of their elders.

The integrity of Micronesian society is further maintained by the observation of ascribed hierarchies of power between families, villages, and larger confederations of villages. Within this hierarchy, every person must follow an expected role. Moreover, all people at all levels of society are entwined in a network of reciprocal obligations.

Especially worthy of note in this regard, both because it is an example of a traditional pattern of reciprocal obligation which has remained intact, and because it is a source of conflict for many returnees, is Palau's exchange system, the ocheraol.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>In Palauan orthography, "ch" represents a glottal stop.

Under this system, a man who has built or purchased an expensive item, nowadays typically a house, holds a ceremony to receive donations from kinsmen to defray its costs. His sisters have the heaviest obligations to contribute native or modern money, and they turn to their husbands to get it. As Roland and Maryanne Force described:

These husbands, in turn, circulate among their relatives and friends to gather together the amount of money that tradition, their particular degree of friendship, relationship, and personal pride require them to contribute. At the ceremony contributions are made publicly and collections may run to several thousand dollars.<sup>53</sup>

In return for these contributions, the man holding the ceremony taps his wife's family to provide an enormous feast.

The ocheraol exchange has many benefits. It redistributes wealth, whether traditional or modern, among lineages. It brings people together and reinforces kin ties; the man who gives money as a husband will receive it as a brother, and the woman who gives it as a sister receives it as a wife. The ocheraol allows people to own costly items even if they have no money income. In fact, the ocheraol has handily incorporated American money as a medium of exchange; since the 1950's, ocheraol ceremonies have often been scheduled to coincide with government paydays.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Roland W. Force and Maryanne T. Force, "Political Change in Micronesia," Induced Political Change in the Pacific, ed. Roland W. Force (Honolulu: Bishop Museum, 1965), p. 5.

<sup>54</sup>Maryanne T. Force, "The Persistence of Pre-Colonial Exchange Patterns in Palau: A Study of Cultural Continuities" (Ph.D. dissertation, Walden University, 1976), pp. 93-97.

### Sanctions against Interpersonal Hostility

Because Micronesians depend on networks of mutual help and support, particularly from their extended families, and because face-to-face contact is unavoidable in an island environment, interpersonal hostility can be highly dangerous. The need to repress hostility and maintain surface harmony has resulted in Micronesian cultures placing a high value on stoicism and on a belief that "what one feels strongly one should not express."<sup>55</sup> Interpersonal relations are characterized by indirectness. Requests and demands are often made with great circumlocution, what one interviewee described as "talking around" matters. Direct speech, especially the sort of public criticism commonly practiced in Western societies, is an anathema to Micronesians.

### Sanctions against Individualism

As potentially upsetting to Micronesian life as interpersonal hostility is individualism. Because roles are ascribed and social institutions have been tested by time, Micronesians do not as a rule, dare to stand out by questioning cultural beliefs or practices. The anthropologists Gladwin and Sarason have reported an allied Trukese belief that people who demonstrate exceptional skills will be punished by

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<sup>55</sup>Thomas Gladwin and S.B. Sarason, "Culture and Individual Personality Integration on Truk," Culture and Mental Health, ed. Marvin K. Opler (New York: MacMillan, 1959), p. 177.

ghosts.<sup>56</sup> In explaining her "crab theory" of Palauan culture, one interviewee in this study likened her people to recently captured crabs in a bucket. When an energetic crab has nearly succeeded in crawling over the bucket's edge, she observed, the rest will take hold of it and pull it down once again.

### Status Competition

Despite the sanctions they enforce against excessive individualism or interpersonal hostility, Micronesian societies are neither Edens of proto-socialist harmony nor autocracies which crush individualism in the name of group survival. Competition exists, and through competition mobility. It is even possible in certain instances for enterprising individuals to manipulate their status. As Mason observed,

The principle of co-operativeness for social and economic integration is present everywhere in some degree. The essence of competitiveness is rather subtle in some islands and may lie just below the surface; in other societies it obtrudes openly, even blatantly, for all to see and applaud.<sup>57</sup>

In general, family groups rather than individuals mobilize their resources to improve their status. According to Mason, "this constant effort to move upward in the system, even though it be but one step, is the essence of political activity in Micronesia."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 180.

<sup>57</sup>Leonard Mason, "The Ethnology of Micronesia," Peoples and Cultures of the Pacific, ed. A.P. Vayda (New York: Natural History Press, 1968), p. 289.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 292.

Palau has one of the most competitive social systems in Micronesia, and Palauans have a reputation among other Micronesians as aggressive and competitive people. Heads of Palauan kin groups engage in status competition not as individuals but on behalf of their respective groups. They engineer clan alliances and build advantageous ties by manipulating marriages and adoptions. Women are particularly important to their lineages in this regard, as reflected in their high status relative to their counterparts in other states. Even after marriage has removed her from her clan's domain, the Palauan woman is still a source of wealth for her brothers and uncles. Barnett averred that the Palauan woman essentially "conspires" to obtain money from her husband's family in return for her labor.<sup>59</sup> Her husband's family must pay her own family stiff prices not only for the marriage, but in the case of her death or divorce.

Status is not as freely manipulated in Yap, whose social organization includes both castes, which a group may not change, and classes, which they may. There is virtually no room in Yap for individual enterprise or mobility since "changing rank depends on altering the status of an entire clan (and hence villages) in comparison with some other. This was accomplished through warfare between opposing alliances of several villages of various castes and classes. The

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<sup>59</sup>Homer G. Barnett, Being a Palauan (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 40.

winners'rank would advance in relation to the losers', though not to each other."<sup>60</sup> Intervillage rivalry is still strong in Yap. Casual intervillage travel is uncommon and young men especially are concerned about being alone after dark in the district center of Colonia lest they encounter a group from an unfriendly village.

In terms of ease of status mobility and traditional sources of support for individual enterprise and initiative, Truk ranks between Yap and Palau. It lacks the former's rigid caste distinctions, but does not approach the latter in institutionalizing outlets for competition or for the individual effort that Palauans can expend to accumulate wealth.

In all three districts under study, however, one's first allegiance is to one's kin. The primary object of political life and of individual energies is the advancement of family status.

<sup>60</sup>William H. Alkire, An Introduction to the People and Cultures of Micronesia (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1972), p. 22.

## Chapter III

### Design of the Study

This chapter will detail three principle aspects of this study's design. The first section explains the manner in which the investigator selected the sample of returnees from whom to gather information, and describes the sample's basic characteristics. The second section details the choice of instruments used to obtain information, reviews briefly research literature relevant to their choice, and describes the instruments used. The final section discusses the treatment of the information obtained.

#### The Sample

The present study focused on Micronesians who had traveled abroad since 1970 to pursue their first post-secondary degree, and who were away for at least two years. The investigator's first task in each state was to establish a "master list" of these returnees with the aid of high school counselors and persons in the offices of Student Services, Personnel, and CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act). From these master lists, target groups of interviewees were selected in each state. These groups were chosen to reflect the master lists' compositions with regard to such characteristics as sex, place of residence, and occupation.

The target groups also included returnees living and working in a wide range of circumstances in order to ensure

that the study's findings would be useful to policy-makers desiring an evaluation of Micronesian returnees' social adjustment. However, the actual selection of interviewees from these target groups could not always be perfectly balanced for several reasons.

First, the master lists themselves were neither complete nor random. Micronesia's state governments have neither complete and accurate records of the whereabouts of students currently overseas, nor knowledge of all of those who have returned. Those officials who supplied information for the master lists were most often aware of returnees who had found jobs nearby in the district centers. Because of this, and because it was often quite difficult for cultural reasons to contact unemployed returnees living in outlying villages, only one person who had not yet been employed in the wage sector was contacted for an interview of usable depth. However, many of the employed interviewees had been unemployed at one time, particularly in the first months after their return, and were able to describe the experience.

In addition, limitations of time and available transportation made it difficult to travel to outer islands to conduct interviews, although it was possible to meet with two schoolteachers on Babelthuap in Palau and to spend a week in the Ulithi atoll in the state of Yap. At any rate, most returned students do live in the district centers; of recent Trukese returnees, for instance, 71 percent live in

Namoneas, the eastern half of Truk lagoon, which includes the district center of Moen and nearby islands from which many people commute daily to work in the district center.<sup>1</sup>

Even without these limitations, the selection of interviewees could not have been based solely on an impersonal choice of unknown names from a random list. Often, individuals with an interest in the study volunteered to be interviewed or arranged interviews with other returnees whose experiences and comments they felt would be enlightening.

The master lists contained 133 names in Palau, 40 in Yap, and 89 in Truk. In the cases of Palau and Truk, these figures fall short of the actual numbers of returned students. As of 1978, only Truk had extensive information on the numbers of its high school and college students.<sup>2</sup> This data indicates that of the Trukese high school students who graduated between 1969 and 1976, some 344 were known to have completed two years of post-secondary study.<sup>3</sup> Of these, 214 (as compared with the master list of 89 names) were known to

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<sup>1</sup>Lynn Ilon, "Trukese High School Graduates" (Moen, Truk:Education Department, September, 1978), Table 3 (unpaginated). This figure includes those Trukese college students who graduated from high school between 1969 and 1976 and who eventually returned to Truk.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Lynn Ilon of the Truk Education Department gathered and computerized basic information for more than 2300 Trukese high school graduates from 1948 to 1978. She hopes to expand this research to include the other states.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Table 1B (unpaginated).

have returned; the rest were presumably still in college.<sup>4</sup> The Truk data itself probably contains gaps, thus the actual number of returnees is probably larger than 214, and the master list compiled for this study represents approximately a third of those who returned to Truk from U. S. colleges during this study's time period.

While Palau has not undertaken a study similar to Ilon's for its high school graduates, the number of returnees there probably also exceeds the 133 names on the Palau master list. The master list for Yap is probably the most accurate of the three established.

The sample from which interviews and questionnaires were actually obtained numbered 16 in Palau, 9 in Yap, and 19 in Truk. The following four tables describe actual interviewees' characteristics in each of the three states studied according to (1) sex, (2) place of birth, (3) years elapsed since return from college, and (4) present job category.

Table 3-1

Interviewees' Sex  
(Figures in parentheses are percentages.)

	Male	Female	Total
Palau	12 (75.0)	4 (25.0)	16
Yap	7 (77.8)	2 (22.2)	9
Truk	12 (63.2)	7 (36.8)	19

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., Table 5A (unpaginated).

Females are somewhat overrepresented in the Truk sample. Ilon's findings showed that the percentage of females among Trukese high school graduates (1969-1976) with two or more years of college is 21.5, a figure more in line with those of the Palau and Yap samples.<sup>5</sup>

Table 3-2

## Interviewees' Island or Municipality of Origin

	District <sup>a</sup> Center	Intermediate <sup>b</sup>	Outer <sup>c</sup> Island
Palau	3	13	0
Yap <sup>d</sup>	0	4	4
Truk	4	6	9

<sup>a</sup>The district centers in the three states studied were the towns of Koror in Palau and Colonia in Yap, and the island of Moen in Truk.

<sup>b</sup>Defined after Alan Kay, "Population Growth in Micronesia," South Pacific Bulletin, Third Quarter, 1975, p. 49. "Intermediate" refers to municipalities neighboring the district center by road or islands accessible to the district center by small boat in less than one day.

<sup>c</sup>Outer islands are those islands accessible only by field trip ship.

<sup>d</sup>One individual's municipality of origin was unknown, thus accounting for the discrepancy in Yap's total.

Outer islanders are perhaps overrepresented among

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., Table 1B (unpaginated).

Yapese interviewees. Because the culture of Yap Island differs from those of the low coral atolls to its east, this study will distinguish in discussion between "Yapese" and "outer islanders of the Yap District." No such distinction need be made for Truk, where the high number of outer islanders in the sample simply reflected the presence in the district center of a first generation of educated and successful migrants from the Mortlock Islands to the southeast of Truk lagoon.

Table 3-3

Years Elapsed since Return from College  
(Rounded to nearest year.)

		Years						
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number of Returnees	Palau	3	5	2	0	3	2	1
	Yap	1	1	1	3	2	1	0
	Truk	9	3	4	1	1	1	0

The returnees in the Truk sample had come back relatively recently, while those in the Yap sample overall had been back longer. The Palau sample was balanced between recent and "veteran" returnees.

Table 3-4

Interviewees' Present Job Category  
(Figures in parentheses are percentages.)

	Palau	Yap	Truk
Education	9 (56.3)	6 (66.7)	8 (42.1)
Other Government	5 (31.3)	3 (33.3)	9 (47.4)
Private Sector	1 (6.2)	0	2 (10.5)
Jobless	1 (6.2)	0	0

Interviewees in each district were overwhelmingly employed in white-collar government positions, with the Education Department being the single greatest source of jobs for returnees. All but one of the participants in the study were employed at the time, though most had initially spent time looking for work. However, the sample does not reflect the seriousness of the unemployment problem at least among Trukese returnees, 24.0 percent of whom are jobless by one estimate.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>This figure is arrived at using Ilon, Table 5A (High School Graduates Listed by Year Graduated, Present Job, and Years Returned from College) for the high school graduating classes from 1970 to 1977. Responses which did not indicate the year returned from college were assumed to be distributed randomly according to occupation and were thus eliminated. Among the resulting corrected total of 217 returnees, 52 or 24.0 percent said they were jobless.

### Research Instruments

The first investigations of international students, sponsored in the 1950's by the Social Science Research Council's Committee on Cross-Cultural Education, relied largely on lengthy interviews with relatively small numbers of ex-students. They eschewed large samples and detailed statistical correlations, which have been used in later studies,<sup>7</sup> to avoid giving, in the Useems' words, "the appearance of comprehensiveness...at the expense of genuine comprehension."<sup>8</sup> Because many of the factors shaping returnees' readjustments are too subtle to permit quantification, the present study employs a more qualitative approach involving lengthy interviews.

