

“Trying to be the man you’ve become”:  
Negotiating Marriage and Masculinities Among Young, Urban Fijian Men Married to  
non-Fijian Women

by

Sayuri Holman  
BA Geography, Simon Fraser University, 2006

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

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University of Victoria

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## **Supervisory Committee**

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Dr. Christopher Morgan (Department of Pacific and Asian Studies)  
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Dr. Sikata Banerjee (Department of Women’s Studies)  
**Outside Member**

## Abstract

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*While studies in masculinities and globalization are a rapidly growing field, few studies address the role of marriage in shaping masculinities. This project explores the emerging pattern of young, urban Fijian men who marry non-Fijian women and in doing so, challenge neo-traditional marriage formations and gender roles. In this particular project, I investigate how Fijian men experience these types of marriages with non-Fijian women and how they negotiate their masculinity within their marriages. I also explore how the confluence of colonial experiences, current globalization trends, and culture affect how these men understand their masculinity. I employ several methodologies including multiple interviews, participant observations, and visual anthropology methods. Through these methods, I explore how the relationship between Fijian men and non-Fijian women alters men's experiences of masculinity and identity at the individual level. Results illustrate the importance of work in defining manhood, according to these men. As well, results suggest that the wives play a powerful role in influencing their husbands' values with regards to work ethics and the general acceptance of global values. These relationships show the intersection and complexities that emerge between evolving ideas regarding masculinities and marriage, Fiji's colonial experience and current global values.*

**Key Words:** Marriage, Masculinities, Fiji, Globalization, Colonialism

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THANK-YOU.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this to the married men and women in Fiji who graciously shared their experiences with me, and to Rebecca, who inspired me from the beginning.

## Chapter 1: “Nowadays, times are changing”: Transformations in Masculinities and Marriage in Urban Fiji

They call me an Englishman at work. Because my wife is from England. She finds it very annoying, but it's done as a joke. I get it as a joke but sometimes it gets to your head. ... I want to come home and spend time with him [infant son]. They see it as she's the boss of the house. So you know? And for me it causes all the more stress trying to push it off. Yes, so it's a lot of stress, trying to be the man you've become and trying to ward off people who say you should be like this. They want you to come drink grog [kava] and then we go home and I say no. It's a constant reminder every day. (Pita, interviewed December 2008, Suva Fiji)

Masculinities and the experiences of being a man in Fiji are in a state of rapid transformation. The conservative, neo-traditional<sup>1</sup> gender roles, once a key feature of Fijian cultural ways, are increasingly blurred due to emerging global values and changing economic conditions. As the above quote from Pita suggests, Fijian men, in particular those who are not in conventional Fijian-Fijian relationships, experience challenges to long-standing values surrounding both marriages and masculinities. This thesis is concerned with Fijian men who are married to non-Fijian women, and how they grapple with changing masculinities as they are played out in their marriages.

Fijian men married to non-Fijian women represent a global trend in redefining what it means to be a man in globalizing society. In contemporary Fiji, there are new spaces in which Fijians are negotiating their masculinity and ideals of manhood are changing. Specifically, by examining the dynamics within intermarriage, I show how certain features of Fijian masculinity are contested and negotiated through everyday

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term “neo-traditional” to describe those values that were established by Christian missionaries and later, the British colonial administration, from the early 1800's onwards. These values have come to represent “tradition” in Fiji, but can be traced to specific points in time in the not-too-distant past. Neo-traditional values are not to be confused with pre-contact values, which for the sake of clarity and simplicity, I will refer to as “traditional.” These values are more difficult to define because Fijians did not have a written language in pre-contact times. Therefore, Fijian history as is documented, was written and defined by Europeans, which is subject to the European biases and political agendas of the time (see Thomas 1994).

practices such as household chores, cultural expectations and expectations surrounding the idea of work.

