

**Service-Learning: Reconciling Research and Teaching,
Tackling Capacious Issues**

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Introduction

The following perspective on engagement in America's community colleges is shaped by more than 30 years as a practicing ecological anthropologist deeply concerned about the condition of Hawaiian, Samoan and Pacific Islander immigrants as they adapt to life in American cities. These "new neighbors" (Shore and Franco, 1977) have unique and deep cultural and linguistic traditions shaped by sustaining and evolving cultures on distant islands, but they experience many of the same challenges that American immigrants and minorities have faced for centuries.

On April 16, 1975 at 3:00 am, my research began on the floor of a Samoan *fale* (house) in Tutuila, American Samoa. A group of Samoan chiefs had just completed their first day of deliberations and the lead talking chief of the *malaga* (traveling group) I had joined summoned me from a deep sleep. He eloquently emphasized that my research *on* Samoan culture and its people needed to be accompanied by work *with* and *for* Samoan culture and its people.

By the time of my completed doctoral dissertation in May, 1985, this research had captured a story of Samoan urban communities framed by three dramatic and complex processes of human mobility: 1) 4,000 years of Pacific Islander voyaging and navigation across roughly one third of the planet; 2) 500 years of European and American colonialism, militarism, and tourism in the Pacific; 3) 80 years of contemporary Islander circular mobility linking small villages and major cities and engaging complex and rich social networks across four generations and both short and wide geographic expanses.

In 1985, when I started teaching 10 introductory cultural anthropology courses per year at Kapiolani, I immediately experienced a seismic shift away from my research. Still, popular media, in brief sound bites, continued to portray the struggles of Hawaiian, Samoan and Pacific Islander families in Honolulu, Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. For more than a decade, I was able to continue publishing on issues of Samoan employment, education, housing and health in urban centers with a comparative focus on Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities. In

1997, I published a major work on the evolution of the Samoan *matai* (chiefly) system for Stanford University Press. About this time, another Samoan chief, the Honorable U.S. Congressman, Eni Faleomavaega, suggested I begin working with younger Samoan scholars as they frame and research questions of Samoan culture and community, and this too I have done.

At the same time, struggling with the tension between effective teaching and student learning and my research on topics of growing importance in contemporary Honolulu, I discovered a new pedagogy, service-learning, that could take me and my students into the community, connect my scholarship, community-based research and teaching, and put engaged learning and discovery in the hands and minds of those who needed it most, my students.

In this paper, I will suggest that a robust program in academically-based service learning is a vital linking strategy to connect scholarship, learning in community colleges, educational success for students under-represented in higher education, and the improvement of the human condition. Service-learning empowers students, graduates, and communities to tackle tough problems and brings relevance and urgency to teaching while advancing research and discovery. I will argue that service-learning has particular relevance within the culture of community colleges and that it provides a first and second year community-based, engaged research foundation for further undergraduate research in numerous scientific disciplines including biology, microbiology, chemistry, ecology, physiology, engineering, and technology.

The Culture of Community Colleges: A Brief History of A Changing Identity

Tracing their roots to the “junior college” movement of the early 1900s, today’s “community colleges” with reduced entrance requirements and lower tuition, support millions of local students as they enter their “open doors” to pursue associate and baccalaureate degrees, and career and civic goals. Early proponents of the junior college referred to them as America’s “democracy colleges” with a strong relationship to their communities, emphasizing equal opportunity and civic participation, and valuing diversity (Gleazer 1994)(See also Franco 2002a, 2004).

Early in the twentieth century, Dean Alexis Lange of the University of California School of Education and other national leaders “urged the junior colleges to give high priority to programs that would prepare their students for effective participation in community life” (Gleazer, 1994:ix). According to Bogue (1950, 336-337), Lange called for a junior college department of civic education with a curriculum that would “quicken” students’ “communal sympathies,” “deepen their sense of indissoluble oneness with their fellows,” and encourage them “to participate vigorously, militantly, if need be, in advancing community welfare.” Further, he suggested pedagogical innovations that would provide these students with suitable opportunities for “observation firsthand and for direct participation in the civic activities” of the community.