Because of certain advantages of quantitative methods, the study also employed questionnaires. A quantitative approach allows abstract concepts to be measured in objective and operational terms; one's second-culture orientation, for instance, can be gauged by asking how frequently one visits foreigners in their homes, or how often one receives letters

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<sup>7</sup>Richard B. Baldauf, Jr. and Harold I. Ayabe, "Acculturation and Educational Achievement in American Samoan Adolescents," Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 8,2 (June 1977), 241-255; Stephen Bochner, The Mediating Man: Cultural Interchange and Transnational Education (Honolulu: East-West Center Culture Learning Institute, 1973); Ingrid Eide, ed., Students as Links between Cultures (Oslo: UNESCO, 1970).

<sup>8</sup>John and Ruth Hill Useem, The Western-Educated Man in India (New York: Cryden Press, 1956), p. 16.

from overseas. Questionnaires can handle such measures quickly and easily. They can also obtain many basic points of information quickly, thus leaving valuable and often hard-to-schedule interviewing time for deeper discussions of the readjustment experience.

Thus the present study attempted to achieve a balance in its methods of information collection by combining a structured questionnaire with a more open-ended interview. Both instruments are detailed further below.

#### The Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained 57 items, both codable and open-ended, and required a half hour to an hour to complete. The first page consisted simply of a time line for the years from 1958 to 1978, and asked the person to indicate next to the appropriate years places he had lived, schools attended, jobs held, and the years when he or she was married and when children, if any, were born. The remainder of the items are reproduced in the Appendix.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested with returnees on Saipan before it was used in the three states under study. Six of the twelve individuals contacted for this purpose returned their questionnaires. On the basis of their responses, two items were redesigned to improve their clarity. Interviews with these twelve returnees also indicated the need to add a question on intentions to return to college.

The investigator's procedure was to meet each prospective interviewee through a work supervisor or family member, introduce himself and the study, obtain each person's consent to take part, give each a questionnaire, and make an appointment to meet again. By answering the questionnaire first, the interviewees, especially those who had returned from overseas some years earlier, had time to reflect on their experiences since coming home. They were also thus able to approach the interview with some confidence and with a knowledge of the general areas to be discussed.

#### The Interview

Each interview began with a brief examination of the questionnaire. Some clarifications were requested and some areas probed further. The body of the interview followed no set outline, except in seeking information on each of the study's research questions. Special care was taken to phrase questions broadly and to avoid leading the interviewee's responses. Interviews ranged in length from forty-five minutes to five hours, though most were in the one-and-a-half to two-hour range.

#### Supplementary Sources of Information

Interviews were also conducted in each state with leaders and educators and to a lesser extent with people acquainted with each returnee. The main purpose of these supplementary interviews was to learn how these persons perceived

returnees' readjustments. The investigator expected that by comparing information obtained from these sources with the returnees' own impressions, it would be possible to judge the accuracy of returnees' responses to others, to learn whether they perceived people to be more or less hostile than they really were, and to see whether the returnees and the community agreed as to the ways in which the returnees had changed.

As it turned out, it was very difficult to get this sort of information from returnees' families and friends. Practically no one talks about their relatives to others, especially to those outside the family. In many cases, and particularly in Yap, it is considered rude even to mention kin ties with certain individuals. Most people are understandably, and admirably, reluctant to describe others' experiences.

#### Treatment of the Data

The data collected is presented in Chapter IV. The chapter's outline follows the study's research questions. Each question is answered in turn using information from two sources. First, relevant questionnaire responses which could be coded or categorized are presented in tabular form. Then, material from interviews is used to corroborate, explain, or qualify the tabulated information. Individual case studies are not used; one consideration observed through each stage of this

study was the protection of the identity of individual respondents.

The data is also treated comparatively. Because previous researchers found the entire cultural context into which a student returns to be significant in determining the kind of social adjustment one makes, three Micronesian states with distinct cultures--Palau, Yap, and Truk--were chosen for investigation. Traditional support for individual achievement and mobility, as one example, differs between the highly stratified Yapese, less unified Trukese, and the relatively open and competitive Palauan social systems. Likewise, the impact of foreign cultural models has been felt less strongly in Yap than in either of the other two states. Thus, the three offer a range of culture change situations against which the attitudes and readjustment experiences of overseas-educated Micronesians can be compared.

## Chapter IV

### Presentation of Data

This chapter will present the data collected from questionnaires and interviews conducted with forty-four interviewees.<sup>1</sup> The chapter addresses each research question in turn, presents first quantitative summaries of the relevant data, and then includes interviewees' comments. In this way, a broad quantitative picture of returnees' readjustment will be "filled out" with some flavor of the range of their experiences and emotions. Finally, the discussion of each research question concludes with a brief summary of the relevant findings.

The chapter's organization follows that of the study design by examining in turn interviewees' social adjustment, orientation to a second culture, occupational roles, and reference groups.

#### Social Adjustment

How have students' values changed as a result of their exposure to a different culture?

To learn about the American cultural models which might have influenced them, interviewees were asked how much

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<sup>1</sup>Because some interviews did not cover every research question, and because interviewees did not answer every questionnaire item, the total number of responses in the accompanying tables is usually less than forty-four.

they valued what they observed and learned in the U.S. in regard to five areas: their formal training, family life, politics and government, the role of women, and religious practices. Table 4-1 presents returnees' responses to these five categories.

Table 4-1  
Interviewees' Valuation of Various Aspects  
of Overseas Experience

		<u>Palau</u>	<u>Yap</u>	<u>Truk</u>	<u>Total</u>
formal training	very valuable and relevant	13	3	11	27
	somewhat valuable	0	1	2	3
	of little value or relevance	1	0	0	1
	not valuable at all	0	0	0	0
family life	very valuable and relevant	4	2	5	11
	somewhat valuable	4	0	6	10
	of little value or relevance	4	2	1	7
	not valuable at all	0	0	0	0
politics and gov't	very valuable and relevant	4	0	4	8
	somewhat valuable	5	4	4	13
	of little value or relevance	2	0	5	7
	not valuable at all	1	0	0	1
role of women	very valuable and relevant	3	0	3	6
	somewhat valuable	5	1	7	13
	of little value or relevance	3	2	1	6
	not valuable at all	1	1	1	3
religious practices	very valuable and relevant	4	0	4	8
	somewhat valuable	2	1	6	9
	of little value or relevance	1	1	1	3
	not valuable at all	5	2	1	8

While overseas, the returnees learned first and foremost about their fields of study, and secondarily about American culture. The ratings in Table 4-1 suggest that interviewees regarded most of what they learned outside of their formal training as "somewhat valuable" at best.

Interviewees were also asked to describe the most important things they learned while overseas besides what they acquired in their formal education. While their responses were varied and not easily tabulated, they are summarized in broad categories in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2  
Most Highly Valued Aspects of Overseas Experience  
Other than Formal Education

	<u>Palau</u>	<u>Yap</u>	<u>Truk</u>	<u>Total</u>
Learning about Cultural Differences	5	2	7	14
Adapting to a Different Culture and Environment	5	0	1	6
Becoming Tolerant and Open with Different People	0	0	3	3
Seeing Value of Own Culture	3	0	1	4
Other	1	3	1	5

Interviewees cited most commonly the opportunity to

learn about cultural differences, to "understand the lives of other races," to "see the different ways people get organized in a society," or to "see different ways of doing things."

The aspect of the overseas experience next most frequently cited varied according to the interviewee's state. Three Trukese, for example, emphasized that they had overcome their shyness while overseas, and learned to be more open with and tolerant of different kinds of people. As one summarized the personal change he underwent, "I don't hate people anymore."

No Palauan interviewee mentioned similar experiences. Instead, five Palauans placed high value on their having adapted successfully to a new cultural setting. They felt they had learned the importance of being independent, of "being your own boss," and of "standing on your own feet" in order to survive.

Four other interviewees said they learned something about the value of their own Micronesian way of life. They felt they learned, for instance, that "intelligence is not tied to race," or simply, that "life is easier" in the islands.

Summary. Interviewees maintained that they learned first and foremost about their fields of study, and secondarily about American culture. At the same time, their experiences of adapting to that culture led roughly one-third

of the interviewees to develop new personal qualities of independence or openness.

What kinds of cultural conflicts do returnees experience?

Because information pertinent to this question was obtained solely from interviews rather than from the structured questionnaires, it has not been quantified. Nevertheless, some very distinct patterns emerged from the comments returnees made in interviews.

For example, by far the most common problem interviewees recounted concerned the burden of kin demands. Several interviewees who lived in district centers in all three states described how their homes became staging areas where relatives from outlying places expected to be fed and sheltered when they visited to take care of business, to shop, or to receive treatment at the district hospital. In Yap, two interviewees from the outer islands who lived in the district center of Colonia, complained that chiefs from their home islands called frequently on them or their spouses to act as intermediaries with the district administration. They felt that their time and resources were being drained away in service to others and that they had little left for themselves. One even hoped to leave the district center and return to her home island where she and her husband would be less vulnerable to special demands.

Interviewees in all three states said they were

expected to share their salaries with kinsmen. These obligations were widely and vocally resented by interviewees in Palau, home of the ocheraol.<sup>2</sup> One Palauan remembered that at first he had contributed willingly. One reason he had pursued both an education and a white-collar job was to be able to fulfill customary obligations generously. However, he tired of the obligations in a year or so when he began trying to save money for travel and further education.

Other Palauan returnees criticized the ocheraol more categorically. Because ocheraol payments are tied to events like births, deaths, and marriages, they cannot be scheduled or budgeted. Further, the payments are not only expensive, but increasingly frequent.<sup>3</sup> Palauan interviewees commonly asserted that their salaries were their own to dispose of, and said they resented having to give much of their pay each

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<sup>2</sup>See supra., pp. 44-45 for a description of the ocheraol exchange system.

<sup>3</sup>While many Palauan interviewees blamed outright abuses of the ocheraol for its present burdensomeness, certain changes in Palauan life have contributed to its rising profile.

For one, young Palauan men increasingly build their own homes rather than live in the traditional communal men's house. Thus, where before only the eldest male might hold an ocheraol, now each of younger brothers--and all of their sons--hold their own ceremonies. Improved communications have also put people in touch so that individuals find themselves invited to ceremonies for ever more distant relatives. The introduction of American money has created new tastes and made the ocheraol correspondingly more expensive. A sixteen-foot Boston Whaler boat costs about \$5000, and a 140-horsepower outboard engine--a prestigious but not uncommon item in Palau--about \$2500. Concern with status also leads to the construction of ever more elaborate and expensive houses, made

week to family members who contributed little in return.

Trukese interviewees did not complain as strongly as the Palauans about sharing their salaries. No Trukese, for instance, was contemplating a move outside the state to escape family demands, something which five Palauan interviewees said they had considered. The four Trukese who were questioned more closely regarding the sharing of salaries said they gave away as much of their paychecks as they cared to--one man gave away virtually all of his--and that they were seldom pressured for more.

The second largest source of cultural conflict interviewees faced, after that of family demands on salaries, was the response they encountered to their own expressions of independence. An example of this was cited by two Trukese men, who described their participation in family meetings.

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with imported materials whose cost is subject to inflation. Reliance on such prestige goods increases the ocheraol's burden year by year. (See Maryanne T. Force, "The Persistence of Pre-Colonial Exchange Patterns in Palau: A Study of Cultural Continuities: (PhD dissertation, Walden University, 1976), p. 120).

In addition, Palauans have developed a new custom known as the "houseparty." The houseparty extends the ocheraol principle outside the kin group to a wider section of the community. Individuals hold these ceremonies to finance smaller purchases, and invite a wide network of friends and friends of friends to come to eat, drink, and contribute money. Like the ocheraol, houseparties are scheduled for payday weekends, and government employees are prominent on the guest lists. A typical donation is \$20, although one must contribute whatever it takes to be "recognized" or to "prove" one's relationship to the host. Many returnees find that they must attend at least one houseparty every payday.

Family members decide many issues at such gatherings, including the roles each will play in discharging clan obligations for births, deaths, marriages, or offenses a member has committed against an outsider. The elders, who know the customary prescriptions from experience, lead the deliberations. One of the interviewees described how he behaved at the first meeting he attended after returning from the U.S. He laughed as he remembered, "I put up so many questions and they just sneered at me." After acting similarly at a second meeting, he was taken aside by an old man who explained that while the leaders understood that free participation was "another way to conduct a meeting," he should nevertheless be quiet and respect the elders' judgments. Similarly, a Trukese woman reported how when she spoke up at a staff meeting where she worked, her co-workers often stared at her as if to say, "Who do you think you are?"

Of course, these conflicts were not experienced solely by the Trukese interviewees. Nor were Palauans the only ones who complained about family demands. Moreover, although the two types of cultural conflicts outlined here, namely heavy customary obligations and constraints on contributing ideas and opinions, were the conflicts interviewees described most frequently, they were not the only ones interviewees experienced.

As another example, certain interviewees returned with a Westernized feeling for time and punctuality and attempted

to schedule projects at a pace their co-workers had no desire to match. Although most eventually slowed down and adapted to Micronesia's more casual style, some remained frustrated at being held back, unable to operate at their potential.

A few interviewees, especially those who dealt with the public in administering government programs, said they had difficulty working with people less educated than they. They complained that many people simply did not understand budgetary and other constraints and besieged them with unreasonable demands and criticisms.

