

ASPECTS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN THREE SAMOAN COMMUNITIES

Maureen H. Fitzgerald
Alan Howard
University of Hawaii

The *'āiga* (family) has long been recognized as the basic unit of Samoan social structure, and as one of Samoan society's most stable features (e.g., Gilson 1963). Not only has the remarkable conservatism of *fa'aSamoa* (Samoan custom, or the Samoan way) been attributed to the *'āiga*, but it has been credited with creating conditions for the successful adaptation of modernizing and migrant Samoans by providing economic, social, and psychological support (Pitt and Macpherson 1974; Macpherson 1978; Higgenbotham and Marsella 1977; Filoiali'i and Knowles 1983).

Yet modernization and migration have resulted in, even necessitated, changes in the structure, function, and accessibility of the *'āiga* (Pitt and Macpherson 1974; Ablon 1971; Kotchek 1978; Filoiali'i and Knowles 1983; Franco 1978). The modern Samoan family is fragmented. Some members are in the home village, others live in the local urban centers, and still others are scattered about in New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii, and the U.S. mainland. For those who live outside Samoa further fragmentation occurs as a result of housing limitations (Filoiali'i and Knowles 1983).

Several observers have noted a shift toward nuclear households and a change in the authority structure of both households and *'āiga* in migrant communities. They have also noted that Samoans abroad widen their social networks and admit non-Samoans into their intimate circles (Pitt and Macpherson 1974; T. Graves 1978; Lyons 1980). Such changes are perhaps inevitable as individuals leave the confines of

homogeneous, well-defined communities and migrate to heterogeneous societies where they are exposed to a broad range of new contingencies.

The impact on social organization of changes taking place within Samoa has been subject to less scrutiny. Conventional wisdom has been that rural Western Samoa represents the most conservative end of a continuum, with American Samoa intermediate and Samoan communities abroad as the least conservative, or most "modern" (e.g., Baker, Hanna, and Baker 1986). While many observers have commented on the obvious differences between Western and American Samoa, brought about by dramatic changes in the latter's economy in the past few decades, few systematic comparisons have been made between them. Evidence from studies of changing health patterns suggests that the "modernization" of American Samoa has resulted in significant changes. Thus the studies reported in Baker, Hanna, and Baker (1986) indicate that the difference between American Samoa and Western Samoa vis-à-vis disease patterns is considerably greater than the difference between American Samoa and migrant communities abroad. This implies that the processes differentially affecting the Samoans--commercialization, urbanization, and Americanization--are more significant than migration abroad as far as health and illness patterns are concerned. Our major concern in this article is to explore the relative importance of *in situ* change, as represented by an American Samoan sample, and migration, as represented by a Hawaiian sample, to see if the same pattern holds for key aspects of social organization.

The data on which this article is based were collected during 1986 and 1987 as part of the University of Hawaii Samoan Stress and Health Project. Interviews were conducted in three locations--a rural village on the island of Savai'i in Western Samoa, seven villages on the southern coast of the island of Tutuila in rapidly modernizing American Samoa, and urban Honolulu, Hawaii. Although the research was designed to obtain information from individuals bearing on the health consequences of modernization and migration, data were also collected concerning their social involvement with kinsmen, non-kin, and organizations since social support was hypothesized to be an important variable influencing health status (Caplan 1974; Cassel 1976; Gottlieb 1981).

Research Sites

The Western Samoan sample comes from a village on the southwest coast of Savai'i. Life in this village, which is recognized by Samoans as one of the most traditional in modern Samoa, contrasts greatly with

that in the two other sites. The economy is based on subsistence agriculture, and *matai* (chiefs) continue to play important, relatively traditional roles in everyday family and village life. Most of those employed outside the village work on government plantations or forestry projects where they engage in activities similar to those involved in subsistence farming (i.e., clearing land and pulling weeds). There is no electricity or running water, and most people live in traditional-style houses (*fale*). Data from this village were collected over a period of three months.

The American Samoan sample was drawn from seven villages on Tutuila. American Samoa has experienced extensive *in situ* modernization since World War II, and rapid change continues. Marked differences between rural and urban areas on the island no longer exist (Hecht, Orans, and Janes 1986; Martz 1982). There is ready access to transportation, electricity, and running water in all seven villages. In spite of such physical changes, however, *fa'aSamoa* and family obligations continue to play central roles in people's lives.

All of the Hawaii respondents reside in the city of Honolulu. We chose an urban sample in order to maximize the contrast with the two Samoa sites, but the sample can be considered representative of young Samoan adults in Hawaii insofar as the vast majority reside in Honolulu (Franco 1987). A large portion of them live, or have lived, in public housing. Although unemployment is a problem, most of the men and a significant proportion of the women are wage earners. In Hawaii *matai* do not have the same degree of influence they enjoy in the Samoas. Titles are likely to be of relevance only during Samoan-oriented events and, since these are limited, the authority of *matai* in Hawaii is considerably more restricted than in Samoa.

Methodology

Forty-eight individuals (23 males, 25 females) were interviewed in Western Samoa, 49 (26 males, 23 females) in American Samoa, and 51 (22 males, 29 females) in Hawaii. Respondents in Honolulu have lived in Hawaii for an average of 11 years (range 3-23 years); 51% have also lived on the U.S. mainland or in New Zealand. Although 15% of the Honolulu sample were born in Hawaii, only about half of them had always lived there. All of the respondents were between 18 and 37 years of age, the most common age group for Samoan migrants (Pirie 1976; Harbison 1986; Hecht, Orans, and Janes 1986). The sociodemographic characteristics of the sample are listed in Table 1.¹

The data on which this article is based derive from two different sets

TABLE 1. **Sociodemographic Characteristics of Samples**

	Western Samoa		American Samoa		Hawaii	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Respondents	23	25	26	23	22	29
Mean Age (years)	24.2	23.7	24.3	23.0	25.9	24.3
Mean Education (years)	8.9	9.8	12.4	13.0	12.6	12.3
Married (%)	39.1	56.0	21.4	28.6	54.5	51.7
Employed (%)	34.8	32.0	61.5	60.9	72.7	48.3
Mean Annual Income (US\$)	642	315	3256	3969	8641	4070

of interviews. The first set aimed at obtaining information directly on each subject's network of relationships and social support system. Respondents were asked to do three things in the following order:

1. On a diagram containing three concentric circles, adapted from Antonucci (1985), they were instructed to write the names of people with whom they "felt close." In the inner circle they were to write the names of people they "feel so close to they could not imagine life without them." In the second circle they were to place the names of people they "feel close to, but not as close as those in the inner circle." The third circle was for people with whom they "feel less close, but who were still important to them." They were instructed to write as many or as few names as they wished.