This project contributes to the growing body of masculinity research that challenges the view that masculinity is immutable, essentializing and monolithic in nature (Connell 1995; Howson 2006; Hearn 1996; Messerschmidt 2005). I define masculinity as those features and characteristics associated with being a man, but refer to Connell's (1995) theory of hegemonic masculinity.<sup>2</sup> By this, I mean the idea that there is a normative ideal that all men are supposed to embody, regardless of whether it is the most prevalent form of masculinity. This normative ideal also subordinates other forms of masculinity, such as gay masculinity (Connell 1995). Globally, dominant ideals of masculinity tend to be defined by Euro-American values (Connell 1995; Morrell and Swart 2005). In this context, values associated with Western hegemonic masculinity include rational thought, strength and aggressiveness or taking on leadership and decision-making roles to name a few stereotypical traits. Fijian masculinities are also influenced by these values, though interpreted within a particular cultural and historical context. This study focuses on men who are married to non-Fijian women because it sheds light on how men are dealing with daily social pressures and the hegemonic masculinities found therein. They are also dealing with forces beyond their control in the form of emerging global values that sometimes conflict with local values. Importantly, they must also contend with the considerable authority and influence of the British colonial experience that has had a strong impact on Fijian masculine ideals.

This project is an initial exploration that seeks to understand and articulate how young, urban Fijian men negotiate their masculinity within intermarriages, in the midst of rapid globalization and the changing economic conditions that are occurring in Fiji. It describes the impact of these forces on the experience of Fijian men married to non-Fijian women. Through the experiences of participants, I show that while values established during the colonial period continue to persist, their marriages to non-Fijian women also allow for the negotiation and redefinition of their manhood.

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<sup>2</sup> R.W. Connell is now known as Raewyn Connell, though still goes by R.W. Connell in most publications.

## Thesis Statement

Within Fiji, this thesis suggests that the previous conditions under which Fijian men were constructed to be “men” have changed profoundly, while the ideal has not. Case studies of intermarriages where Fijian men are married to non-Fijian women allows me to explore the malleability of Fijian masculinity. I argue that the experiences within intermarriages strongly affect participants’ masculinity in terms of values and practices along three different dimensions. First, the wives of these men already exist outside of normative Fijian gender roles and have different expectations of their partners, which challenges ideas of traditional Fijian masculinity. In other words, these women enter marriage with specific expectations of their Fijian husbands, which forces a reconfiguration of Fijian manhood. This reconfiguration is shaped by the global values embodied by their wives and their own lived experiences as they redefine their manhood. In this context, the idea of work emerges as a significant aspect of masculinity and the ongoing reconfiguration experienced by the men. Second, I argue that while marriage to non-Fijian women presents challenges to their masculinity, these challenges also create opportunities in terms of geographic and economic mobility, which is articulated through experiences of travel, work and family. Third, I suggest that while the husbands may appear to experience new opportunities, these non-Fijian wives influence their husbands’ values by imposing their own Western values on them. This can be understood as a manifestation of a “colonial continuity” (Heron 2007).<sup>3</sup> In interviewing participants, I was guided by four key research questions.

## Key Research Questions

1. *To what extent do negotiations in masculinity take place within the realm of marriage, and in what ways does this impact transformations in Fijian masculinity?*
2. *How does the confluence between colonially established gender values, emerging global (Western dominated) gender values and changing economic conditions play out in these men’s marriages with non-Fijian women in terms of negotiating masculinity, and particularly with regards to work?*

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<sup>3</sup> Heron defines “colonial continuities” as a bundle of interrelated constructs that have persisted since the era of empire and remain important today to the “discursive production of bourgeois identity” (Heron 2007:7).

3. *How do emerging global values and changing gender relations influence roles and expectations within marriage?*
4. *In what way do the global values held by the wives influence their husbands' values?*

I travelled to Fiji as a graduate student to conduct fieldwork research for this project, via Micronesia, in October 2008 and spent two months in the capital city of Suva. The research subjects for this project are five Fijian men who are married to non-Fijian and predominantly Caucasian women. Their relationships together ranged from less than a year to over nine years. These couples all live in the city of Suva, Fiji. They are considered upper middle class, as they all work and have a higher standard of living than the average Fijian. The men all have some post-secondary education and so do their wives. It is important to note that while I interviewed both the men and their wives, this study focuses on men and their experiences as it relates to their manhood. Their marriages provide a space in which I can analyze the complex intersections of marriage, masculinity, emerging global values and colonialism.