Five interviewees, all from Yap and Truk, said that they became accustomed to certain amenities while overseas and had problems adjusting to their less affluent homes when they first returned. Those living on outer islands were at first taken aback by what they saw as inadequate sanitation. A Trukese woman who came back to the district center at Moen spoke of her return as "a step into the past;" she was dismayed to find that Moen had not changed in the five years she was gone, and that in fact it seemed more run-down.

Summary. Interviewees experienced cultural conflicts most frequently as a result of their kinsmen's demands that they share their resources, particularly their salaries. They were also likely to encounter conflicts related to constraints on their contributing ideas and opinions and to objections to their relatively Westernized feelings for time and punctuality.

Do returnees' values continue to change after they return? Do they revert to their original attitudes and beliefs? Do they show concern for ideas and events in cultures other than their own?

Older Micronesians interviewed during this study commonly described returnees as having come back "gung-ho" and "full of ideas" only to level off in six months or so. An American Peace Corps Volunteer said of returned students in general that "it's like they never left."

To be sure, interviewees themselves reported many ways in which they adapted their behavior when they found it to be obviously at variance with that of others in their communities. One of their first adjustments typically involved punctuality and handling of schedules. Two interviewees recounted how they arrived at their government offices for their first few weeks only to find them empty at the official starting time. Other returnees had to abandon an American style of directness in speech which they had come to value while overseas. A Yapese interviewee found that his suggestions were not followed until he learned to make them in an appropriate manner; he had to "lobby" for his ideas by talking informally to key people, and making them feel respected, knowledgeable, and experienced. Even when he could see a relatively quick and easy solution to a problem, or a beneficial change that might be instituted, his older and more traditional supervisors viewed direct suggestions as disrespectful.

While interviewees reported having changed certain of their behaviors to make them appropriate to the Micronesian setting, they did not forsake the interests they developed overseas. Interviewees' continuing interest in events outside Micronesia was measured by the amount of reading they reported doing in English language periodicals. Table 4-3 shows the numbers of interviewees who reported that they "subscribe to or buy regularly" various periodicals.

Table 4-3  
Interviewees' Reading of Foreign Periodicals

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Number of Respondents	14	4	17	35
Number who read:				
<u>Pacific Daily News</u>	8	3	8	19
<u>Time</u> or <u>Newsweek</u>	10	3	4	17
Others	9	4	6	19

As Table 4-3 shows, most interviewees followed world news not only through relatively accessible organs like Guam's Pacific Daily News, but through Time or Newsweek. They also subscribed to a wide range of other publication, including Scientific American, Pacific Islands Monthly, Good House-keeping, Forbes, and Psychology Today.

One additional measure was attempted to see if "veteran" returnees, those who had been back for several years, were more traditional in their values than more recent returnees. Interviewees were grouped according to the number of years elapsed since their return, and the groups were compared as to whether they considered themselves more or less traditional than their families with regard to four broad cultural norms. This measure of traditionality is described in detail in the next section. However, its code is reproduced below to help the reader understand the data presented in Table 4-4.

- 1 - I am much more traditional.
- 2 - I am somewhat more traditional.
- 3 - Our opinions are about the same.
- 4 - I am somewhat less traditional.
- 5 - I am much less traditional.

Table 4-4 presents an average of the ratings the different groups of returnees made of their traditionality. The data combines the responses of returnees in all three states.

Table 4-4

Interviewees' Attitudes Towards Traditional Values  
According to Time Elapsed Since Return

Years Elapsed Since Return	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number of Respondents	9	8	6	2	4	3	1
Average Rating of Traditionality	3.4	3.4	2.7	2.8	3.4	3.5	1.8

It seems there was no obvious trend toward tradition-ality as interviewees settled back into their communities. However, the study sample was neither sufficiently large nor adequately homogeneous over time to confirm this finding.

It was evident that the "leveling-off" which older Micronesians spoke of among returnees was not always graceful. Some interviewees felt intense frustration when they were unable to use their college training. A Palauan woman remarked how her "momentum was broken" in the first months after she returned and how she experienced two years of frustration before she went back to the U.S. to reenter college. A Yapese interviewee similarly complained that he had spent so much time, money, and effort on his education that he hated not being able to use it fully. He resented the fact that older, less qualified people had filled jobs at higher levels, and said that the possibility of a better job elsewhere could lead him to move away from Yap. These kinds of responses are examined further in the following section.

Summary. Interviewees generally said that they had changed many aspects of their behavior--the way they dealt with schedules or the way they spoke to others--to make them appropriate to Micronesian sensibilities. At the same time, interviewees maintained many of the interests they developed overseas, and did not appear to become more tradition-oriented as they readjusted to Micronesian life.

What evidence is there that returnees are either alienated from or, at the other extreme, reaffirmative of their cultures?

One questionnaire item asked interviewees to judge whether they were more traditional, less traditional, or of the same opinion as their family members and friends with regard to four broad Micronesian cultural norms. These four norms are reproduced below:

1. The role of women: Micronesians have traditionally considered men to be superior to women. They have felt that men and women have separate roles, and that women should not take over roles filled by men.
2. Respect toward elders: Micronesians have traditionally believed that authority and power rest in the older or chiefly members of the society. They believe that younger people should have very limited influence on decisions.
3. Duty to kin: Micronesians have traditionally regarded obligations to kin as more important than individual wants and ambitions.
4. Deference to rank: Most Micronesian societies traditionally have been more or less stratified. Their members are born into a particular family and social rank, and they accept its special responsibilities, opportunities, and limitations.

Table 4-5 shows the numbers of interviewees who responded according to the following code:

- 1 - I am much more traditional.
- 2 - I am somewhat more traditional.
- 3 - Our opinions are about the same.
- 4 - I am somewhat less traditional.
- 5 - I am much less traditional.

Most notable in Table 4-5 is the wide range of responses. The patterns that emerge are not strong ones. Yapese and Trukese interviewees reported small differences of

Table 4-5

## Interviewees' Attitudes Toward Traditional Norms

		Numbers of Interviewees Responding														
		Palau					Yap					Truk				
		more traditional		same		less traditional	more traditional		same		less traditional	more traditional		same		less traditional
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Compared to Other Family Members	role of women	1	4	2	4	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	7	5	3
	respect to elders	2	2	3	3	3	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	9	2	2
	duty to kin	4	1	1	3	3	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	7	4	1
	deference to rank	4	3	2	1	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	8	0	1
Compared to Friends	role of women	1	1	4	2	3	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	6	4	3
	respect to elders	1	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	1	0	2	2	6	3	2
	duty to kin	3	1	5	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	3	6	3	2
	deference to rank	1	3	4	1	2	0	1	2	1	0	0	2	7	0	1

opinion with their compatriots. Only four of the seventeen who responded to the questionnaire item in these two states consistently rated their opinions as either more or less traditional than their fellows. The majority stated that they were in agreement with their fellows on at least one of the four norms.

Palauan interviewees differed more frequently from their families and friends, but not in any set pattern. Four of the thirteen Palauans who answered this item said they were more traditional with regard to some of the given norms and less traditional with regard to others. One man, for instance, considered himself a traditionalist in each area except on the role of women, where he was less traditional. Two others agreed with traditional values except with regard to deference to hereditary rank.

These mixed responses were unique to Palauans, who as a group, were especially split on the issue of obligations to kin. Only one Palauan considered his opinion to coincide with his family's in this respect, while the rest divided almost equally between those who considered themselves more traditional and those who considered themselves less so. This mix of responses and the conflicting feelings which it represented were reflected in one Palauan's comment that while he regarded many aspects of clan solidarity and mutual help as "healthy," still "you can't be associated with your family and survive."

Palauan and Yapese interviewees seemed closer to friends than families in their opinions of traditional norms. For example, one Yapese woman noted that she felt burdened by the traditional exchanges she carried on with her relatives, in which she gave far more than she received. She appreciated being able to practice with an overseas-educated friend a more equal reciprocity in which debts were repaid promptly.

A similar comparison between Trukese interviewees' attitude agreement with friends and family is ambiguous. Interviewees there may have been in better accord with their families than with their friends.

The wide variation in responses presented in Table 4-5 reveals the conflict which many interviewees felt in adapting to their cultures. In spite of these conflicts, many interviewees were still strongly committed to certain aspects of the traditional culture. Of the thirty-three interviewees who answered another questionnaire item which dealt with changes in their perceptions of their cultures, twenty-one or approximately two-thirds reported they valued their own culture more after being away.

In explaining this higher valuation of their cultures, interviewees typically commented that life in Micronesia is easier and more leisurely than in the U.S., where money is an absolute necessity and where those lacking money have very low status. Some felt that Micronesians were not sensitive enough to the way the introduction of money and related

material changes were altering and undermining their cultures, and specifically credited their overseas experience with making them aware of both the value and the vulnerability of traditional life. Several interviewees who had seen while overseas the effects which dependence on the American economy had had on the indigenous peoples of Puerto Rico and Hawaii said they feared lest Micronesians be similarly affected. A Trukese interviewee worried that his state might someday be owned by outsiders, and a Palauan accused his state's leaders of "selling the whole place to the Japanese."

Some interviewees came to appreciate their culture despite having had negative feelings about it when they left for college. A Yapese woman who saw a movie about Micronesia in her first year abroad was embarrassed by its depiction of women in grass skirts. However, with time she became proud that the Yapese had preserved their "original culture." Likewise, a Trukese man reported how he came to understand the value of a strong cultural identity. He worried that people without such an identity would become ignorant and "float around." He wanted people all over the world to recognize Trukese and other Micronesians as having a strong culture, to call them Micronesians "with the real meaning of Micronesian," that is, people who were not dependent on money or on Western clothes and goods.

Along these lines, interviewees frequently criticized various modern aspects of Micronesian life. Interviewees in

all three states complained that families depended too much on their salaried members, and argued for a more equitable sharing of the costs of customary obligations. Several Palauan interviewees specifically criticized the ocheraol system in this regard, and maintained that the introduction of a cash economy and changes in consumer tastes had increased the system's burdens.

Interviewees deplored other recent changes in Micronesian family life. One Palauan from a chiefly family complained that the pursuit of Western forms of wealth had led people to devalue the extended family in favor of nuclear family units which could more effectively earn, save, and spend without channeling resources to a network of relatives. He blamed the introduction of cash for Palauan society's increasing clan competition and declining peacefulness and cohesiveness.

A Trukese interviewee similarly maintained that money was "breaking the biological bond of the family," and leading to prestige competition through consumerism. Certain interviewees in all three states criticized Micronesians' new affluence, and deplored their predilections for "prestige foods" like rice and tinned meat, for expensive dress materials, and for outboard engines and cars. They feared these newly-cultivated tastes were creating a potentially destructive dependency on foreign economies and institutions.

Interviewees also criticized modern Micronesia's

mixture of traditional and newer forms of political leadership and power. Many averred that the traditional leaders were worthy of respect because of their position, and claimed that returnees in general were unjustly accused by older Micronesians of not paying this respect. However, while these interviewees still viewed the traditional leaders as suitable guides in some areas, particularly in decisions which affect their clans, they disapproved of their involvement in other areas, such as electoral politics. They criticized both the chiefs for directing their people's voting in elections, and the people for slavishly following the chief's directions.

Interestingly, interviewees commonly shared with their elders a concern with wayward high school youth. They worried that the schools' loose discipline gave students a freedom they were unprepared to handle, and that movies and television presented unfortunate models of "modern" behavior. The result, according to a Trukese interviewee who taught at the district high school, was that the young "don't know their culture, don't know what's free, and what isn't." A Yapese teacher who recently returned from a U.S. college himself was appalled by students' disrespect and vandalism, habits which he felt "aren't Yapese, aren't Micronesian, probably aren't American."

A small group of articulate interviewees spoke of feeling caught in the middle of two cultures "with a foot in either side." Said one, "I do not go American, I no not go

really Trukese." These interviewees typically observed that all Micronesians, young and old alike, were likewise adrift between two systems, traditional and modern, either of which prevented the other from operating as it should. They proposed, rather plaintively, that there was no one who could point firmly to the true Yapese way, or the true Palauan or Trukese way. One Palauan held the opinion that no one in the generation which grew up under the American administration could contribute to a "Palauan cause."

In order to measure the depth of such cultural disaffection, interviewees were questioned as to any intentions to actually leave Micronesia, to go somewhere else to live. Table 4-6 presents the number of interviewees who expressed an interest, however slight, in migrating.

Table 4-6  
Interviewees' Intentions to Migrate

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Number of Interviewees Responding	14	5	15	34
Number Indicating Interest in Living Outside	6	2	3	11

While few Trukese intended to move, the proportion of Yapese and Palauans so inclined seemed rather high, at least

based on this small sample. Actually, four of the six Palauans and both of the Yapese interviewees who indicated interest in migrating expressed it in very conditional terms. They said they might leave temporarily to escape family obligations, to save money, to get a better job, or to allow their American spouses some time at home. Interestingly, of the four interviewees who considered migration more firmly, two rated themselves as traditional in the questionnaire item summarized in Table 4-5.

Only one interviewee firmly planned a permanent move to some other land after experiencing a severe clash of values upon returning to Micronesia. More typical was the reaction of one Trukese woman, who constantly dreamed of going away only to find once outside that she deeply missed her home. Concluded one interviewee, himself in the midst of considerable adjustment problems after a seven-year absence, "like it or not, this is home."

While almost no interviewees planned permanent moves away from Micronesia, the number who hoped to return to the U.S. for further college training was striking, as Table 4-7 shows.