2. Respondents were asked to provide genealogical information on their household, their siblings, parents, parents' siblings, grandparents, spouse, and children, if any.²

3. Finally, for all of the people identified in stages one and two, respondents were asked to locate them on (or add them to) the genealogy form and then to answer a series of questions concerning social interaction. These included questions on the flow of money, food, goods, and services, as well as whom they go to for advice and support concerning health and personal problems.

The second set of interviews focused on life events, attitudes, and routines. It included questions concerning involvement with kinsmen, friends, *matai*, church, and community organizations.

Findings

Households

Traditionally, the *'āiga* is defined as an extended family: a group tied together by blood, marriage, and adoption. The basic unit for an *'āiga*

is the household, although there is little agreement among Samoan scholars about the Samoan term for this unit.³ For our purposes here we will use the word “*‘aiga*” for the extended family and “household” for that group of people sharing a common residential unit, whether an apartment or a multiple-structure compound.

Households in the Samoas are usually described as extended, but there is little data on the ratio of extended to nuclear households. An exception is Shore’s description of a rural village on Savai’i in Western Samoa (1982:53). From a total of 55 households, Shore identified only 1 as one-generational, 16 as two-generational, and 38 as three-generational. Mead reported that in 1925-1926, on Ta’u, American Samoa, only 12 of 68 households were “qualified biological family” households (1949:172). Franco describes households in Hawaii as having a preponderance of female heads of household (26.8%) and as more likely to have children under age 18 compared to other households in Hawaii (1987:7-8). Oakey’s account of Samoan migrants in U.S. gateway cities (e.g., Honolulu and San Francisco) suggests households there are usually composed of parents, children, and two “other adults” (1980: 195). The “other adults” are often siblings of the parents but may be grandparents, in-laws, nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles, or grandchildren. Pitt and Macpherson indicate that migrant households in New Zealand are generally either nuclear or are composed of “various relatives”: siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins (1974: *passim*).

That more ethnographers have not attempted to give precise information on household size and composition for Samoan communities may reflect some distinct methodological problems that we, too, encountered. Several respondents in each sample were members of the same household and each was asked to list co-members. They often did not agree as to who was or was not a member. To some extent these disagreements were the result of changes that took place between interviews.⁴ Fluidity is a characteristic of Samoan households—people continually move in and out for longer or shorter periods of time, creating an ambiguity with regard to membership. Most of our respondents included only those people in the household at the time of the interview; others included sojourners and temporary residents.⁵ For example, some respondents in Western Samoa included young people away at school but others did not. Some respondents in all three locations included visitors and people who live part-time in their household and part-time in another; others did not. This kind of fluidity accounts for all the household-size discrepancies within our American Samoan sample.

Another source of discrepancy is that Samoans, especially in Western Samoa, often fail to list young children as household members.⁶ In four

Western Samoan cases discrepancies occurred because a child was omitted. During one interview the respondent's sister, who had been interviewed a few days earlier, came by and was helping him with the household listing. When he mentioned a particular child she laughed with embarrassment and told the interviewer she had forgotten to report that child during her interview.

Additional discrepancies occurred in Western Samoa and Hawaii because individuals had different ideas about household membership. For example, in Western Samoa one woman included only those people she regularly interacted with while performing household duties; her brother-in-law included people from all the houses in the large compound. In Hawaii one woman included nieces and nephews who had just arrived from Samoa to attend school while her husband did not.

These problems of determining household membership constitute a problem for census takers that has not been sufficiently emphasized in the literature. Where only one person provides data for each household, awareness of the problems may not emerge, leading to unwarranted acceptance of information on household size and composition. Our way of dealing with this issue is to present ranges for household size rather than single figures. The ranges represent the highest and lowest figures given by different respondents (if more than one) for each household.

Discrepancies in household structure were also noted (see Table 2). Households were categorized as nuclear, subnuclear, or extended. Nuclear households are composed of a married couple, with or without their children. Subnuclear households are composed of adults without spouses, with or without children. Extended households contain grandchildren and/or secondary relatives (e.g., aunts and uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews) of the household head. All three-generation households are thus classified as extended, as are households composed of adults, with or without spouses, that contain secondary relatives.

Household data from our study are presented in Table 2. Size varies significantly across the three sites, with Western Samoan households being the largest (averaging 11.5-13.1) and households in Hawaii the smallest (averaging 6.0-6.5). American Samoa is intermediate with an average of 7.7-7.9 persons per household. In Western Samoa the large majority of households were extended (91.7%) and contained three or more generations (79.2%). Although extended-family households also predominate in American Samoa, the percentage is considerably lower (71.1-75.6%) and the proportion of households with three or more generations is less than half (42.2-46.7%). In Hawaii the proportion of extended households drops to 36.8-47.3% and only 15.8-21.1% are

TABLE 2. **Household Characteristics by Site**

	Western Samoa	American Samoa	Hawaii
Number of Households	24	45	38
Household Size ^a			
Mean	11.5-13.1	7.7-7.9	6.0-6.5
Range	3-22	3-17	1-14
Household Type ^a			
Nuclear	2	11	12
Subnuclear	0	0	8
Extended	22	32	14
Discrepancies ^b	0	2	4
Number of Generations per Household ^a			
One	0	0	5
Two	5	24	25
Three	13	19	6
Four	3	0	0
Discrepancies ^c	3	2	2

^aANOVA significant ($p < 0.001$) by site.

^bIn American Samoa both discrepancies involve siblings, one of whom includes a secondary kinsman as a household member while the other does not. In Hawaii two instances of discrepancy are the result of a change in household composition over time. In the third case the wife includes a sister of her husband that he does not include. The fourth case is the result of sisters differing on whether to include one of their boyfriends.