To understand the complexities of these intermarriages, however, it is important to situate these men within their specific historical context and within contemporary theories of masculinity. Fiji's colonial experience at the hands of the British was significant in shaping idealized gender roles and continues to persist today (Jolly 2001). Masculinity theories address historical experiences, such as colonialism as well as the dominance of Western hegemonic masculinity on a global scale (Connell 1995, 2005b). I suggest that Fijian masculinity is heavily influenced by these Western standards, though many features of it are also shaped by culture and customary practices and cannot be ignored. Marriage to non-Fijian women upsets the status quo as they contest the established values of both the colonial experience and hegemonic masculinity, leaving men in a position to redefine their manhood.

### **Fiji as a Masculine Space**

Since the early 1800's, Fiji has been imagined, represented and internalized as deeply masculine (by Anglo-American standards) by colonizers. In this untamed place Fijians were famous for their cannibalistic practices and their fierce warriors (Thomas

1994). According to Thomas (1994), "...Fijians are men, and Fiji is an undomesticated space, a jungle, in which male predatory aggression is the emblematic activity" (1994:33). That is, the British colonizers perceived Fiji as a masculine space, where men and their activities dominated. Images of warriors with clubs and aggressive stances dominate history books on Fiji.<sup>4</sup> Idealized traits of Fijian manhood, in this context, are defined as physical strength, aggression, loyalty to the chief and as protector of the family and clan (Ravuvu 1988).

Today, these hypermasculine images and ideals continue to be reinforced among Fijians, and particularly among young Fijian men. The military is perceived as a bastion of Fijian masculinity, as is rugby, and men are expected to participate in at least one of these activities (Teaiwa 2005). Participating in the military and rugby are both physical and aggressive activities and important in proving one's manhood. Significantly, both activities are also celebrated in Fijian society regularly. Fijian men are also expected to be head of the household and to protect and provide for their families (Jolly 2008). Living up to these expectations today, however, is increasingly difficult (Teaiwa 2005).

Fijian men are increasingly influenced by other factors such as the political events of the last 20 years, including three anti-government coups, that have resulted in a resurgence in nationalism and militaristic masculinities (Teaiwa 2005; George 2008).<sup>5</sup> As well, through the process of globalization and the dominance of the capitalist economy, financial success has become inextricably related to men and their sense of masculinity (Knauft 1997, 1999). The need to earn money is becoming a driving imperative as Western definitions of progress have become the global standard (Knauft 1997: 237). That is, as people in developing countries seek to engage with the global economy and pursue modernity as defined by Western standards, the transition from their previous economic and cultural structure (e.g. subsistence farming) to profit-oriented activities is

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<sup>4</sup> Other colonized subjects, such as the Tahitians, were portrayed as effeminate and less masculine than the colonizer throughout the Pacific Islands and the rest of the world (see Thomas 1994; Stoler 1995, 2002; Jolly 2008; Tengan 2004, 2008; Banerjee 2005). This results in a profound impact on indigenous masculinities today, and is something indigenous men continue to grapple with (Tengan's work is particularly strong in this respect). That Fiji was not represented as such is significant in terms of the way colonial politics and constructions were played out in Fiji as well as in terms of gender constructions and roles.

<sup>5</sup> Militarism in Fiji is a significant factor and there is growing literature in this area (see Teaiwa 2005, 2000; Jolly 2008), but it is not the main focus of this project.

far from smooth. As Knauff notes in reference to Papua New Guinean cultures, “local responses are often a complex mix of resistance to, and appropriation of, these values; the search for material gain is dialectically related to changing notions of status and prestige” (1997: 239). The need to work and earn cash in a globalizing society is something many Fijian men are currently grappling with, as money is linked to the status of one’s manhood (Knauff 1997, 1999; Connell 1995). However, women are also participating in the workforce more than ever before, which challenges the traditional role of men as providers. The ability to earn money and provide for the family are two key features of hegemonic masculinities, and this term is explored in more depth in the following section.