In this period of heightened attention to the urban migration of African Americans, and international immigration of southern and eastern Europeans and east Asians, and an emerging Social Darwinism, Lange and other elite university presidents also promulgated another, largely hidden mission for the community college. According to Brint and Karabel (1989:208):

...fearing they would be “overrun” by hordes of unqualified students and yet recognizing the powerful political pressures for more open access to universities in a society emphasizing upward mobility through education, the elite universities saw the junior college as an essential safety valve that would satisfy the demands for access while protecting their own institutions...they saw the two-year institution as existing less to offer new opportunities to obtain a bachelor’s degree to excluded segments of the population than to divert them away from four-year colleges and universities.

In 1922, the American Association of Junior Colleges, in their first revision to their statement of purpose asserted: “The junior college may, and is likely to, develop a different type of curriculum, suited to the larger and ever changing civic, social and vocational needs of the entire community in which the college is located” (Gleazer 1994, viii-ix). The 1920s and 1930s saw the junior colleges assert their dual role in baccalaureate transfer and as provider of terminal vocational education for marketable skills in local workforces (Brint and Karabel, 1989:205-206).

In 1936, Hollingshead reasserted that “the junior college should be a community college, meeting community needs; that it should serve to promote a greater social and civic intelligence

in the community...that the work of the community college should be closely integrated with the work of the high school and the work of other community institutions” (111-116). Hollingshead’s assertion signals a pivotal realignment of junior colleges with high schools and baccalaureate transfer institutions. Realignments toward vocational, terminal degrees, and linkages with high schools gradually resulted in the renaming of “junior college” with their emphasis on baccalaureate transfer, to “community college” with a balanced commitment to both baccalaureate transfer and vocational degrees.

In 1947, the Truman Commission called upon “community colleges” to become “centers of learning for the entire community with or without the restrictions that surround formal course work in traditional institutions of higher education. [The community college] gears its programs and services to the needs and wishes of the people it serves” (President’s Commission 1947, 69-70). Following from Lange’s promotion of pedagogies that would provide students with opportunities for “firsthand observation” and “direct participation” in civic activities, the Truman Commission was also promoting less “formal course work” in community colleges as local “centers for learning.” The Commission also boldly asserted the need for public education to be “made available, tuition-free, to all Americans able and willing to receive it, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or economic and social status” (Gleazer 1994, xi).

With millions of service personnel returning from the European and Pacific theaters of World War II, pressure to extend educational opportunities resulted in the passage of the GI Bill in 1944 and soaring enrollments in community colleges through 1948, and, according to Witt et al. (1994: 126), “By the fall of 1946, nearly 43 percent of all junior college students were veterans” (See Franco, 2002).

The 1950s and 1960s, saw the return of Korean War Veterans, a sustained baby boom, and rapid economic and technological growth leading to an explosion in demand for higher education. Individual state plans called for the creation of community college campuses within

commuting distance of population centers. The construction of these new campuses became intertwined with urban and regional development and eventually contributed to suburban sprawl.

From 1950 to 1970, the number of American community colleges increased from 412 to 1,058. Throughout the 1960s, America built “nearly one community college per week.” Located in every state in the union, community college enrollments soared to nearly 2.5 million students (Witt et al, 1994, 185).

In the 1960s, community colleges found themselves “in communities caught in the throes of change” and substantial ethnic, racial, and political unrest. Colleges and communities were “interfusing both spatially and functionally” with a wide range of other community-based organizations (Gleazer, 1994, xi). Throughout the 1970s community colleges attempted to balance their university transfer and workforce development roles, with their role as a “central hub of community educative and agencies and organizations” (Gleazer, 1994, xi).

In the 1980s, growth in the number of community colleges slowed, but their role in educating an unprecedented diversity of students accelerated. In many American cities, the community college campus was the setting for the first genuine and sustained interactions among racial and cultural groups. Also in the 1980s, “the community college vocationalizers...were finally having an impact” and “faced with a barrage of media images of Ph.D.s driving taxis and college graduates waiting in long lines in unemployment offices, community college students began to view the college transfer programs not as way stations on the road to success but as gateways to nowhere” (Brint and Karabel, 1989, 211). The community college’s “sorting function” was also reasserted as states concerned about budgets and a growing mass of “overeducated” workers came to view terminal vocational education as a mean to reduce university enrollments and provide students with practical skills “harnessed to larger state economic development strategies” (1989, 213).