^cAll three discrepancies in Western Samoa, and both in American Samoa, result from one or more respondents including a grandparent while the other does not. In Hawaii one difference is explained by a change in household composition over the time between interviews, the other by a disagreement about household membership.

three generational or more. Three Hawaii households include only a mother and her children. In addition to kin-only households, we also found several types that contained non-kin in Hawaii. Four respondents were residing in a household made up of two unrelated sibling-groups. Two others were staying with an unrelated roommate of the same sex; one of these respondents, who lives in a university dormitory, did not consider her roommate part of her household. Three additional respondents were living in households that were kin-based but also included friends (e.g., a boyfriend or girlfriend of a household member).

In Western Samoa respondents not living in their natal or conjugal household have been adopted into the household of close kin (grandparent or parent's sibling). In American Samoa three respondents were residing in the household of a sibling and two with a parent's sibling, but none considered himself or herself adopted. In Hawaii two respon-

dents were living with a sibling and two with a parent's sibling and none had been adopted. These households are similar in structure and hierarchy of authority to those described by Pitt and Macpherson (1974) for sibling-based migrant households in New Zealand. Either the eldest sibling assumes the authority or responsibility is shared among siblings.

Our data are consistent with information provided by previous studies. For example, Shore reported an average household size of 14.8 for another Western Samoan village on Savai'i (1982:53)⁷ (see also Macpherson 1975:99). Descriptions of households in American Samoa generally do not include information on the average number of members, emphasizing instead the fluidity of multigenerational extended-family households (i.e., Mead 1930, 1949; Holmes 1958, 1987).⁸ The American Samoa census of 1980, however, provides a figure of 7.1 persons per household (U.S. Government 1983: 5). An important factor facilitating the nuclearization of households in American Samoa may be Western-style house construction (Mageo 1988). In Hawaii, reports of average household size range from 5 (Franco 1987:7) to 10.5 (Ala'ilima and Ala'ilima 1965:2). Using information presented by V. Ala'ilima we calculate an average of 7.8 (1966:3). Samoan households in California are described by Ablon as having 6 to 10 members (1971:79). Holmes (1978:208) and Franco (1978:262) give 8 as an average, and DuBois found an average of 7 in her San Diego sample (1988:83). Similarly, Macpherson reports an average of 7.25 among Samoan migrants to New Zealand, with a range from 2-14 (1975: 133).

Differential household size may be misleading if used as an index of life-style changes, however. In Samoa the extended-family household is usually divided among a number of structures within a single compound. Some structures are identified as the house of one member and that person's spouse and children. For example, one structure may be occupied by an older couple while others are occupied by married children. Siblings who share a cookhouse, and by Samoan definition thus constitute a household, generally have separate sleeping *fale*.

In Hawaii, especially in public housing, the family members who in Samoa would share a household compound (or contiguous compounds) frequently live in close proximity to one another, with one of the residential units--usually that of a parent--serving as the locus of activity. For example, one family we worked with has eight siblings living in Hawaii. Four (including one married daughter) stay with the mother in a high-rise apartment building, three live in apartments in the same building or one adjacent, and one lives in military housing just a few miles away. The mother's apartment is clearly the focal point of family activity. All of the siblings, their spouses, and children generally visit

the mother's apartment on a daily basis and most, if not all, family meetings take place there. This same situation is replicated in other family groups within our sample.

Thus, although many people can be identified as living in nuclear or subnuclear households, the situation often closely resembles that of extended households in Samoa. Almost all of our respondents, even in Hawaii, have frequent interaction with members of their available *'āiga*.

Networks and Patterns of Interaction: The Circle Diagram

For the purposes of this study we included measures of instrumental aid and *informational aid* as indicators of socially significant relationships. Based on a work by House, Thoits defines these terms as follows: Instrumental aid refers to actions or materials provided by others that enable the fulfillment of ordinary responsibilities, such as household, childrearing, financial, and job-related obligations; informational aid refers to communications of opinion or fact relevant to a person's current difficulties--advice, personal feedback, and notification of job openings, available medical assistance, or other opportunities that might make an individual's life circumstances easier (Thoits 1985:53).

We consider a relationship to be socially significant to an individual if he or she reports transactions involving money, food, or goods, or if the respondent reports having asked for advice or help regarding personal or health-related problems. Since such transactions are generally unidirectional with children, data for children under age twelve in a respondent's social network were not considered.

Clearly people feel close to others for reasons beyond the kind of material support they provide. Data from the circle diagrams suggest, and comments during the interviews support, the idea that people named on the diagrams are those with whom our respondents have a special relationship. They seem to share a sense of identity and feel an emotional bond, which usually come from shared experiences. For the most part the names on the diagrams appear to represent people with whom our respondents feel a desire to spend time.

Immediate family--parents, siblings, spouse, and children--were almost always the first names people wrote down, and the majority of these were located in the inner circle. Next they usually wrote the names of other household members, a few members of their or their spouse's extended family, and one or two friends with whom they felt especially close. Almost all of the circles that contained *'āiga* included the names of at least a few aunts, uncles, and cousins. But, while some respondents

included all the aunts, uncles, and cousins they could think of, most had little difficulty distinguishing those with whom they had some special relationship. Often the names were of people they had lived with in a common residence at some time in their lives. Non-kin, the majority of whom appear in the second or third circle, were usually those with whom they shared church, athletic, village, or work activities. One male in American Samoa wrote down the "*Fautasi* crew," a group of young males he was training with for the Flag Day boat race. A young *matai* in Western Samoa included a large number of other village *matai*. A couple of people put God in the inner circle, and one female put the name of her deceased grandfather.⁹ Like the American participants in Antonucci's 1985 study (from which the idea of the circle diagram was borrowed), few respondents had difficulty conceptualizing their networks in a hierarchical fashion.

There is a statistically significant difference between Western Samoa and Hawaii in the mean number of names included on the circle diagram (Table 3). But, although our respondents in Hawaii included more names on their circles than those in Western Samoa, they were more likely to include the names of people who lived elsewhere. Over 90% of the people listed on the diagrams in Western Samoa also live in Western Samoa, most within the same village. Once again American Samoa is intermediate between the two others.

The individuals mentioned on the circle diagram can be divided into two groups—*'āiga* and non-kin. Non-kin are primarily friends and co-workers. In most cases the pastor of the local church is listed as someone important, and for some the pastor is included as a personal friend.