### **Conceptualizing Hegemonic Masculinities in Fiji**

I define masculinity as those qualities and character traits associated with being a man. Hegemonic masculinity is defined as the normative character traits and behaviours that men are supposed to embody or represent, regardless of how realistic it may or may not be (Connell 1995). That is, hegemonic masculinity is the most dominant way for men to behave and understand themselves, which in turn is governed and maintained by the cultures and society that men live in. Connell has been emphatic in pointing out that there are different masculinities, as opposed to one essentialized type. Different masculinities are not equal and are, in fact, organized hierarchically, meaning:

...hegemonic definitions of masculinity receive their legitimacy from the marginalization of other forms of masculinity, such as those of different social classes, ethnicities, sexualities, ages or abilities. The latter are almost always characterized as more feminine, thus highlighting the other dynamic of hegemonic masculinity: its contrast with, and assumed superiority to femininity...” (Van Hoven and Horschelmann 2005:8).

Recognizing that masculinities cannot be collapsed into a simple dynamic of gender relations, however, academics are contributing knowledge to the growing discipline of masculinities and therefore gender relations (Howson 2006; Hearn 1996). Major critiques include the concern that this complex theory fails to connect with the experiences of individuals, and “...the persistent perception that masculinity somehow remains the property of men” (Van Hoven and Horschelmann 2005:9). Some academics

are troubled by the vagueness of the term “masculinity” because of the range of possible meanings from the self to sex stereotypes to institutional practices. Hearn (1996) and others believe that perhaps the term should revert back to “men” in order to fully encompass all the “discourses of masculinity” (1996:214).

In response to the many critiques of “hegemonic masculinity,” Connell and Messerschmidt say that, “hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it. But it was certainly normative. It embodied the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men” (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:832). She says the term was formulated with regards to a patriarchal system and that “hegemonic masculinities therefore came into existence in specific circumstances and were open to historical change” (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:832). Here, Connell alludes to the idea that hegemonic masculinities are subjective and can be manipulated over time in order to stay relevant and maintain the patriarchal status quo.

Connell’s definition remains useful to my research because participants discussed their own experiences in terms of masculine ideals and realities that suggest there is an existing hierarchy of male values in Fiji. That is, Connell’s theory of hegemonic masculinity highlights the contrasts between the dominant patriarchal masculine ideals of Fijian society and the lived experiences of my participants. I apply this concept in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, where participants place themselves in contrast to the established ideal. The roots of the hegemonic masculinity that research respondents struggled with derive from historically-rooted cultural expectations, contemporary global values, and colonialism. I explore each of these factors in turn.

### **Cultural Expectations**

First, recent research by indigenous scholars of Oceania suggests there are many alternative masculinities that exist and are performed throughout the Pacific region. Recent studies have explored the re-establishment of Hawaiian masculinities, militaristic masculinities throughout Oceania, sports and Oceanic masculinities and new masculinities defined by cash economies (Knauff 1997, 2002; Jolly 2008; Hokowhitu

2004, 2008; George 2008; Teaiwa 2005; Tengan 2002, 2008; see also Banerjee 2005; Hearn and Kimmel 2006). Fijian academic, Asesela Ravuvu<sup>6</sup> (1983), has addressed the topic of Fijian masculinity in a cultural context. Ravuvu defines idealized Fijian masculinity as being able to embody several desirable and chiefly characteristics known as *vakaturaga*. If a man displays *vakaturaga*, “he should show *loloma* (love or kindness) to all, irrespective of social status and affiliation. He is ready to help and serve others. He is dignified and composed...he maintains his self-respect and authority during crisis...he is *dauveimaroroi* or *dauveitaqomaki* (protector and defender) and he assures that those around him are not ill-treated” (Ravuvu 1983:104). Most of my respondents agreed with Ravuvu’s assessment, describing an ideal Fijian man who provides for and protects his family by working on the farm or at a paying job. He plays rugby (or some other sport), spends time with the “boys,” and is a good Christian man who upholds Christian values, including those surrounding work. This ideal persists despite a consistent shortage of job opportunities, low wages per capita and heavy tax burdens (Teaiwa 2005). This results in immense pressure for men to succeed as they negotiate constantly changing conditions and differing values.