Table 4-7  
Interviewees' Intentions to Return to College

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Number of Interviews	15	8	18	41
Number Expressing Desire to Return to School	7	6	11	24

Most of those who hoped to resume their education put their return two to three years in the future. Only six had firm plans to go "next year."

Summary. In rating their own positions on four key Micronesian traditional values, Yapese and Trukese interviewees described their opinions as little different from their compatriots'. The Palauans expressed stronger differences, but not in any consistent direction; some Palauans considered themselves less traditional than their compatriots with regard to certain social norms but more traditional with regard to others.

In fact, interviewees were as critical of various modern aspects of Micronesian life as they were of any of its more traditional facets. Strikingly, two-thirds of the interviewees in each state said that they valued their culture more at the time of this study than before they went away to college.

At the same time, one-third of the interviewees said

they hoped to live outside Micronesia, at least temporarily. Nearly 60 percent intended to return to the U.S. for further schooling. Whether such intentions indicate an alienation from Micronesian cultures is unclear; only one interviewee actually planned to migrate permanently to escape a severe cultural conflict.

In what ways and to what extent do returnees act as cultural interpreters?

An interviewee was identified as a cultural interpreter if it appeared, on the basis of observation, interview material, and questionnaire responses, that he or she showed an understanding of or a rapport with both traditional and modern-oriented Micronesians. Individuals were judged to be interpreters if they appreciated the implications of culture change and sought selected kinds of change that would redefine traditional Micronesian cultures without undermining them.

While certain instances where interviewees functioned as interpreters doubtless went unobserved, the number of interviewees who were judged to fill interpreter roles consistently in their daily lives was relatively small. It included ten interviewees, less than one-fourth of the total sample. The group of ten included two women and individuals from each of the states studied. To preserve anonymity, their behavior is discussed here as a composite and not in terms of individual case studies.

The interpreters considered their attitudes toward cultural values to be the same or slightly less traditional than those of their family and friends. They interacted with a wide segment of the community. Most visited the homes of expatriates or received visits by expatriates about once a month. They numbered other college-educated Micronesians as constituting between one-fourth and one-half of their closest friends.

Seven of the ten spent considerable time with Micronesian youths, either in connection with their jobs as teachers or school administrators, or as a spare time avocation. Those who were professionally involved with the educational system were among the interviewees most successful in establishing innovations where they worked. These innovations included the creation of special units in social studies or sex education to help students understand and cope with changing cultural values, or the establishment of career counseling programs to divert students from general academic tracks into more productive training in agricultural or technical skills.

Three of the ten interpreters worked with youth more informally, outside the classroom. One had a part-time job at a bar where she saw idle, hard-drinking school-leavers. She felt she understood their yearnings to go away to look for a better life, but tried to convince them that their best opportunities were at home. She encouraged them to get jobs or to work their families' lands, and not to worry about

going away.

Another interviewee had organized a sort of youth club in his village. He directed the young men in road-clearing, "beautification" and clean-up projects, and in a co-operative fishing venture where all shared in the management and profits.

Still another had plans to revitalize his village through a special brand of tourism. He hoped to construct a model village on unused land, to get the old people to teach traditional crafts and dances to the young, and to allow small groups of tourists to observe the process for an admission fee. He believed that the negative image many older Micronesians held of tourism owed to its uncontrolled aspects, as demonstrated in Guam or Hawaii. He wanted to structure the enterprise so the elders would accept it, and so it would give tourists an appreciation of the culture while giving the young a chance to learn about their cultural legacy.

In general, the interpreters were disturbed by many of the responses youths were making to cultural change, but were also sympathetic to the pressures youth were experiencing. They believed that older Micronesians often criticized youths unfairly, and felt that the young simply needed better guidance.

The interpreters tended to see the young as victims of what one called an educational "umbrella" which covered them as they progressed from school to school, never being

prepared to live in or serve the needs of their communities. The interpreters generally questioned the value of this academic education, including overseas education, for the mass of Micronesian youth, and were active proponents of vocational and career training. While granting youth their desire to see the world outside, they encouraged them to enter schools within Micronesia, such as the Community College of Micronesia in Ponape or the Micronesian Occupational College in Palau.

The interpreters' efforts were not always welcomed, either by older Micronesians or by the youths they sought to help. One of them found that the young resented his urgings that they pursue technical rather than academic training. They felt he was trying to put himself above them. They aspired to the same kind of academic training which had won him a secure government job.

Despite such setbacks, these interpreters did not "level off" but adapted their approach. As one commented, "you have to be smart to change things so they fit." Still, they have experienced frustration, and while feeling a duty to help youth and others through the problems of change, they had their own aspirations. Nine of the ten planned to return to the United States at some point to pursue graduate degrees.

Summary. Less than one-fourth of the interviewees were judged to act consistently as cultural interpreters.

### Second-Culture Orientation

In what ways and to what extent are Micronesian students oriented to American culture before they go overseas? What kinds of involvement do they have with Americans and American culture while in the U.S.?

Virtually all forty-four interviewees graduated from Micronesian high schools between 1969 and 1976, years when a large number of their teachers would have been Americans. Moreover, twenty-four, or more than half, spent at least a few years in mission-run schools, which were largely expatriate-staffed and emphasized academic subjects and the learning of English.

Despite this contact with American teachers, only thirteen, less than a third, responded positively to a questionnaire item asking if they had had any interaction with expatriates before going overseas to school. Most of the interaction they described occurred with contract teachers or Peace Corps Volunteers. Only two interviewees, both of whom had grown up in government housing enclaves in the district centers, remembered having had Americans as close friends. Six others got to know Peace Corps Volunteers whom their parents sponsored or with whom they worked before going to college. Finally, seven interviewees, including three of the nine Yapese, lived with American sponsor families, while attending high schools in the U.S. or Guam.

To learn about their cultural interactions while in

the U.S., interviewees were asked to describe ways they had taught people there about their homes. Of the thirty-seven interviewees who completed questionnaires, only one failed to respond to this item. Table 4-8 shows the nature of their responses, enumerating those who taught in informal ways (e.g. talking with small numbers of friends, showing slides), more formal or structured ways (e.g. lectures, seminars), or through cultural events (e.g. presentations of songs, dances, or other aspects of their cultures).

Table 4-8

Interviewees' Avenues of Teaching about Home Cultures<sup>a</sup>

	Palau	Yap	Truk
Informal	13	3	12
Formal	3	0	3
Cultural Events	2	1	3

<sup>a</sup>Some interviewees described more than one type of "teaching."

Most of the cultural exchange the interviewees described was informal, and dealt largely with very general matters of geography, climate, and customs. Four interviewees enlarged on their responses and revealed specific messages they sought to communicate. Two of the Palauans were especially concerned about correcting American stereotypes of

Micronesia as a primitive land on the one hand or a paradise on the other. One, however, became frustrated by Americans' "silly questions" about his home and concluded that it was "a waste of time" to try to correct their misconceptions. A Trukese woman explained to Americans that her people "share their food and always respect elderly people." And a Palauan sought to communicate that his people valued their "simple life" and their customs and "don't want too much progress from the expatriates."

Summary. While most of the interviewees must have had almost daily contact with expatriates, at least with classroom teachers, few said they had interacted with Americans before going overseas. Interviewees described most of their cultural exchange while overseas as being informal, and dealing with general matters of geography, climate, and customs.

What are students' reasons for going overseas to college?

One questionnaire item asked interviewees to rate four given reasons according to their importance in their decisions to study overseas. The four reasons stated were:

1. Parents or teachers strongly advised me to go.
2. I felt it would help me to find a better job when I returned.
3. I wanted a chance to travel outside Micronesia.
4. I felt I would receive honor and prestige from acquiring a college education at an outside institution.

Interviewees were asked to rate the most important reason with a "1", and the least important with a "4" or "5", since space was provided for them to specify a fifth reason of their own. These ratings are summarized in Table 4-9.

Interviewees cited most frequently as their primary reason for going overseas the belief that a college education would ensure their finding good jobs. Twenty of the thirty-four respondents (58.5 percent) considered this their primary reason. Though far behind, the second strongest reason appeared to be the desire to travel. Interviewees generally rated the honor derived from overseas education as a relatively unimportant reason for their decision to study in the U.S., although Palauans did rate it somewhat more highly than Trukese or Yapese. Likewise, the influence of parents or teachers was judged a weak reason for going abroad.

Seven interviewees listed other strong reasons, including the desire to experience the challenge of higher education (cited by three interviewees), and the desire to be useful to their people (cited by two individuals).

Summary. By far the most important reason interviewees cite for going overseas is their belief that overseas education will help them find better jobs on their return.

Table 4-9

## Interviewees' Motivations for Going Overseas

Motive	Ranked Order of Importance																			
	Palau					Yap					Truk					Total				
	most import.				1st. import.	most import.				1st. import.	most import.				1st. import.	most import.				1st. import.
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Job	7	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	12	3	2	1	0	20	6	5	2	1
Chance to Travel	4	3	4	0	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	5	2	4	4	8	8	7	5	6
Honor and Prestige	2	4	4	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	2	3	3	4	4	4	7	9	7	5
Influence of Parents	1	3	0	7	1	0	2	0	1	1	3	2	5	2	4	4	7	5	10	6
Other	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	1	7	0	0	2	2

### Occupational Roles

How successful are returnees in finding jobs commensurate with their training and ability?

As stated before, all but one of the interviewees were employed at the time of this study. Thus, the data discussed in this section may understate the difficulties returnees have as a group in finding work.

Out of the total of forty-four interviewees, twelve had worked before going away to college. Only two, both older men who had established their careers at a time when college education was not as common as it is today, had secure jobs to which they were certain of returning. Most of the interviewees went to college immediately after high school and returned to seek their first jobs.

Nineteen interviewees began their job search while still overseas, making inquiries or submitting applications for employment. Of these, five received firm promises of jobs. All five were in relatively specialized fields: agriculture, marine resources, nursing, and court reporting.

Five other interviewees were promised jobs. Two, as stated above, were assured of returning to their previous jobs, two knew they would have places in family businesses, and one received an offer to teach at his old high school.

Thus, thirty-three, or nearly three-fourths of the interviewees began to look for work only after they returned. Most had relatively little trouble finding jobs. Of the

twenty-two who specified the amount of time they needed to find employment, seventeen said it took two months or less. Three others needed up to six months to get work, and two said they had needed up to a year to locate jobs they considered acceptable.

As a group, interviewees indicated they had been fairly sanguine while overseas about their job prospects. Twenty-three, more than half, had felt sure while overseas that, as a Palauan woman stated, "if I studied hard and prepared myself in my field, I'd always find myself a good job." Eight of this group were so optimistic that they made no job inquiries before returning. One of them, a Yapese, believed that when he returned it would be only a matter of time before "someone heard I was back and called on me" to go to work.

This individual was correct, as it turned out, and was tapped almost immediately for a teaching job. Ten other interviewees were similarly "called" to fill certain positions. Two of these ten turned down these offers and sought other jobs.

That one-fourth of the interviewees found jobs without looking points up not only the demand that existed for college-educated employees--particularly in secondary education which accounted for half of the unsolicited offers--but the personal nature of hiring practices in Micronesia. Interviewees seemed to be most successful locating jobs in

offices or agencies where their kin or family friends held influential positions.<sup>4</sup>

From the returnee's point of view, the association of clan politics with job-hunting is a double-edged sword. Trukese interviewees in particular complained of being passed over for jobs because they lacked family connections. But the same persons could benefit from connections they did possess. One Trukese woman shrugged off suggestions that her father's friendship with a government official had helped her get a job by saying, "maybe I was just lucky. First come, first served you know."

Although family politics may exclude individuals from certain jobs, seldom does it force returnees to settle for employment totally unrelated to the expectations they formed while overseas. As Table 4-10 shows, nearly two-thirds of those who indicated their job expectations while in college managed to find related work when they returned. In addition, six interviewees found jobs at least somewhat related to their expectations, and in which they used some but not all of their skills. Two of these were trained in elementary education but were subsequently assigned against their protests to teach in secondary schools--a result of

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<sup>4</sup>While Westerners might view Micronesian hiring practices as nepotistic, the system is a logical expression of the vast importance which the people place on duty and loyalty to family. Relatives are apt to accuse employers who do not use their positions to extend at least some aid to their kin of being overly fond of outsiders.

Micronesia's shortage of college-educated high school teachers. Two others, who studied in the much-required fields of agriculture and fisheries, were promoted to administrative positions despite their preferences for field or extension work.

Table 4-10

## Relation of Present Job to Job Expected in College

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Related	9	2	11	22
Somewhat Related	3	1	2	6
Unrelated	2	1	4	7
No Specific Expectations While in College	1	1	1	3

Of the seven interviewees whose jobs did not correspond to what they had hoped to do while in college, only one claimed to be the victim of discrimination owing to family politics. Three others took positions at very comfortable pay levels and were happy to stay with them. The remaining three were unable to satisfy excessively high expectations. However, most interviewees aimed for jobs in the middle of the salary scale, jobs which they had a reasonable chance of obtaining.

Nearly two-thirds of the interviewees who responded

to the questionnaire item dealing with job difficulty indicated that the difficulty of their jobs was at least equal to their abilities, if not somewhat beyond them. These ratings are summarized in Table 4-11.

Table 4-11  
Ratings of Job Difficulty

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Somewhat Beyond Abilities	3	0	6	9
Equal to Abilities	4	3	6	13
Not Quite Equal to Abilities	3	1	1	5
Below Abilities; Often Feel Bored	3	1	3	7

Seven interviewees, or about one in five, said they were bored by their jobs. These feelings of boredom did not seem to correspond to one's job complexity, since the seven included nurses, teachers, and secretaries alike. Three of the seven were probably too highly trained for their work, and were unable to convince their co-workers of the need for innovations and improvements. The other four either returned without specific job preferences or expectations and simply took the first work available, or went against their preferences and entered jobs in areas of marginal interest.