Respondents rarely included all members of their household on the diagram. Some did not include anyone in the household: In five instances in Western Samoa household members were excluded from circle diagrams; in American Samoa only one was without a household member; and in Hawaii three did not include household members (two of these live with an unrelated roommate).

As noted earlier some members of the *'āiga* or special friends may not be immediately available, primarily because of migration. These people may live thousands of miles away, but the miles do not necessarily negate bonds of affection and responsibility. Nevertheless, although feeling close to particular people can contribute to an individual's sense of well-being, those who live far away are unavailable to provide immediate emotional, instrumental, and informational support.

When only *available* people are considered (those resident on the same island), the number of names included on the diagram is still smallest in Western Samoa (11.7) but there is no difference between

TABLE 3. Circle Diagram by Site

	Total Circle			Available Circle		
	Western Samoa	American Samoa	Hawaii	Western Samoa	American Samoa	Hawaii
Sample Size	48	49	51	48	49	51
Number of Persons Named:						
Total						
Mean	12.8	24.9	28.7	11.7	19.1	20.6
sd	8.5	24.6	24.0	7.6	20.1	19.7
<i>‘Āiga</i>						
Mean	7.3	13.1	18.6	6.9	8.9	11.4
sd	4.8	12.1	13.3	4.4	8.1	9.6
Samoan Non-kin						
Mean	5.5	11.7	8.6	4.8	10.0	7.8
sd	6.2	20.6	15.5	5.7	18.1	14.8
Non-Samoans						
Mean	0.1	0.1	1.5	0.0	0.1	1.5
sd	0.3	0.4	3.1	0.0	0.4	3.1
Social Interaction:						
Total						
Mean	8.4	11.0	13.8	8.1	10.5	10.6
sd	6.7	8.2	13.9	6.5	8.3	10.7
<i>‘Āiga</i>						
Mean				5.4	7.4	6.6
sd				3.9	7.0	5.2
Samoan Non-kin						
Mean				2.7	3.0	3.7
sd				4.4	3.8	8.7
Non-Samoans						
Mean				0.0	0.0	0.3
sd				0.0	0.3	0.8

sd = Standard Deviation

American Samoa and Hawaii (20.8 in each). The amount of decrease is greatest, however, in Hawaii. In other words, people in Hawaii are more likely to include family and friends even when separated by thousands of miles.

When the number of non-kin are considered, the pattern of across-site differences breaks down. American Samoans include more names of non-kin on their circles, and available non-kin represent a significantly larger portion of their circles than in the other two sites. In fact, the *‘āiga*/non-kin ratios of available people are quite similar in Western Samoa and Hawaii. In part these differences reflect differences in mari-

tal status ($r^2 = 0.10$, $p = 0.0001$): 75% of the American Samoans have never been married compared to 52% of the Western Samoans and 47% of those in Hawaii.

It is also in the proportion of *'āiga* to non-kin that we find the only significant difference between the sexes. Male circle diagrams in all three sites tend to have a larger proportion of friends than those of females. Again, this reflects a difference in marital status, as males in all three places are less likely than females to be married. Using a multiple regression model, sex explains 4% ($p = <.01$) and marital status 10% ($p = <.0001$) of the variance in the proportion of friends; together they account for 13.6% ($p = <.0001$) of the variance. To some degree, even within the narrow age range of our sample, life stage influenced who appeared on the circle diagram. The absence of some (or, in certain cases, all) household members and the inclusion of substantial numbers of non-kin probably reflect the importance of peers for the younger, unmarried subjects--those who have not yet assumed family responsibilities and the social behavior of older, more established adults (Mead 1949; Gerber 1975).

Although respondents often provided large lists of people with whom they feel close, they did not always report significant social interaction with them.¹⁰ While the differences are not statistically significant, the proportion of available people listed with whom they had significant social interaction shows a modest decrease across sites. When social interaction with *'āiga* is compared to social interaction with non-kin there is a significant difference. In Western and American Samoa *'āiga* represent 68% of all those named on the circles with whom there is significant social interaction. In both locations transactions with non-kin are generally of a casual nature, involving the sharing of an occasional meal, small amounts of money, and small gifts. In contrast, *'āiga* represent only slightly more than half of all those with whom significant social interaction takes place in Hawaii. Thus, friends represent a larger portion of the available circle in American Samoa, but little significant social interaction takes place with many of them. In Hawaii friends and co-workers appear to represent a more important part of our respondents' social networks. Although the sex difference is significant only at the $p = <.06$ level, it seems evident that non-kin generally play a somewhat stronger role in the social networks of males than females.

The number of respondents who included the names of non-Samoan friends and co-workers on their circles increases across the sites. Only two respondents in Western Samoa (4.2%) gave the names of non-Samoan friends, and none of these friends lived in or near the village.¹¹ In American Samoa 10.2% included non-Samoans, but never more

than two persons. The percentage of those with non-Samoan friends and close workmates increases to 35.3% in Hawaii; the majority of these offered two or more names, and four offered ten or more.

Despite this increase the self-identified "close" social networks of all of the respondents are predominantly Samoan, and in many cases exclusively so. A strong link to family is also clear: In most cases family represents roughly two-thirds of the names on the circle. There appears to be a transition from friends to family following marriage and the assumption of adult status that is consistent with Samoan culture and the Samoan focus on family and family responsibilities. In Hawaii non-kin appear to supplement rather than replace ties to *'āiga*, and the greater inclusion of non-Samoans enhances rather than replaces a social network focused on Samoans.

It is clear that there is considerable individual variation within each site, not just in Hawaii. In all three sites some respondents wrote only a couple of names on their circles and others wrote until they could find no more room. Some circles contain only the names of kin; others include few, and on rare occasions no kin. Family was obviously important to all participants in the study, but our analyses suggest that sex, age, and marital status must be taken into account when considering the importance of the *'āiga* to modernizing and migrant Samoans in this age group.

Monetary Exchanges between Kinsmen

The importance of remittances from relatives abroad has been well documented for Western Samoa (O'Meara 1986; Pitt 1970; Shankman 1976). This is one way kinship reciprocity and ties to home communities are maintained at a distance. For the most part previous studies have focused on the effects of remittances on home communities in Samoa; little has been done on the patterning of monetary flows between individuals or households. Our data shed some light on this issue.