Additionally, Teaiwa states that in Fiji, “indigenous Fijian ideology constructs a notion of reciprocal gender relations that does not contradict patriarchal power structures” (2005:209). She refers to the idea that in Fijian culture, men and women have important roles to play that cannot exist without the other, but at the same time it does not challenge the established patriarchal system. The patriarchal gender formation remains deeply embedded within Fijian society and remains the ideal endorsed by elites and commoners, men and many women alike. Marriage is just one way to reinforce and maintain those values. These values are further complicated with the introduction of external forces in the form of “global values,” which I suggest can be traced back to the colonial period.

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<sup>6</sup> Ravuvu’s perspective is prescriptive in nature, though useful because this defined ideal influences Fijian boys and their relations to these ideals, which in turn reflects their ongoing negotiation with masculinity.

## Global Values in Fiji

When referring to “global values,” I mean a specific and often contradictory bundle of values and ideas that underpin both globalization and capitalism, as is interpreted among the middle-class Fijians who participated in this study. This bundle includes ideas surrounding progress, individualism, wage labour, urbanization, romantic love and monogamy. The term “global values” encompasses the idea of modernity in its simplest form, but is not bogged down by the baggage and implications of the term. Knauft’s (2002) definition of the term “modernity” is helpful in explaining some of the values I wish to explore. According to him, modernity is associated with Western-style progress that is defined through economic and material advancement and reflected in social and cultural development (Knauft 2002:18). Significantly, he notes that modernity is perceived as a threat in terms of individual desires trumping traditional kin obligations. Knauft says:

Reciprocally, modernity in a contemporary world is often associated with either the incitement or the threat of individual desire to improve social life by subordinating or superseding what is locally configured as backward, undeveloped or superstitious. (Knauft 2002: 18)

Knauft suggests the Western idea of “progress” builds on the need to compare this “progress” to something that appears backwards—usually the local way of life. In turn, people accept these values in favour of their own customary practices. Through the colonial experience and now the dominance of the capitalist economy and increased global linkages, these values have become “global” in both a geographical and ideological sense (Knauft 1997, 1999). In Fiji, many embrace these global values and articulate them in terms of their education, work and the need to work in order to better their lives. It is interesting to note that many academics have critiqued the idea of modernity being a uni-directional process that progresses from “backwards” to “modern” (see Bruce Knauft’s edited volume *Critically Modern*). In contrast, the men I interviewed appear to have internalized ideas of progress and the belief that they are moving from a “backward” way of being to a “modern” way of life, which is articulated through their discussions surrounding their marriage, work and even individual desires. These men also offered a critique of their own culture, suggesting a need for change and

improvement. In this sense, their wives offer them a chance to progress from “backwards and traditional” Fiji, to a more progressive and “modern” state of being, where they are able to fully surround themselves with these “progressive” global values. To understand where and when the desire for progress began, I turn to Fiji’s colonial experience to help situate and explain.

### **The Colonial Project in Fiji**

Fiji’s colonial experience officially began in 1874, which was later than other countries (Donnelly et al 1994). Colonialism resulted in the conquest of other people’s land and goods, restructured economies and resulted in the internalization of colonial values among the colonized (Loomba 1998; Fanon 1967). It was a project that attempted to micromanage all aspects of the colonizer and colonized lives. Studies in colonial relations reveal as much about the colonizer as the colonized. In critically analyzing the colonial project, Stoler says,

...The new “Imperial History” starts from the premise that colonizing bodies and minds was a sustained, systemic, and incomplete political project in colonial regions *and* in Europe. In a range of colonial contexts, that project has come to be seen as one with unanticipated effects. In the end, there was no panoptic imperial state but only a partially realized range of efforts to specify the use of and access to public space, and to dictate which cultural affinities and styles, and what distribution of affections, would prevail in the street and in the home. (Stoler 2002: 10)

Stoler acknowledges that despite the desire to impose colonial values on colonized populations, this was only partially successful, though colonizers were able to establish hierarchies of privilege. Like Loomba and Fanon, Stoler also highlights the effects the colonizing process had on the minds of the colonized and explicitly links the process to unfulfilled goals, partial acceptance of colonial values and unintended consequences. Thomas (1994) notes that in their desire to re-mould societies into specific ideals colonizers employed several tactics through legal and other repressive measures. They justified their actions by identifying what was lacking among the colonized populations and attempted to rectify these problems as they saw fit. In this respect, Fiji fits within this larger picture, as the British played out their project there.