Nine interviewees considered their jobs to be somewhat beyond their abilities. Six of these held middle- to high-level administrative positions. Four of the six said they attained these positions through clan connections or friendships with job supervisors.

Summary. Nearly three-fourths of the interviewees began to look for work only after they returned from the U.S. Most were able to find jobs within two months. In fact, one interviewee in four found a position without really looking, by being contacted by an employer who had heard the individual had returned from college.

While some interviewees complained that clan politics interfered with their obtaining certain jobs, roughly two-thirds found work related to the expectations they had held while in college. Two-thirds of the interviewees also felt that their jobs were of a level of difficulty at least equal to their abilities.

Are returnees able to contribute ideas and suggestions where they work? Are they satisfied with the amount of influence and involvement they have?

Interviewees' responses to questionnaire items dealing with innovation varied. What one respondent considered a notable innovation another did not deem worthy of mention. However, since satisfaction with a situation depends on how valuable one judges his own contributions to be, the interviewees' perceptions of the value of their contributions is

just as important as the absolute value of what they do. Table 4-12 summarizes these judgments.

Table 4-12  
Interviewees' Innovation in Present Jobs

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Number Reporting Innovations	10	4	4	18
Number Reporting No Innovations	4	2	10	16
Number Reporting Resistance to Innovations	1	1	3	5

Nearly half of the interviewees who responded to this item felt that their ideas or suggestions had led to changes where they worked. The innovations they reported ranged widely from devising new classroom curricula, organizing training courses, establishing departmental newsletters, initiating crop trials, to more general things like creating an atmosphere of understanding in which problems could be solved more readily.

Table 4-12 also shows that sixteen of the interviewees, nearly 40 percent, reported making no innovations. When questioned more closely, they simply said that they had yet to suggest changes or improvements.

One interviewee in eight reported frustration in

attempting to suggest changes. These individuals sometimes encountered resistance from co-workers, and one said he had difficulty with conservative traditional leaders with whom he had to deal as part of his job. Most often, however, the key impediment to innovation from the interviewees' point of view was a less-educated job supervisor. This group of interviewees complained variously that their supervisors were not accessible and demanded deference to their position and age, that they simply did not communicate with their co-workers, and that because of their limited education they were not open to the alternatives which the overseas-educated might put forward.

Summary. About half of the interviewees felt they had innovated successfully where they worked. Of the remainder, three-fourths reported that they had not suggested changes. These "non-innovators" were especially numerous in Truk, where they outnumbered successful innovators more than two-to-one. The reverse was true in Palau.

Only one interviewee in eight encountered resistance to their attempts at innovation. These individuals cited as the key impediment to innovation a less-educated job supervisor.

To what kinds of jobs do returnees aspire?

Interviewees were asked to rate nine occupations on a "one-to-ten" scale, with a "10" signifying a very desirable job and "1" a very undesirable one. They were further

instructed to give a rating of "5" to any occupation which they considered "neutral," neither desirable nor undesirable.

Table 4-13 summarizes these ratings, and orders the nine fields from most to least desirable. It presents the average overall ratings interviewees gave to each field, as well as the number of ratings each received as being generally undesirable (1 to 5 on the scale) or generally desirable (6 to 10).

Table 4-13 shows that interviewees expressed a general preference for "white collar" employment. At the same time, interviewees in the three states definitely differed in their judgments as to the most desirable occupations. Palauans rated professional careers and business ownership considerably higher than the Yapese or Trukese. Only the Trukese rated government work highly, even though the government employed a large number of the interviewees in each of the states studied. The Yapese alone indicated substantial interest in occupations based on the traditional lifestyles which surround farming and fishing, although their sample was too small to be sure if this difference is meaningful.

"Public works laborer" was the only category judged undesirable in all three states. Though the politician category's average rating was also low, it actually reflected a split between those interviewees who scored it very highly and those who considered political involvement to be very undesirable. The only group to rate politics low consistently were the Yapese. The Yapese also considered teaching to be

Table 4-13

## Interviewees' Ratings of Job Desirability

Occupation	Total			Palau			Yap			Truk		
	avg. rtg.	no.of 1-5 rtgs.	no.of 6-10 rtgs.	avg rtg.	no.of 1-5 rtgs.	no.of 6-10 rtgs.	avg rtg.	no.of 1-5 rtgs.	no.of 6-10 rtgs.	avg. rtg.	no.of 1-5 rtgs.	no.of 6-10 rtgs.
Professional	7.6	6	20	9.3	0	9	7.5	1	3	6.5	5	8
Teacher	6.6	12	18	6.4	4	8	5.5	3	1	7.1	5	9
Owner of Business	6.5	11	17	8.8	1	8	6.0	1	2	6.6	9	7
Government Worker	6.3	14	12	4.7	8	2	4.3	2	1	8.1	4	9
Skilled Tradesman	5.8	16	11	6.1	5	5	4.5	1	3	5.2	10	3
Cash Crop Farmer	5.8	16	12	5.6	7	4	8.5	0	4	5.1	9	4
Commercial Fisherman	5.2	17	9	3.9	7	2	8.5	0	4	5.0	10	3
Politician	4.4	17	11	4.5	7	4	2.7	3	0	4.6	7	7
Public Works Laborer	3.7	23	3	2.9	11	0	3.0	3	0	4.5	9	3

less desirable than did the Palauans or Trukese.

While interviewees consistently ranked the professions and business ownership as desirable, it is striking that no occupation received an overall average rating above a "7". In fact, of the twenty-seven ratings listed in Table 4-13 (nine occupations rated in each of the three states), only five are between "8" and "10", the range that would indicate relatively high desirability.

Many interviewees did not rate highly their present jobs. Table 4-14 shows that slightly more than half placed their present occupations in the "eight-to-ten" range indicating relatively high desirability.

Table 4-14  
Interviewees' Ratings of Desirability of Present Jobs

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Number Rating Present Job	15	6	19	40
Number Rating Present Job in 8 to 10 Range	7	3	14	24

Similarly, Table 4-15 summarizes interviewees' responses when questioned as to the type of job they would like to have ten years from now.

Only seven of the thirty-four who responded to this

item expressed a desire to be in their present positions. This minority either (1) had found positions in local bureaus of U.S. Government agencies which offered better salaries than comparable positions which come under the TTPI pay scale, or (2) were among the first Micronesians in agencies still largely manned by expatriates, such as the Marine Resources or Agriculture Departments.

Table 4-15

## Interviewees' Job Aspirations Ten Years in the Future

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Present Job	3	1	3	7
Own Business	4	2	4	10
Other Business	2	0	2	4
Government	3	0	1	4
Politics	0	1	2	3
Professions	1	1	0	2
Teaching	1	1	0	2
Farming/Fishing	0	1	1	2

Of the majority of interviewees who aspired to different jobs in the future, very few looked to the professions or teaching, despite their having rated these careers as being generally desirable. Instead, their preferences fell into several categories. Most numerous were those interviewees

who intended to start their own businesses. Next in number were those who either hoped to move to other jobs in government closer to their areas of training and interest, or to capitalize on development in the private sector by getting high-level jobs in companies dealing with fields like tourism.

Summary. While interviewees generally aspired to white-collar positions, individuals in the three states held different preferences. Palauans particularly favored professional careers and business ownership. Only the Trukese rated government work highly. The Yapese were the only group to show substantial interest in occupations based in agriculture or fishing. No single occupation was appraised highly by interviewees in all three states.

In fact, just more than half of the interviewees considered their present jobs to be highly desirable. Only one in five hoped to be in their present job ten years from the time of the study. Instead, the occupation to which the largest group of interviewees aspired was business ownership.

Do some jobs more than others create cultural conflicts for returnees? Which jobs are these?

Because information pertinent to this question was gained solely from interviews rather than the structured questionnaire, it has not been quantified. No breakdown has been attempted according to an interviewee's state of origin. Instead, the potential conflicts interviewees faced on the

job are described here as a composite of their most typical comments.

The cultural conflict interviewees encountered most commonly in their jobs involved their relationships with older co-workers. Interviewees were especially conscious of the potential for misunderstanding if they had learned while overseas to value directness. One Yapese observed that even when he could see a quick and direct solution to a problem, he had to approach elders very humbly, make them feel that they were respected and their opinion valued, and then gently forward his proposal. The need for such sensitivity seemed especially important in Yap, where traditional leaders control strong sanctions. Another Yapese interviewee, clearly cautious of the elders' powers, hinted ominously that "they can really wipe you out."

More specific kinds of work-related cultural conflict were reported by interviewees employed in the government, and were summarized by a Palauan who concluded, "to perform your job well you have to go against cultural practices." She was referring specifically to the way Micronesians expected relatives in the government to use their positions to help their families. The importance of kinship and friendship in hiring has been discussed. Although interviewees in all three states complained of it, and criticized civil servants and politicians for thinking of their families and villages before the larger polity, they felt they were expected

to behave likewise. One Trukese explained that while people perceived returnees as assets, "it is a question of assets to whom." He felt Micronesians expected returnees to serve not their states, but their families.

These expectations created particularly intense conflict for interviewees who themselves had control over hiring. Their relatives expected them to give them jobs, and accused them of liking outsiders better than their own kinsmen when they were reluctant to do so. Some of the interviewees in this position felt that the situation was improving as Micronesians came to understand better the various government programs and the restrictions imposed by budgets and regulations.

Lastly, cultural conflicts were encountered by interviewees whose jobs required them to deal with traditional chiefs. Especially vulnerable were those who administered social programs--especially programs which dispensed free U.S. Department of Agriculture surplus foods--in those states where traditional leaders feared they fostered dependence. Though these interviewees generally supported the programs' goals and disputed claims that they undermined traditional lifestyles, their controversial position had led at least one individual to seek a job transfer.

Summary. Interviewees whose jobs gave them responsibility over hiring were especially exposed to conflict with kinsmen who expected them to use their positions to help their families. Also vulnerable to conflicts were those

interviewees whose jobs required them to mediate between government agencies and traditional leaders. Regardless of what one's job entailed, an interviewee was likely to encounter cultural conflicts in relating with older co-workers. Older Micronesians were often offended by the direct style of communication which many interviewees came to value overseas.

#### Reference Groups

How much do Micronesians criticize or, on the other hand, accept and expect new, different, or "Americanized" behavior from returnees?

Interviewees generally felt that their co-workers held good opinions of them. Two-thirds of those who responded to questions asking them to describe co-workers' attitudes toward people who went to college outside Micronesia considered them to be positive. Table 4-16 summarizes this information. The positive attitude interviewees noted most frequently was respect; nine interviewees remarked on this specifically. Interviewees believed that their co-workers considered returnees as a group to be responsible and trustworthy, to "know more," to be resourceful, and to contribute positively to their workplaces as a result of their overseas training.

A third of the returnees attributed negative attitudes to their co-workers. These included feelings of

jealousy, of being threatened by better-educated returnees, and of sensitivity to inappropriately expressed ideas and suggestions. As Table 4-16 shows, few returnees attributed only negative attitudes to co-workers; more often they described a mixture of positive and negative attitudes.

Table 4-16

Interviewees' Perceptions of Co-Workers' Attitudes  
Toward the College-Educated

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Positive Attitudes	9	3	12	24
Negative Attitudes	1	0	3	4
Mixed Attitudes	4	2	1	7

While interviewees generally felt that their co-workers regarded them positively, many were aware that returnees were closely watched as a group, particularly by their elders. According to a Yapese woman, "People keep an eye on you when you return to see if you are putting yourself up or acting like an American." "In America, people do their own thing and don't care about other people," a Palauan returnee observed, "but here, man, they really care. ...If you want to be clean [keep a good reputation], get the hell out of Palau."

Interviewees commonly spoke of having returned with behaviors that were upsetting to traditional Micronesian

sensibilities, or that were considered "Americanized." Some of these behavioral conflicts were enumerated earlier in connection with the preceding research question on job-related cultural conflicts.<sup>5</sup> In addition, interviewees understood that clothing and speech were easily observed markers of "Americanization," as was long hair when worn by men. Female interviewees found they could be branded as "playgirls" for wearing the most modest of women's shorts; women's thighs are to Micronesians what their breasts are to Americans. Several interviewees commented that their daily experience in speaking English while overseas altered their pronunciation and intonation of their own languages, and that they were chided for this until, with time, they lost their "foreign" accents. It also took awhile for some interviewees to change attitudes toward time and punctuality learned in America's less casual society. One interviewee who, in his desire to keep a scheduled appointment, did not stop to speak to an acquaintance on the path but simply said a few words while passing indicated he was scolded and told to "come back here and tell us what you're talking about."

Interviewees commonly reported their desire to participate freely in discussions with their elders, a value they learned in the more democratic atmosphere of the U.S., to be a source of friction. Equally disturbing to older Micronesians

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<sup>5</sup>Supra., pp. 105-108.

was the directness with which many interviewees expressed themselves. Older people interviewed in all three states, including many who attended college themselves before the "educational explosion" of the 1970's, commonly characterized younger returnees as being "only good for talk." People in the community can see its problems for themselves, a Yapese woman explained, so that when they hear the young commenting openly on social ills and suggesting reforms, they "wonder what they are trying to prove."

Though interviewees in all three states described misunderstandings which arose from these differences in behavior, those in the outer islands of Yap found them to be tolerated the least. One such outer island interviewee said his parents criticized him for acting like a foreigner when he first returned. Another, who came to the district center of Colonia after an absence of several years, was at first thought to be a Black American Peace Corps Volunteer because of his openness in dealing with Yapese of all ages and ranks.