As part of our questionnaire on life experiences we asked about the sending and receiving of money to and from relatives. As expected, significantly more individuals in both Western Samoa (52.1%) and American Samoa (49%) reported receiving money from relatives than individuals in Hawaii (21.6%). However, the amounts received in American Samoa were greater, presumably because of a greater need for cash and/or because their benefactors have more access to cash.¹² An interesting difference also exists between both Samoas and Hawaii regarding which relatives send money. In Western Samoa 73.1% of those receiving money reported siblings as benefactors. Aunts or uncles were reported

as donors by 30.8% of receivers. Only one person (3.8%) receiving money reported the source as a parent. In American Samoa siblings are reported as benefactors by 66.7% of those receiving money, aunts and uncles by 41.7%, and no one reported receiving money from a parent. In Hawaii, however, 7 of the 11 respondents (63.6%) who report receiving money named a parent as sender. Only 2 (18.2%) received money from a sibling and 1 (9.1%) from an aunt or uncle.

When it comes to sending money the Hawaiian and American Samoan samples donated at similar rates (57.1% and 56.9% respectively), while the rate for the Western Samoan sample was about half of that (29.2%). This reflects, of course, the greater access to cash enjoyed by the residents of American Samoa and Hawaii (see Table 1 regarding mean income). The amounts sent also reflect this factor, with the Hawaiian group sending an average of US\$609.48 per year, the American Samoans an average of US\$271.54 per year, and the Western Samoans US\$94.86 per year.¹³ The pattern concerning kinsmen again differs between the sites. In Western Samoa siblings (50%) and aunts and uncles (50%) were the prime recipients, followed by parents (21.4%). In American Samoa "other kin" and affines were named most often as recipients (39.3%), followed by siblings (35.7%), aunts and uncles (28.6%), and cousins (17.9%). Two respondents (7.1%) reported sending money to non-relatives, but none reported parents. The Hawaiian sample donated most frequently to "other kin" and affines (51.7%), followed by parents (44.8%) and siblings (27.6%).¹⁴

These data suggest somewhat different patterns of monetary flow in the three locations. It appears that in Western Samoa, which is primarily a recipient of remittances, the dominant flow is between siblings, supplemented by flows between nieces/nephews and parents' siblings. Monetary flows there are almost entirely between close kinsmen, reflecting the fact that income is relatively low in rural Western Samoa (see Table 1). Providing money may therefore be a way of helping close kinsmen in times of need or difficulty. In American Samoa and Hawaii monetary networks are more expansive and include more distant kin. This may reflect the fact that incomes are substantially higher in these locations, allowing individuals to invest in expanding their social networks on the one hand, and substituting money for more demanding ways (in terms of time and labor) of meeting social obligations on the other. Whereas in Western Samoa helping with *fa'alavelave* (ceremonial events) primarily involves producing goods and providing services, in American Samoa and Hawaii giving cash is an alternative way of meeting obligations. In Hawaii the importance of monetary gifts between parents and children provides a fascinating contrast with both Western

and American Samoa. Most likely the difference is a reflection of the increased nuclearization of families in Hawaii. In the Samoas parents are more apt to be in the same household and to share household resources, including income. This would preclude the necessity for transferring funds through gifts. In Hawaii, on the other hand, parents are far more likely to live in a separate dwelling or to have stayed behind in Samoa, necessitating the transfer of funds between households in order to provide financial support.

Service to Matai

Questions have been raised by several scholars on the response of the *matai* system to the intrusion of a cash economy and its fate in migrant communities (Holmes 1967; Ablon 1971; Pitt and Macpherson 1974; Norton 1984). To gain an understanding of how the *matai* system is adapting to such changes we posed a series of questions to each of our respondents concerning their involvement with, and attitudes toward, *matai*.

All of the men and 91.7% of the women in the Samoas reported serving a *matai*, while 59.1% of the men in Hawaii and 44.8% of the women reported giving service. A striking difference is evident between Western and American Samoa, however, with regard to the location of the *matai* being served. In Western Samoa 91.7% of *matai* served were within the respondent's household, while in American Samoa only 23.9% were in the household. In Hawaii only 11.5% of those serving *matai* were co-resident with him.¹⁵ This seems to reflect differential household size in each location--the smaller the household, the less likely that a *matai* will be present. However, this information also raises some serious questions about the nature and function of chieftainship in the three locations. A comprehensive comparative study of the changing role of *matai* in different Samoan communities remains to be done.¹⁶

Frequency of service (giving labor or donations) is also revealing. In Western Samoa the vast majority of respondents (89.6%) reported providing daily service to a *matai*. In American Samoa there is a wide distribution with 18.4% reporting service daily, 18.4% weekly, and 22.4% monthly.¹⁷ An additional 16.3% reported only providing service for *fa'alavelave*. In Hawaii 5.9% reported providing service daily, 5.9% weekly, 13.7% monthly, and 19.6% only yearly. One person reported only helping for *fa'alavelave*, and two report serving their *matai* only when they are in Samoa. This indicates a clear progression away from frequent obligatory service across sites. The American Samoan data are perhaps most interesting in this respect since they suggest that the *matai*

system has responded to the imposition of a commercial economy by retaining obligatory service but reducing its demands. It is also interesting that although expressed satisfaction with *matai* is high among those who provide service in all three locations (95.8% in Western Samoa, 80.4% in American Samoa, and 100% in Hawaii), American Samoans are the least satisfied.

Reasons given for being dissatisfied include statements like: *matai* expect too much, they drain resources, and *fa'aSamoa* (of which the *matai* system is an important part) holds people back from becoming modern. General dissatisfaction with *fa'aSamoa* was a common theme in casual conversations with people in American Samoa. A separate, open-ended question addressed the best and worst things about being Samoan. *Fa'aSamoa* was offered as the worst thing by 37.3% of American Samoans compared with only 9.4% of Western Samoans; the Hawaiian sample was intermediate with 15.4%. American Samoans are clearly ambivalent about *fa'aSamoa*, however, for they also frequently responded that it was the best thing about being Samoan (62.7%, compared with 54.7% in Western Samoa and 42.3% in Hawaii).