In the 1990s, even with the end of the Cold War and the retreat from the war on poverty, the number of community colleges climbed to 1,155. From 1972 to 1992, the percentage of

American higher education students attending a community college increased from 28.7 to 37 percent. Over this same period, there was little or no improvement in the percentage of low socioeconomic status (SES) students attending four-year colleges, although there was a doubling, from 11 to 22 percent, in the percentage of low SES students attending community colleges (Gladieux and Swail, 102-105). In the period, 1970-2000 community colleges were still, to a large extent, merely masking and reproducing social structural inequalities, as Brint and Karabel argue.

Today, America's 1,195 community colleges (987 public, 177 independent, 31 Tribal) educate 11.5 million credit students, 41 percent of whom are full-time and 59 percent part-time (all current data from American Association of Community Colleges). Women comprise 60 percent and men 40 percent of total national enrollment. The average age of community college students is 29, with a nearly equal percentage of students (43%) under the age of 21 and between the ages of 22-39 (42%), while 15 percent are over 40. Nearly half (46%) of all U.S. undergraduates are in community colleges. More than half of all Native American (55%) and Hispanic (55%) undergraduates, and nearly half of all African American (46%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (46%) undergraduates are in community colleges (see author's note).

The average annual tuition and fees at public community colleges is \$2,361. Nearly half (47%) of community college students receive financial aid: 23 percent receive federal grants, 11 percent federal loans, and 12 percent state aid, and more than 80 percent of all community college students are employed. Only 303 community colleges provide on-campus housing. Students at 41 percent of the public community colleges can earn an associate degree entirely online. The community colleges annually award more than 555,000 associate degrees and 295,000 certificates.

Beyond preparing students for continued study towards higher degrees in a range of fields, community colleges are major providers of workforce education and training. The community colleges are on the forefront of healthcare training as 59 percent of new nurses and

the majority of other health care workers are educated at community colleges. Nearly 80 percent of firefighters, law enforcement officers, and Emergency Medical Technicians are credentialed at community colleges. Nearly all (95%) of the businesses and other organizations that employ community college graduates support community college workforce development programs. The average expected lifetime earnings for a graduate with an associate degree are \$1.6 million, about \$.4 million more than a high school graduate earns. Finally, 100,000 international students attend America's community colleges and these students comprise 39 percent of all international undergraduates in the U.S.

The central engagement question for community college faculty and administrators, many of whom have doctoral degrees and substantial research experience, is how their colleges can help a broader, more diverse population of college students fulfill both their transfer and career goals for the betterment of themselves, their communities, and American society. This is the special challenge faced by my colleagues who believe that community colleges can no longer merely mask and perpetuate social structural inequalities as “sorters” and “diverters” of lower SES students. The engagement imperative for faculty in the community colleges is simply this: how can we develop new “high impact” pedagogical approaches (AAC&U: 2008) that simultaneously prepare our increasingly diverse students for success in academic transfer, 21st century careers, and as citizens in their communities, locally, nationally, and globally? For me, the answer to this question is to develop high quality, academically based service-learning programs to promote greater community engagement by all students.

Engagement at Community Colleges

In 2002, Campus Compact, an organization formed by a group of elite university presidents in the 1980s, contracted Dr. Donna Duffy of Middlesex Community College and myself to help guide a national team of researchers led by Dr. Edward Zlotkowski in the exploration of institutional civic engagement in America's two-year colleges. This research result in the Campus Compact publication, *The Community's College: Indicators of Engagement at*

Two-Year Colleges (2004). This research would provide the framework for subsequent Campus Compact exploration of engagement in minority-serving institutions and in comprehensive universities (see Compact.org for references).

The research team, building on earlier research, identified 13 indicators of engagement at community colleges, all of which impact the ability of community college faculty to engage with their students and their communities and are summarized in the table below (2004:5-6):