Balanced against this strong Yapese sentiment against foreign values is the fact that three recent returnees, including one outer islander, won District Legislature seats there in 1978.

Summary. While interviewees generally felt that their co-workers regarded them positively, many said that older Micronesians watched them closely for signs of being "Americanized." Clothing and speech were two such "markers"

which distinguished the overseas-educated, as were certain attitudes toward time and punctuality, and towards interpersonal relationships. While interviewees in all three states felt that older Micronesians were critical of such novel behaviors, those in Yap's outer islands found them to be tolerated the least.

Who are the returnees' friends? Do returnees insulate themselves from cultural conflict by interacting with a "binational third culture," including other college-educated people or expatriates?

Table 4-17 summarizes interviewees' responses when asked how many of their good friends were expatriates or had gone to college outside Micronesia.

Table 4-17

Interviewees' Interaction with Expatriates or  
Others Educated Overseas

	Expatriate Friends			Overseas-Educated Friends		
	Palau	Yap	Truk	Palau	Yap	Truk
None	1	1	6	0	0	5
Less than One-Fourth of Friends	7	2	4	0	1	3
One-Fourth to One-Half of Friends	5	1	3	6	0	5
More than One-Half of Friends	0	0	2	8	3	4

While only two interviewees had large numbers of expatriate friends, twenty-four, or three-fourths of them, considered at least one expatriate to be a "good friend." More than two-thirds had either visited expatriates in their homes, or had them as guests in their own homes, in the three month period prior to the interview. Interviewees in the three states studied did not vary greatly according to these measures of their contact with non-Micronesians.

Table 4-17 also shows that many of the interviewees' friends were themselves returned college students. Trukese interviewees were somewhat less cliquish in this regard than Palauans or Yapese.

Among the reasons interviewees expressed for their tendency to associate so greatly with other returnees were commonality of experience and values. Interviewees commonly reported having had difficulty re-establishing ties with old friends when they first returned. They came back to find that they no longer shared interests with old acquaintances, many of whom had married in the interim and taken different courses in life. These interviewees noted that it often took several months to "break the ice" with old friends, who were often reserved and hesitant to talk to the college-educated, apparently believing them to be too intelligent to listen to them. These interviewees usually had to take the initiative themselves; some who had difficulty figuring out the correct approach were never able to re-establish links with certain

old friends.

Interviewees found fewer constraints when cultivating friendships with other returnees. A recent returnee in Truk explained that it was easy to recognize college students by their dress and by the way they talk. While older Micronesians often devalued such characteristics as evidence of "Americanization," other returnees were naturally more accepting. Interviewees also said they were able to carry on certain valued practices only with other returnees. Marijuana smoking was one example they gave. Another was a Western style of reciprocity, in which favors were repaid quickly and equally, and which several interviewees said was a relief from the burden of traditional customs of exchange.

Summary. Many of the interviewees' friends were themselves returned students. Interviewees reported having had difficulty re-establishing old friendships when they returned. Their commonality of experience made it easier for returnees to build friendships with one another. Similarly, interviewees found that they shared values; other returnees were more accepting of various "Americanized" behaviors than other Micronesians.

Chapter V  
Discussion of Findings  
and Summary

This study's primary purpose has been to help Micronesians and their leaders determine a suitable policy regarding the movement of students overseas. To accomplish this purpose, the study has sought to examine the various claims made by both critics and proponents of overseas education and to provide an evaluation of returnees' social adjustment.

Accordingly, this discussion of findings looks first at interviewees' social adjustment and weighs the evidence those findings offer for or against the claims of critics and supporters alike.

One of this study's basic assumptions has been that overseas education benefits any acculturating community to the extent that it enables any of its members to function as cultural interpreters. Thus, the chapter's second section examines the findings relevant to the three factors which influence social adjustment (namely, second-culture orientation, occupational role, and reference group) to ascertain how these affect returnees' tendencies to serve as cultural interpreters.

The chapter's third section focuses on alternative policies Micronesians might follow regarding overseas education. It examines policies which might better prepare overseas students to function as cultural interpreters on their return.

The chapter concludes with a summary of the study's major findings and conclusions.

### Discussion of Findings

#### Social Adjustment

The findings presented in the previous chapter do not consistently support either the critics or the supporters of overseas education. However, at least one of the critics' charges is well-grounded: students definitely undergo changes while overseas. As a government administrator from Yap's Ulithi atoll observed, "no matter how you look at it, once a child goes out, regardless of age, he will bring changes."

If changes in values or behavior are inevitable among returnees, how deep or disruptive are they to the individuals themselves or to their communities? Interviewees maintain that while overseas, they learn first and foremost about their fields of study, and secondarily about American culture. They regard most of what they learn outside their formal training as "somewhat valuable" at best.

This finding accords with that of earlier studies of overseas students, and with the common observation, not researched in this study, that Micronesians interact largely with their compatriots while overseas. Few interviewees admit to adopting specific values or practices from Americans. Trukese interviewees, in particular, feel they are accused

unjustly of returning with new and foreign values. One explained that while he did return with some new ideas, he simply "added" these to his Trukese ways of living. He did not feel that he changed as a result, saying that "my culture stays where it belongs."

While many returnees may, like this individual, be unaware of changes, Micronesians apparently perceive returnees to behave differently. Many Micronesians, including many returnees, agree that the group is marked by distinctive manners of dress, speech, even general demeanor.

Less superficial changes are also evident, particularly in returnees' attitudes toward personal freedom and independence. Interviewees commonly describe as a valuable part of their overseas experience not only their exposure to a different cultural setting, but their ability to adapt to it. Palauans, for example, particularly prize the independence they first enjoyed while overseas, the feeling of "being one's own boss" and of "standing on one's own feet." The Trukese and many of the Yapese, on the other hand, appraise highly the ability they gained while overseas to communicate and be open with other people.

In effect, the Micronesian students' sojourns in America introduce and reinforce behaviors that are not nurtured at home. While returnees may not realize that they have adopted new practices, they become aware of conflicts when they return to Micronesia and find their new ways are

reinforced no longer.

Returnees who, as explained earlier, come to prize some degree of personal independence while overseas, often resent their kinsmen's demands that they share their resources. Palauan returnees in particular are often resentful of the demands their culture's ocheraol system places on their salaries.

Trukese returnees, who do not emphasize such feelings of independence as being a valuable product of their overseas experience, encounter a different kind of conflict. While they are not as troubled as the Palauans by family demands, they find that other Micronesians do not always appreciate the open and direct manner of relating to others that they came to value while overseas. Many Trukese interviewees comment, for instance, that they meet with resistance, even outright dismay, when they air their views freely at clan gatherings or other meetings.

Thus, the kinds of cultural conflict a returnees experiences are rooted in the kinds of values one brings back from overseas. While certain conflicts of values and behavior are more critical in one Micronesian state than in another, Micronesian cultures are similar enough that the same kinds of conflicts occur to some degree everywhere. Thus, Palauans are not alone in complaining about family demands, nor are family demands the only source of frictions they experience.

Certain returnees have profound problems. A Catholic

sister and long-time resident of Micronesia has observed individuals, for instance, who have attained responsible and overly demanding jobs. She notes that they become discouraged when their shortcomings draw criticism, and often turn to alcohol, which further impairs their job performance, causes greater criticism, and traps them in a debilitating downward spiral.

This study did not attempt to gather information on the sensitive area of alcohol use, and so cannot confirm these observations. The researcher did not routinely develop an intimacy with interviewees that would lead them to divulge these more difficult adjustment problems. Two of the four interviewees whose clan and personal connections eventually placed them in difficult jobs did admit that they were trying to overcome drinking problems. However, since alcohol abuse is widespread in Micronesia, to relate its existence among returnees to job difficulty or to overseas education generally would be overly simplistic.

This study did not find serious readjustment problems among more than a handful of interviewees. Nor did its findings support the criticism that returnees are so dissatisfied with the restrictiveness of Micronesian life that many plan to migrate. Only one of the study's thirty-four interviewees plans a permanent move away from Micronesia. Still, one-third of the interviewees, mostly Palauans and Yapese, hope to migrate temporarily, and nearly 60 percent intend to return to

school in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

Whether or not such intentions to return abroad indicate alienation from Micronesian cultures is unclear. The plans of many returnees are largely pragmatic. They plan to leave temporarily to get better-paying jobs, to save money, or to advance themselves outside until they perceive the political climate at home to be more conducive to success. As stated above, only one interviewee in this study hoped to leave permanently. More typical was the comment of a Trukese woman, who said she always thought about going away, only to find once outside that she missed the islands and had to return. As a disgruntled Palauan allowed, "like it or not, this is home."

This study found a great deal of evidence that returnees' readjustment problems are usually not severe, certainly not sufficiently severe to prompt a mass migration, and that much of the criticism of the psychological cost of overseas education to students is overstated. Specifically, the study found that when returnees realize that something in their behavior differs from that of others in the community, they often change that behavior. Certain behaviors, such as punctuality or the maintenance of a full and controlled schedule of work activities, are soon modified. Returnees

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<sup>1</sup>A clientele evidently exists for yet another wave of educational expansion, this time to graduate school. Difficulties in obtaining financial aid may prevent many from going.

"slow down" and assume their neighbors' less frantic pace. They also learn quickly that the direct style of communication they found so convenient in the U.S. is unappreciated, and they develop a more deferential and circumlocutious style --a more traditional pattern that one older returnee describes as "beating around the bush."

Other findings contradict the critics' charge that overseas education alienates students from their home societies. When asked directly whether they now value their culture more or less than when they went away to college, two-thirds of the interviewees studied in each state said that they value it more. Returnees, at least in Yap and Truk, did not generally disagree to any great extent with traditional Micronesian values. In rating their own positions on four key traditional values, Yapese and Trukese regarded their opinions as little different from their compatriots'.

The Palauans expressed stronger differences, but not in any consistent direction. Some said they were less traditional than other Palauans with regard to certain social norms but more traditional with regard to others. They were especially split on the issue of kin obligations, perhaps because of their broad range of perceptions of the costs and benefits inherent in their culture's ocheraol exchange system.<sup>2</sup> In any event, Palauan returnees obviously held highly

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<sup>2</sup>Supra., pp. 66-67, 78-79.

conflicting feelings toward their home.

Before these conflicts are attributed to overseas education, it should be noted that young Palauans have long complained about the ocheraol. Things were really no different fifteen years ago, when Roland and Maryanne Force observed that

young, employed men particularly deplore this system, but are powerless to stop the arrangement. Their salaries are constantly eaten away by such claims made upon them.<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, Homer Barnett noted that the exchange systems are supported by Palauan elders

against the almost solid opposition of the younger men. The latter believe themselves to be victimized by an outmoded system which exploits their abilities for the benefit of the oldsters who have a vested interest in it.<sup>4</sup>

Young Palauans have complained about traditional exchange systems since the 1960's, when overseas education was still rare. Moreover, several returnees commented that the ocheraol itself has changed. They claimed that its burdens have become unmanageable as other Palauans have adapted it to tap the resources of a new salaried class, a class of which returnees are usually members.

The dissatisfactions many Palauan returnees have with

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<sup>3</sup>Roland W. Force and Maryanne T. Force, "Political Change in Microneisa," Induced Political Change in the Pacific, ed. Roland Force (Honolulu: Bishop Museum, 1965), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Homer G. Barnett, Being a Palauan (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 62.

the ocheraol system illustrate one of this study's principle findings: some of the tension returnees experience in their readjustments stems not from a disagreement with traditional patterns, but from what they see as the corruption these patterns undergo as Micronesian societies change. For instance, several interviewees blamed the introduction of money for what they saw as a weakening of the extended family's solidarity, and for an increase in interfamilial competition. Other returnees are alarmed by Micronesians' growing taste for consumer goods, a taste which leads to dependence on foreign assistance and undercuts local productivity. Returnees share with their elders a concern with wayward high school youth "who don't know their culture" and who develop behaviors which, in the words of one interviewee, "aren't Yapese, probably aren't American," but are something connected neither to traditional mores nor to a new model for living.

Much of the stress returnees experience was perhaps best described by a small group of articulate interviewees who spoke of being adrift between two cultures. The anxiety of living in a society changing so rapidly that no firm models, no firm ideas of a "Micronesian way" are available, is probably widespread not only among returnees, but among many younger Micronesians. If so, it is difficult to speak of returnees as alienated from a set of cultural values, because these values are themselves no longer well-defined. It becomes a question of "alienation from what?" or "adjustment

to what?" Like their less-educated compatriots, Micronesian returnees are members of acculturating communities, and are attempting to resolve the stress associated with culture change.

As a group, returnees have dealt with this stress and readjusted without experiencing the major difficulties many critics of overseas education had predicted. Perhaps some of the critics have been overly pessimistic. Like the older Micronesians who watch returned students for signs of "Americanization," they may have prejudged returnees without observing the subtle ways in which they have adapted to their communities' patterns of living.

At the same time, certain factors may make returnees readjustment easier now than in the future. For instance, the region's current state of political transition, while a time of uncertainty for many returnees, is also a time of hope for those who anticipate broader opportunities for their clans and themselves under a new political order. If and when a new power structure solidifies, certain returnees may lose this source of optimism, and may find adjustment more difficult. Similarly, the prospect of returning to the U.S. for further education, a choice 60 percent of this study's interviewees hope to take, may represent a safety valve, an alternative path that returnees believe they can follow if things do not work out at home. The relatively mild adjustment problems returnees describe now may become larger in

their perceptions if this safety valve is ever removed.