Church and Organizational Involvement

A number of students of Samoan culture have pointed out the important roles churches play in Samoan communities, both within Samoa and abroad (Ablon 1971; Pitt and Macpherson 1974; Kotchek 1978; Vavae 1979; Sala 1980). Our data lend support to this contention. In Western Samoa 91.6% of those interviewed said that they provided support for a local church; in American Samoa 93.9% and in Hawaii 82.4% responded this way. Involvement in church organizations is, however, considerably less in Hawaii. Only 29.4% of the Hawaii respondents are members of a church organization compared to 72.9% in Western Samoa and 63.2% in American Samoa. It may also be significant that whereas the large majority of respondents in both Samoas belong to the same denomination (Methodist in Western Samoa, London Missionary Society in American Samoa), denominational membership in Hawaii is more varied (see Table 4). Given the importance of church-related activities for community solidarity, this may be an index of increasing fragmentation within the Samoan community in Hawaii.¹⁸

With regard to traditional village organizations, the differences between Western and American Samoa are rather dramatic: 100% of

TABLE 4. **Religious Affiliation by Site**

Religion	Western Samoa		American Samoa		Hawaii	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	48	100.1	49	99.8	51	99.9
None	0		0		2	3.9
Mormon	3	6.3	1	2.0	5	9.8
Methodist	41	85.4	2	4.1	4	7.8
London Missionary Society	3	6.3	33	67.3	20	39.2
Catholic	1	2.1	8	16.3	8	15.7
Seventh-day Adventist	0		1	2.0	2	3.9
Assembly of God	0		2	4.1	4	7.8
Baptist	0		1	2.0	1	2.0
Jehovah's Witness	0		0		4	7.8
Other	0		1	2.0	1	2.0

the men in Western Samoa belong either to the *fono* (organization of *matai*) or to an *'aumāga* (village organization of untitled men) compared to only 30.8% of the men in American Samoa; likewise, 93.8% of the women in Western Samoa belong to a village women's organization compared to only 13.0% of the women in American Samoa. There are no comparable organizations in Hawaii.

Several people in American Samoa and Hawaii (six in each location) belong to school organizations, and five men in Hawaii belong to organizations associated with their employment. In general, however, our data suggest that both men and women in the Samoas belong to more organizations and attend more meetings than their counterparts in Hawaii.

Summary and Conclusion

Data from our study of young men and women in Western Samoa, American Samoa, and Hawaii support many of the conclusions reached by previous researchers about changes in Samoan social organization. When compared with Western Samoa, American Samoa appears to have undergone some rather profound changes in response to the commercialization of its economy, to urbanization (which has affected all of Tutuila; see Hecht, Orans, and Janes 1986:51-53), and to Americanization.

One response has been the nuclearization of households and the

decrease in household size, although the effects of these changes on lifestyle may be exaggerated if relationships between households in the same vicinity occupied by kinsmen are ignored. A second response seems to be an expansion of networks outside the household, as reflected in the greater number of non-household persons named on the circle diagram. While some of those named are kinsmen who might be co-residents in Western Samoa, the American Samoan respondents named significantly more non-kin and non-Samoans. This expansion of networks in American Samoa also involves more individuals who are located elsewhere-not immediately available for social interaction. Data on monetary flows follow the same pattern, with the American Samoan sample reporting more expansive networks, including a greater number of distant kinsmen.

A correlate of household nuclearization in American Samoa is that the *matai* served by individuals are far less likely to be members of the same household unit and the frequency of service is correspondingly significantly less. Our data also suggest a dramatic decrease in participation in traditional men's and women's village organizations in American Samoa and a decreased satisfaction with *matai*.

Data from Hawaii, as expected, show an even stronger shift away from traditional Samoan social organization. Households are less likely to be extended and are of even smaller size than in American Samoa. Social networks are expanded and include even more non-Samoans and distant kin. Ties to *matai*, while still in evidence, are functionally weaker, and traditional men's and women's organizations are not present. Finally, although church membership continues to be important in Hawaii, participation in church organizations is significantly less, and there is evidence of denominational dispersion, which may signal an increasing fragmentation within the Hawaii Samoan community generally.

While none of these findings was unexpected, they help to clarify the extent of change and of continuity with traditional patterns of social organization. The fact that the most dramatic contrast is between Western Samoa and American Samoa is testimony to the effects of commercialization, urbanization, and Americanization on social patterns, independent of migration. Migration simply seems to give further impetus to changes already set in motion by processes operating *in situ*.

NOTES

This research was funded through a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (MH40675). We would like to express our appreciation to Mike Hanna and Jay Pearson, Director and Co-Field Director of the Samoan Stress and Health Project, for their many

contributions to this work. This research would not have been possible without the help of our *palagi* and Samoan research assistants. We would like to offer special recognition to Christina Pearson, who assisted with data collection, and to Tanielu Aiono, Fetulea'i Vita Tanielu, Feuamuli Mataio Fiamalua, and John F. Mayer, who translated and back-translated our questionnaires. We also extend our sincere thanks to the Government of American Samoa, especially the Public Health nurses at L.B.J. Tropical Medical Center; the Western Samoan Ministry of Health, especially Dr. Walter Vermuelen and Dr. Aleki Ekaroma; and our village hosts in Western Samoa for all their help and support. Most of all, we would like to thank the people who gave so much of their time answering our incessant questions. To them we say, *Fa'afetai tele lava mo le fesoasoani*.

1. The base sample from American Samoa is composed of all the willing subjects we were able to locate who participated in an earlier study during 1981 (see Howard 1986:185-186 for details). In Western Samoa respondents were chosen randomly to match the age and sex distribution of the American Samoan sample. The Hawaii group is a convenience sample, matched for age and sex, drawn from a list of people referred to us by members of the community or by other subjects.

2. As each person was named for the genealogy we used a rubber stamp to place a box of answer spaces below the name. The top portion of the answer matrix included spaces for genealogical information (name, date and place of birth, current place of residence [or, if deceased, date, place, and cause of death if known], ethnicity, and, if applicable, adoption information); the bottom part was used to record answers to the social support protocol. If the person was named on the circle diagram, the number of the circle (1 = inner, 2 = middle, 3 = outer) was recorded on the matrix in step three.