Western values involving ideas of formal education, maternal practices and sexuality were imposed on colonized populations with lasting impact. Significant to my study are those values involving marriage practices, family structures and gender ideals, as it relates to Fijian masculinity. These customs were under the intense scrutiny of colonial administrators around the world. As Stoler has stated, “who bedded and wedded whom, was never left to chance” in the colonies (Stoler 2002: 47). Indeed, once British women started to arrive in Fiji in 1835, anti-miscegenation policies were implemented and enforced, effectively controlling who could marry whom (Knapman 1986, de Bruce 2007, Heartfield 2003).

### **Back to Basics—What is Marriage?**

It is a major contention of this thesis that colonial, global and cultural values are reflected and reformulated within the sphere of marriage, and are particularly prominent in marriage between Fijian men and non-Fijian women. Intermarriages are an increasing trend throughout the world with many theoretical and social implications (see Constable 2005, 2009; Thai 2005; Pollock 2003). A major theme that runs through contemporary literature on marriage focuses on migration patterns, globalization and the commodification of marriage through bridewealth and other practices (Constable 2009). In this context, since the term “marriage” has several definitions, I will employ the two definitions most relevant to my own study. Marksbury (1994) writes that, “a common and widely accepted view of marriage is that it is a socially sanctioned relationship between a man and a woman that regulates their sexual activities, locates children within a kinship system, and influences the inheritance of property” (1994:7). He adds that:

Even though procreative sex is necessary to maintain the life of societies, it is a mistake to view marriage as a social institution based primarily upon sexual considerations; economic factors are often the basis for marrying...the reproductive significance of marriage cannot be dismissed, but this is not the fundamental force behind it. Marriage provides the means by which most societies arrange for the products and services of men and women to be exchanged” (Marksbury 1994:7).

Marksbury investigates the idea of marriage practices in a state of transition throughout the Pacific in the early 90’s. He suggests that because customary practices are

changing, as it relates to all aspects of betrothal and marriage, so too is the identity and meaning of marriage (Marksbury 1994). Marital values are changing and becoming more subjective whereas before, traditional strategies meant conforming to local values. Today, individual decisions and desires are trumping kin desires.

In contrast, Nock (1998) defines marriage as a social institution that is a “...core ritual in all religious traditions” (Nock: 5). He identifies six dimensions:

1. Marriage is a free and personal choice
2. Maturity is a presumed requirement for marriage
3. Marriage is a heterosexual relationship
4. The husband is head, and principal earner, in a marriage
5. Sexual fidelity and monogamy are expectations for marriage
6. Marriage typically involves children.

(Nock 1998:6)

Nock appears to be referring to Western ideals of marriage that involve core values and assumptions, including the freedom to choose a partner, expectations of monogamy and the husband as head of the household. This definition also supports the bundle of global values discussed earlier in that Western ideas of marriage promote individualism, nuclear families, the idea of romantic love and monogamy. Together, these trump traditional kinship formations.