Indicators of Engagement in Community Colleges

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Mission and purpose explicitly articulate a commitment to the public purposes of higher education;2) Administrative and academic leadership is in the forefront of institutional transformation that supports civic engagement;3) Disciplines, departments, and interdisciplinary work have incorporated community-based education, allowing it to penetrate across disciplines and reach the institution's academic core;4) Pedagogy and epistemology incorporate a community-based, public problem-solving approach to teaching and learning;5) Faculty development opportunities are available for faculty to retool their teaching and redesign their curricula to incorporate community-based activities and reflection on those activities within the context of the course.6) Faculty roles and rewards, including promotion and tenure guidelines and review, reflect a reconsideration of scholarship that embraces a scholarship of engagement.7) Enabling mechanisms are present in the form of visible and easily accessible structures (e.g., centers, offices) on campus to assist faculty with community-based teaching and to broker community partnerships.8) Internal resource allocation is adequate for establishing, enhancing, and deepening community-based work on campus—for faculty, students, and programs that involve community partners.9) Community voice deepens the role of community partners in contributing to community-based education and shaping outcomes that benefit the community.10) External resource allocation is made available for community partners to create richer learning environments for students and for community-building efforts in local communities.11) Integrated and complimentary engagement activities weave together student service, service-learning, and other community engagement activities on campus.12) Forums for fostering public dialogue are created that include multiple stakeholders in public problem-solving.13) Student voice is cultivated in a way that recognizes students as key partners in their own education and civic development and supports their efforts to act on issues important to themselves and their peers. |
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The *Indicators of Engagement* research team recognized that the primary challenges facing community colleges faculty in engaging more deeply in communities are:

- 1) Full-time, permanent faculty have a heavy teaching workload, on average 5 courses per term, as well as other responsibilities within their academic departments and campus-wide committees.
- 2) Part-time, adjuncts make up nearly two-thirds of the faculty in two-year colleges, and they are usually hired to teach specific courses with syllabi, textbooks, and learning objectives identified by permanent faculty, and frequently at multiple campuses.
- 3) Community college students have diverse learning styles shaped by culture and experience, are frequently underprepared for college, and swirl in and out of college as familial responsibilities and job opportunities wax and wane;
- 4) Administrators focusing on workforce development and the achievement of specific workplace skills, and a host of other accountability measures, often under-estimate the value of service and civic engagement.

For community college faculty then, all 13 indicators of engagement are necessary for their sustained and transformative civic and scholarly engagement. The Indicators of Engagement research team captured the need for this holistic support structure by developing an integrated chapter on “Faculty Culture” and identified five best practices to support faculty engagement in the two-year college (Ibid, 2004:53):

- 1) Centralize faculty development resources and build engagement into these development efforts.
- 2) Create a culture of service through hiring and buy-in from key academic administrators.
- 3) Provide on-campus training and incentives for participation.
- 4) Actively recruit adjunct faculty to participate in community-related activities.
- 5) Seek external funding to support engagement efforts.
- 6) Document results to justify resource allocations.

Institutional examples of these best practices are found at dozens of community colleges but I will highlight only a few here. At Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) in Maryland, all new faculty must participate in a year-long Learning College implemented by the Institutional Professional Development office. Service-learning and other community-based pedagogies are presented by experienced faculty practitioners. AACC also offer service-learning faculty development opportunities within its three-day faculty orientation and in three part faculty service-learning institutes.

At Brevard Community College in Florida, faculty engagement is strengthened through a broad-based “saturation” model initiated by the director for the Center for Service-Learning (CSL) and supported by the college’s administration for nearly two decades. The CSL regularly offers a range of community-related opportunities, including workshops and courses, strengthens school partnerships, and supports faculty attendance at numerous annual conferences and publication opportunities. Brevard Community College and Miami-Dade Community College have instituted a “point system” that impacts a faculty member’s contract status. Service-learning is a legitimate way for faculty to earn points toward future contract renewal.

Success in faculty community engagement at Kapiolani Community College in Hawaii is driven by a broad commitment to a “culture of service” as a way of life for faculty and students. The College’s hiring practices result in the recruitment and retention of “a critical mass of faculty who see their own productivity, creativity, and commitment in relation to the greater community” (Zlotkowski, et al, 2004, 45). The Kapiolani culture of service results from the vision and the leadership of key administrators who also support a multi-purpose Service-Learning Office to facilitate and formatively evaluate community partnerships, and cultivate a cadre of student leaders focused on “reducing the severity of serious issues” in the community.

Malcom X Community College in Illinois and Yakima Valley Community College in Washington are also developing a broader culture of service for their faculty, and tapping powerful minority cultures to forge a “sense of natural connectedness and social responsibility” (Ibid, 45).