3. For example, Shore (1982) uses *'au'āiga*, Holmes (1987) uses *fua'ifale*, and Orans uses *umu'āiga* (Hecht, Orans, and Janes 1986).

4. In some instances more than a month elapsed between the time the first and last respondents in a household were interviewed.

5. Some of our respondents were part of this fluidity, changing their place of residence one or more times during the course of fieldwork. For example, two Hawaii respondents lived in the same house when the first one was interviewed, but by the time the second one participated she had moved to another household and gave information for her new household.

It has also been pointed out to us by an anonymous reviewer that Samoan concepts, such as *'au'āiga*, are contingent in nature; inclusion depends on who is currently participating in food production, food preparation, and other relevant activities.

6. Very early in the research we became aware of this tendency and, after respondents completed their lists, made a point of asking if there were any additional children. The fact that people sometimes do not list children is of interest for what it may reveal about Samoan notions of household membership. For some Samoans, at least, membership seems to imply active contribution to household resources and activities.

7. Household size in both our village and the one studied by Shore is larger than the average household size of 11 reported by Hirsh (1958) for an urban Western Samoan village.

8. This fluidity is also seen in all three research sites. There were respondents in all three sites who changed households during the period of data collection. The data presented here represent the primary household on the day we collected the information.

9. Our analyses, however, include only living people.
10. Social interaction was considered significant if it involved more than occasional exchanges of small amounts of food, goods, services, advice, or support.
11. In Western Samoa non-Samoan members of the research team were included on a few circles, but these were excluded from the analyses.
12. Differences between the amounts sent and received may also reflect the age and life stage of many of our respondents. Younger respondents often pointed out that they do not yet have *fa'alavelave* (at least not in the sense of a ceremonial event, as the term is commonly used); it is their parents or families who have *fa'alavelave* (for which they provide assistance, for young people are rarely the focus of such events until after they are married and have children).
The *absolute* amounts reported should not be taken as an accurate index of money exchanges. As one reviewer of this manuscript pointed out, in his research Samoans continually overestimated the value of gifts made and underestimated the value of gifts received. This tendency probably reflects the importance of generosity--being an overall giver rather than receiver--in Samoan culture. However, we have no evidence to suggest that such reporting errors differed across sites; thus, we assume that the relative figures are valid indicators of comparative giving and receiving.
13. These figures do not reflect the monetary value of all goods and services transacted. It may well be the case that if nonmonetary transactions were given dollar values the differences between the sites would dissolve or be greatly lessened.
14. Since several individuals sent money to more than one relative the figures total more than 100%.
15. In two instances the *matai* named lives in Samoa.
16. Lyons (1980) compares attitudes toward the *matai* system in American and Western Samoa, and Stanton (1978) addresses aspects of the issue, but little has been done on structural changes in the institution as it has accommodated to urbanizing and migrant communities. An exception is Miller (1980), who analyzes changes in *matai* roles in New Zealand.
17. Two men report they normally *serve* a *matai* on a regular basis but their *matai* died and the title has not yet been filled. Three claim they have a *matai* but are not currently giving service. In one of these cases the *matai* no longer lived in Samoa.
18. It is also, of course, a reflection of the greater number of options available. For example, there was only one active church within the Western Samoan village.

REFERENCES

- Ablon, Joan
1971 "The Social Organization of an Urban Samoan Community." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 27(1):75-96.
- Ala'ilima, Fay, and Vaiao Ala'ilima
1965 *Samoan Pilot Project (Palama Samoa Neighborhood Survey and Organization) Preliminary Report*. Honolulu: Organization Services of Palama Settlement.

Ala'ilima, Vaiao

1966 *Report on Samoan Survey--Kalihi Housing*. Honolulu: [Organization Services of Palama Settlement].

Antonucci, Toni C.

1985 "Social Support: Theoretical Advances, Recent Findings, and Pressing Issues." In *Social Support: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Irwin G. Sarason and Barbara Sarason, 21-37. Boston: Martinus Nijhof.

Baker, Paul T., Joel M. Hanna, and Thelma S. Baker

1986 *The Changing Samoans: Behavior and Health in Transition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Caplan, G.

1974 *Support Systems and Community Mental Health*. New York: Behavioral Publications.

Cassel, J. C.

1976 "The Contribution of the Social Environment to Host Resistance." *American Journal of Epidemiology* 104: 107-123.

DuBois, Barbara

1988 Hypertension and Social Support: The Medical Anthropology of Older, Urban Samoans. Ph.D. diss., Department of Anthropology, University of Hawaii.

Eyde, David

1954 *A Preliminary Study of a Group of Samoan Migrants in Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, Social Science Research Council.

Fairbain-Dunlop, P.

1984 "Factors Associated with Language Maintenance: The Samoans in New Zealand." *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 19(2):99-113.

Filoiaili'i, La'auli Ale, and Lyle Knowles

1983 "Attitudes of Southern California Samoans towards Maintaining the Samoan Way of Life." *Sociology and Social Research* 67(3):301-311.

Franco, Robert W.

1978 "Samoans in California: The 'Aiga Adapts." In *New Neighbors: Islanders in Adaptation*, 255-267. See Macpherson, Shore, and Franco 1978.

1987 *Samoans in Hawaii: A Demographic Profile*. Honolulu: East-West Population Institute, East-West Center.

Gerber, Eleanor

1975 The Cultural Patterning of Emotions in Samoa. Ph.D. diss., Department of Anthropology, University of California, San Diego.

Gilson, Richard

1963 "Samoan Descent Groups: A Structural Outline." *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 72:372-377.

Gottlieb, Benjamin, ed.

1981 *Social Networks and Social Support*. New York: Sage.