Thus, while returnees have adjusted to Micronesian life in a way which currently belies the more dire predictions made by critics of overseas education, they may find satisfaction more elusive in the years ahead. Certainly, their readjustment has not been so successful as to justify the sanguine claims made by overseas education's supporters. For example, this study found that relatively few students return to fill the valuable role of a cultural interpreter. Reasons for this are explored in the following section.

#### Cultural Interpreters

The review of research literature pertaining to acculturating communities which was presented in Chapter II described the groupings into which the members of such communities typically divide. This study has not attempted to identify the acculturative categories or roles which individual interviewees filled. Behavioral guidelines were not available to distinguish, for instance, between "transitional" and "elite-acculturated" returnees. Besides, the social utility of either of these roles, their value as models for other members of the acculturating community, is minimal. More useful and valuable is the role of the cultural interpreter. Thus, the study attempted only to identify those interviewees who could be categorized as cultural interpreters. Table 5-1 shows the number of interviewees who were so

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identified.

Table 5-1  
Number of Interviewees Serving as  
Cultural Interpreters

	Palau	Yap	Truk	Total
Interpreters	2	5	3	10
Total	16	9	19	44

In order to suggest reasons for the small number of returnees who act as cultural interpreters, it is necessary to review the study's findings which relate to the three factors which influence social adjustment--the returnee's second-culture orientation, the occupational role one fills upon returning; and the way one chooses and interacts with a reference group once back home.

Second-Culture Orientation. The study's findings suggest that Micronesians do not attend U.S. colleges because they are strongly attracted to American culture or influenced by Americans. This conclusion is supported by the interesting finding that while most of the interviewees must have had almost daily contact with expatriates, at least with classroom teachers, few actually said they had interacted with Americans before going overseas.

In fact, students usually decide to go away to college very late in their high school careers, usually in the junior

or senior year, and their major reason for going is the belief that overseas education will help them obtain good jobs when they return.<sup>5</sup>

Micronesian students' career-orientation, intent to return, and evident lack of culture-learning overseas may help explain why so few of them serve on their return as cultural interpreters. They may not, as a group, approach the overseas sojourn with the openness that would permit them to evaluate their own culture critically. It is interesting, though certainly not conclusive, that of the six cultural interpreters who gave their reasons for going overseas, three said their primary reason was to travel and see another culture. This ratio far exceeds that found for the interviewees as a group.

Returnees' predominant career-orientation probably also eases their readjustment. Because they did not travel to America primarily to experience its culture, they did not seem to adopt American values to any large or at least conscious degree. Had they gone to America dissatisfied with their own cultures or hoping to learn more about American culture, they may have become more "Americanized" and experienced greater adjustment problems on their return.

Occupational Roles. Since most overseas students go

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<sup>5</sup>It seems that overseas education has also become something of a rite of passage, and that many Micronesians go overseas simply because they feel it is the thing to do at their age or because they don't want to be left behind.

away to improve their job prospects at home, they presumably need good jobs in order to readjust satisfactorily. This study found that a college degree does "pay off" and that interviewees' career goals are satisfied to a degree. All but one of the study's interviewees found white-collar jobs.<sup>6</sup> Although some complain that they have been preempted from higher positions by older Micronesians, many with lesser academic qualifications, nearly two-thirds of the study's interviewees found jobs related to their expectations while in college and of a level of difficulty at least equal to their abilities.

To be perceived as satisfactory, and to permit the returnee to act as a cultural interpreter, a job must not only fit one's area of training, but must not entrap one in conflicting cultural demands. One should not have to defy cultural demands in order to perform a job properly. Though such problems are not widespread, returnees are more likely to experience them if they either hold high positions which give them control over hiring or if they have to deal with traditional leaders.

While a returnee must be able to make sensitive innovations to serve as a cultural interpreter, it is uncertain how important the opportunity to innovate is to job satisfaction. About half of the interviewees feel they have

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<sup>6</sup>As discussed earlier in the description of the sample, this does not necessarily reflect accurately the job prospects all returnees encounter.

contributed to positive changes where they work. Of the remainder, three-fourths report that they have yet to suggest changes. These "non-innovators" are especially numerous in Truk, where they outnumber successful innovators more than two-to-one. The reverse is true in Palau. This difference may owe to the relative youth of the Trukese interviewees, who may not have worked in their jobs long enough to be confident in making suggestions to their supervisors. The difference may also owe to the Palauans being more aggressive, a trait commonly noted in Micronesian ethnographies.<sup>7</sup>

Only one interviewee in eight encounters resistance to his attempts at innovation. The single most important factor affecting one's ability to innovate appears to be one's relationship with the job supervisor. Not only are unsympathetic supervisors the most frequently cited obstacle to innovation, but interviewees who are relatively free from direct supervision innovate more often than others. One such group are teachers; nine of the twelve teachers who responded to the relevant questionnaire item say that they have innovated in their jobs. Similarly, seven of the ten cultural interpreters identified in this study were classroom teachers or in positions with relatively little direct supervision.

The study did find that interviewees generally favor

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<sup>7</sup>See for instance William H. Alkire, An Introduction to the Peoples and Cultures of Micronesia (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1972), p. 18.

white-collar jobs. A large majority of them sought government jobs upon their return. Government seems to be an employer of first resort for several reasons; not only does it offer high pay and prestige, but its wages are steadier and its pace of work less demanding than in private businesses.

Nevertheless, interviewees do not generally rate government work to be highly desirable. A major source of their disaffection is the family politics associated with government service. Returnees whose expectations of government work are founded in a Western image of a professional civil service, selected according to merit and dedicated to serving the larger society, are disillusioned with the reality of the Micronesian civil service. Though Micronesian governments are modeled on Western institutions, they are manned by Micronesians who bring their own value to their operation. These values include the assumption that the individual's duty lies primarily toward his kin, and the expectation that an individual will use his position in society to further his family's interests.

Interestingly, though the Trukese complain most frequently about the influence of clan politics in government, they are the only group to rate the occupation as highly desirable. The Palauans prefer instead business and professional careers, and the Yapese are alone in indicating substantial interest in farming or fishing (although the number of Yapese interviewed was too small to ensure that this difference is meaningful).

The Yapese also rate teaching and political involvement lower than their counterparts in the other two states, possibly because of the constraints which the Yapese social system imposes on its classrooms and its political institutions. For instance, a Yapese teacher who is a woman or low caste faces severe limits in dealing with upper-caste students. Likewise, caste position dictates the relative influence of individuals from Yap's various islands and municipalities.

It is striking that interviewees perceive few occupations as very desirable. There is evidence that they are not totally satisfied with their present jobs; only one in five hopes to be in his or her present job ten years from now, and only the Trukese rate their present jobs to be very desirable.

The occupation to which the largest group of interviewees aspires is business ownership. This may owe to the presence, particularly in Palau and Truk, of an identifiable business elite. These men control not only great personal wealth, but hold important political positions. Like many of the interviewees who hope to emulate them, they acquired their initial capital through their salaries as government workers. Only time will tell if a new generation of Micronesian entrepreneurs will emerge to contribute to the area's relatively small private economic sector. It is the general opinion of most older Micronesians interviewed that young returnees are "only good for talk," and that their plans to enter business are only dreams.

At any rate, returnees' career aspirations clearly exceed the expectations they hold upon returning. If the young are blocked in their desire to advance by traditional hierarchies or other restraints, the relatively mild frustrations they report in this study could become more intense with time. Similarly, future college graduates could experience greater readjustment problems if they are unable to fulfill even their most basic expectations.

Despite these reservations, the job-related conflicts returnees report in the present study are relatively minor. Few returnees face job-related obstacles to serving as cultural interpreters, for instance. More severe are the conflicts which stem from the expectations of one's family or of others with whom the returnee deals outside the job itself. Returnees' interaction with these reference groups, the third major factor affecting their readjustment, is discussed next.

Reference Groups. The expectations returnees face from key reference groups, particularly their kinsmen, are the most important source of their adjustment problems.

Returnees generally feel that other Micronesians, especially older ones, watch them closely for signs of becoming "Americanized." These signs are apparent for anyone who wishes to note them. Returnees are marked by the way they dress or wear their hair. They often behave differently; they are less casual than most Micronesians in their attitudes toward time, and less formal and circumspect in their conversation.

Because returnees find that these differences in behavior are more accepted by other returnees than by those who have not traveled abroad, they tend to choose other returnees as their friends. By virtue of these mutual friendships, returnees could be said to form an identifiable subculture.

Two observers of Palauan politics noted the existence of such a group when they described the Save Palau Committee, an organization which has opposed local legislators' and businessmen's efforts to establish an oil transshipment facility in the state, as a union of traditional chiefs and Palau's "young Western-educated intelligentsia."<sup>8</sup> Likewise, a group called the Concerned Citizens of Truk, comprised largely of returnees, promotes goals of national unity and self-sufficiency.

The finding that other Micronesians tend to devalue different behavior among returnees contrasts with that of Sherwood Lingenfelter's study of political roles in Yap's changing society.<sup>9</sup> Lingenfelter found a certain amount of tolerance to exist for different behavior among the college-educated. In order to act as agents of culture contact, as cultural interpreters in effect, and to deal with Americans in order to obtain benefits for their people, college-educated

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<sup>8</sup>John Seeger and Mac Marshall, "Port Pacific: An Anthropological View," The American Pacific, 2,4 (October-December 1977), p. 18.

<sup>9</sup>Supra., pp. 40-41 discusses Lingenfelter's study.

Yapese were permitted to be more "precocious and domineering" than traditional leaders.

The social and political structures of Micronesian societies have changed in the years since Lingenfelter studied Yap. Micronesians have moved into government positions at virtually every level. Instead of acting as intermediaries between an American administration and the traditional leaders, college-educated Micronesians increasingly are the administration. Instead of having indirect responsibilities to their people, increasingly their responsibilities are direct.

It is possible that, with the disappearance of the intermediary's role, dispensations for different behaviors have also vanished. Older Micronesians interviewed in all three states agree that recent returnees compare unfavorably with earlier ones in the quality of the work they do, and in the respect they pay to traditional culture.<sup>10</sup>

Thus Micronesians no longer tolerate behavior from

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<sup>10</sup>This perception also stems from other sources. The number of students matriculating overseas is now so large, and the criteria for their selection so much looser, that a drop in their average quality is understandable. In addition, Micronesian students in the U.S. are exposed to the culture of the college campus, a culture which has changed greatly since a select group of Micronesians began attending in the early 1960's. Later generations of graduates have imported to Micronesian the blue jeans and long hair, and some of the political activism, of more recent times. In doing so, they may have eroded some of the respect for overseas education which their earlier, more "clean-cut" counterparts established.

college-educated individuals which they would deplore in others. As more returnees reenter Micronesian societies at all levels, they are held accountable to the same standards as persons less educated.

By the same token, as Micronesians replace Americans in positions of political and economic power, and as they learn to manipulate new institutional avenues leading to power and status, Micronesian families tend to recruit their overseas-educated members to obtain prestigious jobs, earn salaries, and help improve their clans' positions.

Few returnees can function as cultural interpreters in this atmosphere of clan competition. Significantly, five of the ten cultural interpreters identified in this study are from Yap, the least developed of the three states studied. Yap's traditional culture has been the least disrupted by the status competition associated with the cash economy and other modern institutions. In addition, Yap's rigid caste system simply permits less manipulation of individual or clan status than the relatively more fluid social systems of Truk or, especially, Palau. Returnees in those two states have as models many of their compatriots who have followed modern avenues to power and status and thus feel more keenly the pressures of clan competition.

To the extent that these students view overseas education as a means to obtain status for themselves or their families, their aspirations may become a problem for social

policy. This will be especially true if, as is likely, their aspirations are not greatly satisfied. Though today's returnees do not experience major violations of their expectations, future graduates may if they find high-level jobs occupied, or if the termination of the Trusteeship reduces the number of available white-collar jobs.

### Policy Recommendations

In the face of their youth's high aspirations, what policy should Micronesian governments adopt with regard to overseas education? Should they continue to encourage the movement of students overseas through financial aid or loan schemes? Or should they stem the movement by limiting educational grants or even by restricting the issuance of passports?

. A proper policy must take into account a major conclusion of this study--that overseas education by itself is not responsible for the high aspirations of many returnees. They generally see overseas education as a means to fulfill desires they already have for high-paying jobs and modern consumer goods.

Moreover, although students may change while overseas and experience conflict when they return, the major source of their readjustment problems would appear to be the demands clan members make on their talents in the competition for wealth and status. This competition has antecedents in Micronesia's traditional mores, but has been widened and perhaps

intensified by the introduction of foreign political and economic institutions, which offer new ways to obtain wealth and status.

One danger, it would seem, is that some might be tempted to use educational policy to enhance their own standing in this competition. Since a college degree earned overseas is a requisite to a lucrative job, officials empowered with granting the opportunity to travel abroad for study could use their positions to ensure that selected individuals will obtain that status and that others will be denied it.

A restrictive and politically-motivated policy toward overseas education would very likely cause Micronesian states to experience the economic stagnation and political dissension that plagues such states as Liberia or the Cook Islands. Moreover, it would ignore the present study's findings that overseas education benefits many returnees in non-economic ways by helping them realize the nature and value of Micronesian cultures and by helping them understand the process and ramifications of culture change.