At Portland Community College in Oregon, Brevard, and many other community colleges, there are strong intentional efforts to “mend the rift with adjuncts” (Ibid, 46). Recognizing that adjuncts may have other lives with community-based organizations in the non-profit and private sector, these colleges have viewed “adjunctness” as an asset that can help engage students with the wider community. Faculty mentoring models, such as the program at Chandler-Gilbert

Community College in Arizona, also help junior and adjunct faculty develop into engaged full-time, permanent faculty.

At most successful community college campuses, faculty development for increased community engagements involves:

- 1) Sustained, on-campus training opportunities
- 2) Sharing of publications, course models and exemplary syllabi
- 3) Opportunities for community immersion as learning experiences for faculty
- 4) Opportunities to attend local conferences with engaged K-12 and university educators, and regional and national conferences with discipline-based community college colleagues.
- 5) Reduced course loads and mini-grants for revising courses and developing faculty collaboration, and summer institutes to immerse faculty in the complexities and richness of community engagement, in their non-duty periods.

Two major national organizations play a significant and sustained role in the development of community-engaged community college faculty. Since 1995, the American Association of Community Colleges' "Horizons Colleges" initiative has played a critical role in developing community-engaged faculty at hundreds of campuses nationally. AACC awards three-year subgrants to community colleges and has identified and trained dozens of faculty mentors who provide campus-based training and technical assistance for each new cohort of Horizons colleges.

The Community College National Center for Community Engagement (CCNCCE) produces publications, provides training, and assists community colleges in identifying external funding. Attendance at the CCNCCE annual conference is a major component of faculty development for dozens of community colleges annually. Since 2002, Campus Compact has also supported a Senior Faculty Fellow for the Community Colleges who has provided faculty engagement training at nearly 200 college in 34 states and three U.S. territories.

At engaged community colleges, service-learning is explicitly grounded in an institution's commitment to teaching and learning. Further, service-learning as pedagogy is aligned with the institution's civic engagement profile. As community-based, teaching institutions, community colleges can reward faculty for the integration of service-learning assignments into courses, and for serving the institutions' civic purposes.

The Miami-Dade Center for Community Involvement explicitly describes the many “maintenance of rank” options related to service-learning, and provides workshops on integrating both service-learning and civic responsibility into the curriculum, as well as reflection and assessment workshops. By coupling engagement with career advancement Miami-Dade is implementing a long-term sustainable strategy for both faculty and community development.

At Kapiolani Community College, the Chancellor has emphasized that “there is a palpable faculty peer pressure to do civically engaged work; excellence in this area sets the institutional tone, and this in turn results in a difference in faculty productivity, creativity, and commitment” (Zlotkowski, et al, 2004, 50).

For most community-engaged faculty in two-year colleges, the primary motivations for engaging their students in community-based work are: a) improved learning of academic content (methods, theory, critical thinking); b) personal development and especially career clarification and advancement; and c) increased civic understandings, skills, and attitudes. To the extent that these learning outcomes are embedded in general education, degree, and college requirements, as well as institutional mission, vision, and values, faculty engagement can both deepen and expand.

Scholarship of Engaged Teaching and Learning in the Two Year College

In 2007, Campus Compact again contracted with Donna Duffy and myself, as well as Amy Hendricks and Marina Baratian from Brevard Community College, and Tanya Renner from Kapiolani, to develop a follow-up publication entitled Service-Learning Course Design for Community Colleges. Kay McClenney, Director of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) contributed the Forward to this publication and in it emphasized that “service-learning, properly conceived and executed, powerfully reflects those key elements of the student experience that we know are important to learning and success: collaboration with other students and community organizations; active involvement in planning, participating in, and

rigorous reflection upon the service experience; and focused interaction with faculty, peers, and others” (2007,viii).

This publication represents a new direction in engaged scholarship for community college faculty. That new purpose is to explore the impact of community-based learning on “success” for diverse community college students. By “success” we mean: a) earning a “C” or better in courses; b) completing a semester (retention); c) reenrollment in continuous semesters (persistence); d) degree completion and/or baccalaureate transfer; e) employment at mean national income or higher. All the papers in this Course Design volume provide convincing evidence that service-learning and other community-based pedagogies contribute positively to the success of community college students. These papers, taken as a whole, suggest that if two-year campuses are serious about student success and about closing the gaps between lower, middle, and higher SES groups, then service-learning for community engagement should be a primary pedagogical innovation advanced at their institutions.