- Graves, Nancy B., and Theodore D. Graves
 1978 "The Impact of Modernization on the Personality of a Polynesian People; Or, How to Make an Up-tight, Rivalrous Westerner Out of an Easy-going, Generous Pacific Islander." *Human Organization* 37(2):115-135.
- Graves, Theodore
 1978 "Polynesians in New Zealand Industry." In *New Neighbors: Islanders in Adaptation*, 136-144. See Macpherson, Shore, and Franco 1978.
- Graves, Theodore D., and Nancy B. Graves
 1980 "Kinship Ties and the Preferred Adaptive Strategies of Urban Migrants." In *The Versatility of Kinship*, ed. Linda S. Cordell and Stephen Belkerman, 195-217. New York: Academic Press.
 1985 "Stress and Health among Polynesian Migrants to New Zealand." *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 8(1):1-19.
- Harbison, Sarah
 1986 "The Demography of Samoan Populations." In *The Changing Samoans: Behavior and Health in Transition*, 63-92. See Baker, Hanna, and Baker 1986.
- Hecht, Julia, Martin Orans, and Craig R. Janes
 1986 "Social Settings of Contemporary Samoans." In *The Changing Samoans: Behavior and Health in Transition*, 39-62. See Baker, Hanna, and Baker 1986.
- Higginbotham, Howard N., and Anthony J. Marsella
 1977 *Immigrant Adaptation in Hawaii: A Pilot Study of Filipino and Samoan Immigrant Problems, Feelings, and Resources*. Honolulu: Department of Psychology, University of Hawaii.
- Hirsh, Susan
 1958 "The Social Organization of an Urban Village in Samoa." *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 67(3):266-303.
- Holmes, Lowell D.
 1958 *Ta'u: Stability and Change in a Samoan Village*. Reprint no. 7. Wellington: Polynesian Society. (First published 1957 in *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 66:301-338, 398-435.)
 1967 "The Modern Samoan Family." *Wichita State University Bulletin* 43(2):3-10.
 1978 "Aging and Modernization: The Samoan Aged of San Francisco." In *New Neighbors: Islanders in Adaptation*, 205-213. See Macpherson, Shore, and Franco 1978.
 1987 *Quest for the Real Samoa: The Mead/Freeman Controversy and Beyond*. South Hadley, Mass. : Bergin & Garvey.
- Howard, Alan
 1986 "Questions and Answers: Samoans Talk about Happiness, Distress, and Other Life Experiences." In *The Changing Samoans: Behavior and Health in Transition*, 174-202. See Baker, Hanna, and Baker 1986.
- Kallen, Evelyn
 1982 *The Western Samoan Kinship Bridge: A Study in Migration, Social Change, and the New Ethnicity*. Leiden, the Netherlands: E. J. Brill.

- Kincaid, D. Lawrence, and June Ock Yum
 1987 "A Comparative Study of Korean, Filipino, and Samoan Immigrants to Hawaii: Socioeconomic Consequences." *Human Organization* 46(1):70-77.
- Kotchek, L.
 1978 "Samoans in Seattle." In *New Neighbors: Islanders in Adaptation*, 19-24. See Macpherson, Shore, and Franco 1978.
- Lyons, Robin R.
 1980 Emigration from American Samoa: A Study of Bicultural Assimilation and Migration. Ph.D. diss., Department of Geography, University of Hawaii.
- Macpherson, Cluny
 1975 Extended Kinship among Urban Samoan Migrants: Towards an Explanation of Its Persistence in Urban New Zealand. Ph.D. diss., Department of Sociology, University of Waikato, New Zealand.
 1978 "Samoa Migration to New Zealand and Polynesian Migration and Settlement." In *New Neighbors: Islanders in Adaptation*, 11-19. See Macpherson, Shore, and Franco 1978.
- Macpherson, Cluny, Bradd Shore, and Robert Franco, eds.
 1978 *New Neighbors: Islanders in Adaptation*. Santa Cruz: Center for South Pacific Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz.
- Mageo, Jeanette
 1988 "*Mālosi*: A Psychological Exploration of Meads and Freeman's Work and of Samoan Aggression." *Pacific Studies* 11(2):25-65.
- Martz, Joann
 1982 Adult Blood Pressure on Tutuila, American Samoa: An Analysis by Distance to the Pago Pago Harbor Area. Master's thesis, Department of Anthropology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park.
- Mead, Margaret
 1930 *Social Organization of Manua*. Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 76. Honolulu: Bishop Museum.
 1949 *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation*. New York: Mentor Books.
- Miller, Llevelly
 1980 Some Aspects of the *Matai* System in Samoa and New Zealand. Master's thesis, University of Auckland.
- Norton, Robert
 1984 "Titles, Wealth, and Faction: Electoral Politics in a Samoan Village." *Oceania* 55 (2):100-117.
- Oakey, Betty H.
 1980 *American Samoan Families in Transition: A Report*. San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research on Development.
- O'Meara, Timothy
 1986 Why Is Village Agriculture Stagnating? A Test of Social and Economic Explanations in Western Samoa. Ph.D. diss., Department of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Pirie, Peter N. D.

- 1976 "The Demographic Effects of Local Socio-economic Change on Small Populations: A Samoan Example." In *Population at Microscale*, ed. Leszek A. Kosinski and John W. Webb, 79-92. Christchurch: New Zealand Geographical Society.

Pitt, David

- 1970 *Tradition and Economic Progress in Samoa: A Case Study of the Role of Traditional Institutions in Economic Development*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Pitt, David, and Cluny Macpherson

- 1974 *Emerging Pluralism: The Samoan Community in New Zealand*. Auckland: Longman Paul Limited.

Sala, Ulisese Elisara

- 1980 A Theology of Samoan Christian Immigrants in the United States. Doctor of Ministry thesis, The School of Theology at Claremont.

Shankman, Paul

- 1976 *Migration and Underdevelopment: The Case of Western Samoa*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

Shore, Bradd

- 1982 *Sala'ilua: A Samoan Mystery*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Stanton, Max

- 1978 "Mormons, *Matais*, and Modernization: Stress and Change among Samoans in Laie, Hawaii." In *New Neighbors: Islanders in Adaptation*, 272-285. See Macpherson, Shore, and Franco 1978.

Thoits, Peggy A.

- 1985 "Social Support and Psychological Well-being: Theoretical Possibilities." In *Social Support: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Irwin G. Sarason and Barbara Sarason, 51-72. Boston: Martinus Nijhof.

U.S. Government

- 1983 *1980 Census of Population*. Vol. 1, *Characteristics of the Population*, part 56, *American Samoa*, ch. B, "General Population Characteristics." Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Vavae, Alosina

- 1979 The Church in a Changing Society. Bachelor of Divinity thesis, Pacific Theological College, Suva.