Both definitions are useful for this study. Historically, Fijian marriage was intended to maintain and reaffirm strong alliances between certain clans, so marriages were typically arranged by the parents of the young man and woman (Ravuvu 1983:45). There was little choice in the matter, as rejecting a formal request for marriage was viewed as disrespectful and shameful. Family and kin obligations came before the individuals (as per Marksbury’s definition). Ravuvu says, “traditionally arranged marriage is obviously not executed solely for the personal love of the marriage partners, but for the respect, recognition and requirements of the respective groups, whose welfare the bride must consider” (1983:47). He says today, however, marriage practices have changed and in urban areas particularly, more people are choosing to marry partners of their individual choice. When it comes to intermarriages though, Ravuvu states that, “although marrying persons outside one’s ethnic group is not often acceptable to many, it is practiced wherever and whenever it is socially and economically advantageous” (1983:50). Ravuvu does not address the idea that some Fijians choose to marry for love

and not just for personal or family gain, which is more in line with Nock's definition. The marriages discussed in this thesis illustrate the tensions between competing sets of values, where traditional kinship networks, marriage and definitions of manhood stand in perceived "backward" contrast to "progressive" global values surrounding romantic love, masculinity and individualism.

Brison (1995), Knauff (1997, 1999) and Derne (2002) suggest that many men in the Pacific are increasingly caught between the traditional and contemporary era, where transnational interactions are increasing in density. This is exposing men in many societies to new ideas that may undermine or be perceived as a threat to their authority. This threat tends to result in men placing more constraints upon women. Derne notes similar patterns in many other parts of the world. He concludes that, "Cultural globalization, then, plays an important role in shaping the social construction of masculinities at the local level... Men are attracted to transnational celebrations of masculinity that strengthen male dominance. But they respond to transnational challenges to existing gender arrangements by reconstituting local gender hierarchies" (Derne 2002:161).<sup>7</sup> Thus, there is a reciprocal relationship between the manner in which men interpret masculinity and the interaction between global and local forces. When referring to globalization in this study, however, I will use Tomlinson's (1999) broad definition, where he claims that globalization is, "...the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependences that characterize modern social life" (Tomlinson 1999:2). Though somewhat vague, it incorporates ideas of both cultural and economic globalization that are important, but not the focus of this project. I put more emphasis on the idea of global values, which are related to globalization processes, but not the same. That is, how do certain global values gain acceptance in Fiji, such as the idea of work and progress, and how do they impact notions of manhood and masculinity in the context of intermarriages.

To summarize, this project explores transformations in Fijian masculinity by examining the dynamics of marriage between Fijian men married to non-Fijian women. This thesis argues that marriages forces the Fijian men to rethink masculine ideals

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<sup>7</sup> Indeed, cultural globalization is an important factor that certainly influences Fijian masculinity, however, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to properly address it.

because their wives have different values and expectations regarding husbands and their roles. By employing a theory of masculinity framework, I analyze and situate the experiences of these men within existing literature on marriage, colonialism and global values.

### **Summary of Thesis**

The following chapters will explore the key ideas I have introduced in this chapter more fully as participants share their experiences. Below is a brief outline of each chapter.

*Chapter 2* describes my research experience in the field. This section includes how I located research participants and a discussion of the methodologies I used and why. It also further explains and justifies why I chose a post-colonial methodological approach.

*Chapter 3* explores the relationship between the British colonial experience in Fiji and the establishment of ‘normative’ gender roles in the family, as well as the reinforcement of a particular masculine ideal. This chapter also examines the impacts and challenges global influences have on these ideals and how men in the region have reacted to these challenges.

*Chapter 4* questions the ‘hegemonic’ masculine ideal in relation to the transformations in masculinity that appear to be occurring in Fiji. Specifically I focus on how work and Christianity have become intertwined with this ideal. First, I will identify the key characteristics of what defines the ideal Fijian male. Then I will use participant case studies to illustrate the conflicts that arise in relation to key themes, the challenges they face and how they manage to reconcile the Fijian ideal (and expectation) with their lived reality. The tension and contradictions they experience daily forces these men to define their masculinity in a new, alternative way in light of their experiences.

*Chapter 5* explores how global values play out within the context of intermarriages. Specifically, I focus on the manner in which these values influence the negotiation of gender roles and expectations. This often entails opposing cultural practices and involves clashes. A kind of cultural negotiation takes place, and despite the

conflicts that arise, these marriages are an opportunity to experience freedom from colonially established gender ideals that continue to persist.