Service-Learning, Teaching and Research and Tackling Capacious Issues

Over the last ten years, as a faculty member, researcher, and administrator, I have overseen service-learning at Kapiolani as we sharpened our focus on capacious issues confronting our diverse multicultural communities. These issues include low literacy, math and science proficiency, and high school graduation rates, and are particularly prevalent in Palolo public housing, a low income community only two miles from the college. This community is largely comprised of Hawaiian, Samoan, and Pacific Islander families. The college has focused much of its service-learning and community engagement on building sustainable and authentic partnerships in Palolo to improve literacy and high school graduation rates, increase access to state-of-the art technology, and build a college-aspiring culture for both adults and children. In 2008, with funding from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Office of University Partnerships program, the college was able to complete the renovation of a new Palolo Learning

Center to further ameliorate the issues confronting the families of Palolo Homes. At the opening of the center, another Samoan chief congratulated the residents of Palolo Homes and the college for this major development. After three decades of research and pedagogy in Honolulu's Samoan community I am still going strong having reconciled the apparent conflict between research and community college teaching.

This conflict between research and community college teaching is also being reconciled in our rapidly growing STEM program where Native Hawaiian, other under-represented, and all students annually engage in undergraduate research under the supervision of faculty with impressive research credentials in engineering and space science, microbiology, biotechnology, ecology, and physiology. But these research experiences are limited and reserved for successful sophomore-level students who are prepared for baccalaureate transfer.

At Kapiolani, SENCER provides an emerging strategy for engaging first-year students in capacious scientific and public policy issues such as health promotion and disease prevention, understanding health disparities in minority populations, healthy sleep and brain function in children, adults, and the elderly, ecological deterioration, including species extinction and watershed quality, engineering solutions to sea-level rise, and genetic modification of foods. Service-Learning courses in botany, chemistry, ecology, and microbiology, provide community-based research opportunities and connect first-year and second-year STEM curriculum. While undergraduate research reaches a limited number of students, service-learning reaches nearly 800 per year.

Another emerging strategy is to use service-learning's student recruiting potential to identify and encourage Native Hawaiian, Samoan, and other under-represented students into the STEM program, particularly those students who self-select into community-based projects that reduce the severity of capacious environmental problems such as water contamination, coral reef

degradation, and the spread of invasive species, and health problems, such as asthma, HIV/AIDs, obesity, and diabetes prevention.

SENCER provides direction in the development of science content within a broader public policy context. Service-Learning provides opportunities for research contextualized in community and matters of real consequence to citizens. Interlocking Service-Learning and SENCER with community-based service and research will better prepare our Native Hawaiian, Samoan, other under-represented, and all students for an increasing number of STEM undergraduate research experiences, and for engagement and leadership in solving the capacious public policy issues they will confront in the future.

After Words

In the last 30 years of immigration into the United States, with Samoan and Pacific Islander migration representing a very small proportion of this process, the country finds itself at a public policy impasse with regard to immigration policy. There appear to be no good or acceptable solutions.

American democracy has shown it can disregard serious public policy issues related to illegal migration, a 30 percent high school dropout rate, and increasing homelessness, poverty, and incarceration. The social scientists seem to have lost their public policy focus and voice.

SENCER is vitally important because without a strong reconciling of science and public policy we may find ourselves at public policy impasses on even more serious issues such as global warming, sea-level rise, species extinction, and the spread of infectious diseases. SENCER courses and pedagogies need to produce citizens, scientists and public policy leaders to address these and other major issues before they too become unmanageable (Friedman, 2008).

Meanwhile, after three years of consulting with another Samoan chief, the Honorable Fofa Sunia, and the American Samoa Humanities Council, we have completed American Samoa's first

published history, a required 9th grade textbook. I continue to respect and admire Samoa's chiefly democracies, a fascinating example of diversity in democracy. To be continued.

Footnote: The Asian/Pacific Islander census category was disaggregated in the 2000 U.S. Census since the coupling of Asians of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Indian, and other Asian backgrounds with Pacific Islanders of Hawaiians, Chamorro, Guamanian, Samoan, Marshallese, Palauan, Micronesian, and other Oceanic backgrounds as a singular group within the American experience made no conceptual sense. For example, while Asian-Americans achieve impressive educational outcomes, Pacific Islanders have not. Still, headlines would read "Asian/Pacific Islanders Rank Highest in Educational Achievement."

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