Any policy toward overseas education must deal with the goals of status competition, with the benefits and costs students perceive to inhere in a college education. Such a policy must balance the supply and demand for overseas education with the supply and demand for the benefits, jobs and status, which education is seen to provide.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>The following "supply and demand" analysis owes much in its conception to Edgar Edwards and Michael Todaro,

The policy focus most widely considered by Micronesian leaders thus far has been to limit the supply of overseas education. The introductory chapter mentioned several proposals Micronesian educators and lawmakers have made to limit the numbers of students traveling to the U.S. This policy has the advantages not only of a certain degree of logic but of convenience. It is logical because the current system fails to meet many of Micronesia's manpower needs; students' choice of fields of study is not regulated to produce trained graduates in the fields where they are most needed. It is convenient because it allows Micronesia's new elite, legislators and businessmen among others, to limit competition for the roles they currently hold.

However, a policy which limits educational opportunities does not confront the demand which currently exists for overseas education. An alternative policy could attempt to meet this demand by offering educational opportunities other than four-year sojourns at American colleges. Such opportunities might include, for example, short-term training programs or cultural exchanges. Not only could such a scheme involve a greater number of individuals, its flexibility could allow planners to meet specific manpower and training needs quickly. Increased emphasis on cultural exchanges and the cultural

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"Education and Employment in Developing Countries" in F.C. Ward (ed.) Education and Development Reconsidered: The Belagio Conference Papers (New York: Praeger, 1974), pp. 3-22.

aspects of overseas experience might also make students more sensitive to the ramifications of culture change, and better prepare them to serve as cultural interpreters.

These kinds of alternative educational opportunities, while they may fill gaps in manpower needs or heighten sensitivity to culture change, will not replace the demand for an education which leads to the status of lucrative white-collar jobs. This demand can be reduced only if the perceived benefits of overseas education in these areas are reduced.

For instance, the perceived link between overseas education and white-collar employment might be weakened if overseas students were required to spend a year or longer, either before or after they go abroad, in some sort of community service.

Perhaps the most effective way to break the link between education and white-collar status would be to decrease the vast difference between wages in Micronesia's traditional and modern sectors. The attraction of white-collar employment could be alleviated if those jobs were not so profitable in comparison with other kinds of work. The reduction of wages in the modern sector would also free vital funds for rural development, and perhaps help slow the bifurcation of Micronesian societies into district centers and rural communities.

Obviously, such policies are not primarily educational

in nature. They are very difficult political ones. So is the principle issue of the returnees' social adjustment not educational but political. The stresses with which returnees must deal are not the result of an "educational explosion" as much as they inhere in modern Micronesia's changing social structures. As wholly new economic classes emerge to fill the gaps left behind by a departing foreign administration, returnees join their compatriots in a general competition for newly available political and economic opportunities.

It remains to be seen whether Micronesia's new leaders will have the political will to deal with the issues of economic aspirations and the growing split between their societies' rural and urban sectors. Leaders in government and other institutions have a stake in the current system of overseas education because they use it to identify eligible new employees. However, the link between overseas education and white-collar employment has resulted in a demand for overseas education which exceeds the resources Micronesian societies can afford to devote to satisfy it. This problem can only be remedied through potentially unpopular policies which either sever the link between overseas education and lucrative modern-sector jobs, or makes the jobs themselves less lucrative.

#### Summary

Since 1973, when the U.S. Congress extended eligibility

to Micronesian high school graduates for various educational assistance monies, relatively large numbers of Micronesian youths have enrolled in U.S. colleges. The effects of overseas education on these students' readjustments to their home societies, and the influence of this influx of returned students on Micronesian societies themselves, has become controversial. With the U.S. Trusteeship over the region scheduled to terminate in 1981, various Micronesian governments will gain greater control over the movement of students overseas, and must develop a suitable policy toward overseas education.

This study has attempted to aid Micronesian policymakers by providing an evaluation of returnees' social adjustment in Micronesia's acculturating communities. In reviewing previous studies of returned students in other such communities, it has identified a type of adjustment, that of the cultural interpreter, which would be valuable in Micronesia. The study thus has also sought to determine the frequency with which Micronesian returnees serve as cultural interpreters.

An examination of previous studies also led to the identification of three aspects of a returnee's experience which influence readjustment: second-culture orientation, occupational role, and reference group. The study has attempted to link social adjustment, particularly that of the cultural interpreter, with these three factors in order to suggest ways that a policy toward overseas education might increase the possibility that returnees will fill interpreter roles.

The study employed interviews and written questionnaires to collect information from 44 returnees in the Micronesian states of Palau, Yap, and Truk. Interviewees were chosen to represent a wide range of economic, social, and occupational circumstances. All of them had traveled to the U.S. since 1970 to pursue their first post-secondary degrees, and all had been away at least two years.

The study's findings indicate that returnees have adjusted to Micronesian life in a way which belies the more ominous visions of overseas education's critics. Returnees do change while overseas, and some have serious adjustment problems on their return. However, most avoid conflict by changing their novel behavior to fit the Micronesian setting.

Moreover, many of the conflicts returnees encounter result not from specifically "American" values which they import, but from attitudes, like a valuing of personal independence, which they learn as a result of adapting to a new environment overseas. Most students, rather than becoming "Americanized," feel they value Micronesian cultures more after being away. In fact, their dissatisfactions seem to stem less from any alienation from traditional Micronesian mores than from disagreements with certain modern aspects of Micronesian societies.

Chief among these "modern" aspects is the way status competition, always a part of Micronesian societies, has been enhanced by political and economic changes which have opened

new avenues to power and status. Students who return with newly-obtained abilities to win lucrative jobs and earn prestige find that their families recruit them to aid the kin group in this competition. Kinsmen regard returnees' own aspirations as of secondary importance, and demand a great deal of their resources, including their earnings.

Most students themselves believe overseas education to be the key to a good job. Nevertheless, the demands they face from kinsmen are one of the most important sources of readjustment difficulties. These demands are also an important factor, along with students' career-orientation, in limiting the number of returnees who are able to assume the role of cultural interpreter.

A policy toward overseas education must take into account this study's finding that overseas education itself is not the source of returnees' aspirations. Students generally regard overseas education as a requisite to the status and wealth in turn associated with white-collar employment. While educational policy can call for the replacement of two- and four-year college sojourns with short-term technical and cultural exchanges to address specific manpower needs or emphasize the valuable cultural aspects of overseas experience, it cannot break the perceived link between white-collar employment and overseas education. This link has caused a demand for overseas education which Micronesian governments simply will not have the funds to satisfy, and can only be

broken by policies whose bases are political more than educational.

## Appendix

## Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire items used in this study are listed below. They are organized according to the four principle areas of investigation on which they focused: social adjustment, second-culture orientation, occupational roles, and reference groups.

Social Adjustment

1. For the following four statements, indicate whether you are more or less traditional than (a) other members of your family and (b) your friends. Use the following scale:

- 1 - I am much more traditional.
- 2 - I am somewhat more traditional.
- 3 - Our opinions are about the same.
- 4 - I am somewhat less traditional.
- 5 - I am much less traditional.

- a) Micronesians have traditionally considered men to be superior to women. They have felt that men and women have separate roles, and that women should not take over roles filled by men.

compared to other family members \_\_\_\_\_

compared to friends \_\_\_\_\_

- b) Micronesians have traditionally believed that authority and power rest in the older or chiefly members of the society. They believe that younger people should have very limited influence on decisions.

compared to other family members \_\_\_\_\_

compared to friends \_\_\_\_\_

- c) Micronesians have traditionally regarded obligations to kin as more important than individual wants and ambitions.

compared to other family members \_\_\_\_\_

compared to friends \_\_\_\_\_

- d) Most Micronesian societies traditionally have been more or less stratified. Their members are born into a particular family and social rank, and they accept its special responsibilities, opportunities, and limitations.

compared to other family members \_\_\_\_\_

compared to friends \_\_\_\_\_

2. How did your perception of your own culture change while you were away?

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel that I value my home and culture more highly after being outside.

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't think my feelings have changed much.

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel that I value my culture less after being outside.

3. List any organizations (religious, social, political) of which you are now an active member.

4. What anthropological, historical, or sociological books or articles have you read about Micronesia's people?

5. About how many days a month do you work at farming or gardening, or go out to gather coconuts, fruit, or other food from the land?

6. Since returning from college, in what ways have you tried to explain or teach others about life and people outside Micronesia?

7. Which magazines, periodicals, or newspapers do you subscribe to or buy regularly?

8. Do you have a shortwave radio? If so, what programs do you listen to most often?
9. In the last three months, how many letters have you received from overseas? From what countries?
10. Over the same period of time, how many letters have you sent overseas? To which countries?
11. Would you consider living abroad permanently? If so, why would you want to live overseas? What countries would you prefer to live in?
12. Would you consider sending your children overseas for their college education? Explain why or why not.
13. Would you consider planning for your children to live abroad permanently? Explain why or why not.
14. Besides those things you learned as part of your formal education, what was the most important thing you learned while studying overseas?
15. How much do you value the various things you observed while you were away? Rank each of the following items according to this scale.
  - 1 - very valuable and relevant
  - 2 - somewhat valuable
  - 3 - of little value or relevance
  - 4 - not valuable at all or of negative value

\_\_\_\_\_ your training in your particular field

\_\_\_\_\_ things you observed about family life

\_\_\_\_\_ politics and government

\_\_\_\_\_ the role of women

\_\_\_\_\_ religious practices

16. List the languages you speak with the following people or in the following settings. Also please indicate which language you speak most of the time in each situation.

at the present time	in the year before you first went to college
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with relatives  
in the home, in-  
cluding children.

with friends in  
social situations.

with co-workers.

in church.

17. For each language you speak, briefly describe when and how you learned it.

### Second-Culture Orientation

1. What college(s) did you attend overseas? Please list the approximate dates you attended them and the reasons you transferred to different schools.
2. Please mark the types of funds you used in your study overseas.

\_\_\_\_\_ TTPI scholarship  
 \_\_\_\_\_ BEOG or SEOG  
 \_\_\_\_\_ College Work/Study Program  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Student Loans  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

3. When you went to college for the first time, did you have to leave a job, or refuse a job that had been offered you? If so, please describe the job.

4. When did you first decide to attend college outside Micronesia? Who or what influenced your decision?
5. Describe the contacts you had, if any, with expatriates (including friends, teachers, or co-workers) before you went to college.
6. In the order of their importance, rank the following reasons that you went outside of Micronesia for college. (Mark "1" for the most important reason and "5" for the least important.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Parents or teachers strongly advised me to go.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I felt it would help me to find a better job when I returned.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I wanted a chance to travel outside Micronesia.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I felt I would receive honor and prestige from acquiring a college education at an outside institution.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)
7. Why did you choose the particular college where you first began your studies?
8. What was your field of study?
9. Describe your living situation while in college.
10. If you had roommates, how did you meet them?
11. In what ways did you teach any people overseas about your home?
12. While you were away at college, in what ways and from whom did you learn about other people and cultures in Micronesia?

13. Describe any clubs or organizations you joined while in college.

14. How much did you participate in the activities of any organization for Micronesian students at the college you attended? (Check those which apply.)

inapplicable; there was no such organization at my college.

I was an officer in such an organization.

I attended at least three-fourths of any meetings and activities.

I attended about half of any meetings and activities.

I attended less than half of any meetings and activities.

There was such an organization but I did not participate.

15. Describe any jobs you had while you were overseas, either during the school term or during summer vacation.

#### Occupational Roles

1. While you were still away in college, were you sure of a job when you returned? Were you promised a job by someone or by some agency in Micronesia?

2. At the time you began your studies, what kind of work did you hope to do afterwards?

3. Did you make any contacts about employment, either by mail or during trips back to Micronesia, while you were in college?

4. What was your situation (with regard to residence, work, etc.) for the first three or four months after your return from college?

5. List the kinds of work you have done since returning from college. If possible, give the approximate dates for each.
6. What is your present job? Describe your duties.
7. The responsibilities of my present job are: (Check one)
- \_\_\_\_\_ beyond my ability to handle them. I am considering transferring.
- \_\_\_\_\_ somewhat beyond my abilities. However, I get the advice and help I need to do the job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ about equal to my abilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ not quite equal to my abilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ below my abilities. I often feel bored by this job.
8. List any changes which have come about where you work as a result of your own ideas or suggestions.
9. Rank the following occupations according to how desirable you consider them to be. Rate each job with a number from 1 to 10, based on the following scale: "10"-very desirable; "5"-neutral; "1"-not desirable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher
- \_\_\_\_\_ Professional (doctor, lawyer, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Owner of Business
- \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial Fisherman
- \_\_\_\_\_ Politician
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cash Crop Farmer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Public Works Laborer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Government Worker
- \_\_\_\_\_ Skilled Tradesman
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. What kind of job would you like to have ten years from now?

Reference Groups

1. Which of your relatives also attended college outside Micronesia? What years did they attend?
2. Which of your relatives holds some kind of elected office or other official government position?
3. Of your good friends, how many (what percent?):
  - are from other states in Micronesia?
  - are expatriates, including Americans?
  - have also gone to college outside Micronesia?
4. During the past three months, how many times have you visited expatriates in their homes?
5. During this same period, how many times have expatriates come as guests to your home?
6. How many of your co-workers at your present job are expatriates, including Americans?
 

_____ All	_____ Few
_____ Most	_____ None
_____ Many	
7. How many of your co-workers in your present job are Micronesians who have gone away to college like yourself?
 

_____ All	_____ Few
_____ Most	_____ None
_____ Many	

8. How often do you meet co-workers outside the job?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Almost everyday
  - \_\_\_\_\_ At least once a week
  - \_\_\_\_\_ At least once a month
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Less than once a month
9. How would you describe your co-workers' attitudes toward people who went to college outside Micronesia?
10. When you first returned home, which of your experiences abroad were of the greatest interest to your friends and family?
11. When you came back, what differences of opinions or interests did you notice between yourself and friends or relatives?

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