*Chapter 6* is a theoretical discussion regarding the acceptance of ‘global values’ among these men and why this is significant in this study. I focus on participant critiques of their own culture and situate it within global narratives surrounding development and global values. I also examine how the wives may influence their husbands with their own values and what some of the implications may be.

*Chapter 7* is a summary of my research findings. It sets out the thesis conclusion that is based on field data. This chapter contains concluding thoughts on the nature of transformations in marriage and masculinities. It will also include a brief discussion on topics for future research.

This exploratory project puts both men and intermarriages in the spotlight, which has not been done before. It raises and explores the ways in which marriage to non-Fijian women can initiate transformations in Fijian masculinity and enable freedom from established gender role norms. But, this project also raises some uncomfortable questions regarding the very nature of these marriages by focussing on the influence the wives have on their husbands and their unintentional colonizing potential.



## **Chapter 2: God, Grog and Gossip: Conducting fieldwork in Suva**

This chapter covers a brief history of Fiji as well as the methods and methodologies I employed while conducting fieldwork in Suva, Fiji. I start by recapping Fiji's history from 1643, when Abel Tasman first saw some of the Fiji Islands. I then provide some basic facts and social context for the city of Suva, where I conducted my research. This is followed by an explanation of the theoretical underpinnings that guide my work, my research methods, which include a description of the research participants, and a discussion regarding the limitations of my chosen research methods.

### **A Brief History of Fiji**

Although Abel Tasman was the first European to sight the islands near Taveuni in 1643, Fijians had regular contact with nearby Polynesian islands such as Tonga and Samoa (Scarr 1984). According to Tasman's journal entries, he did not have a positive experience. He encountered dangerous reefs and foul weather, which may explain why sailors shunned the region for so long after (Donnelly et al. 1994). While Lieutenant James Cook was in Tonga in 1774, he was also introduced to Fijians and was impressed with Fiji's material culture (Scarr 1984). The first Europeans to interact with Fijians on a more regular basis were sailors, traders and beach combers, who drifted onto island shores in search of resources to replenish dwindling supplies, or as castaways (Scarr 1984:11). After 1801, the sandalwood, whaling and beche-de-mer industries became a significant reason for traders to stop in Fiji (Scarr 1984; Donnelly et al 1994). From about 1835 onwards, Christian missionaries attempted to convert the 'savage' population in Fiji (Scarr 1984; Eves 2005; Thomas 1994). Finally, after a failed American business venture, on September 30, 1874, Fiji became another acquisition in the British Empire, when the paramount Chief Cakobau and other leaders signed the Deed of Cession to the British (Scarr 1984:75).

After the Deed was signed, it effectively gave administrative control to the British, though the chiefs were still largely able to control their own affairs (Kelly 1989). In fact, the British accorded a high level of respect to the chiefs, and worked with them frequently (Jolly 2001). Fiji is often cited as an example of British 'indirect rule.' This

means that while the British controlled the financial, economic and social aspects of the country, Fijians were encouraged to maintain their cultural way of life before colonialism (Kelly 1989). The administrative decisions and actions taken during this period, however, have left a legacy within Fiji that cannot be ignored and continues to influence how Fijian society operates today (Davis 1986:133). Some significant actions include: the introduction of indentured Indians brought over to farm the growing sugarcane industry (Lal 1984, 1993; Kelly 1989, 1994); the desire to preserve indigenous Fijian culture (Thomas 1994; Jolly 1998, 2001); the introduction and maintenance of the Methodist Church as an institution in Fiji; and the British colonial values that helped establish moral and gender guidelines (Jolly 1998, 2001; Thomas 1994; Tomlinson 2009; Brison 2007). I locate my own research within the context of the colonial historical period and today's globalizing processes.

### **Conducting Fieldwork in Suva**

My research for this project was conducted in the capital city of Suva, in the Fiji Islands, between October-December, 2008. With a population of just over 75,000<sup>8</sup> (Fiji Bureau of Statistics 2007), Suva is the largest city within the Pacific Islands (not including Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea). Suva is a port city and the 'hub' of Fiji. It is where most government, commercial and administrative activities occur and where people can access tertiary education opportunities (Donnelly et al. 1994). It is also home to offices of many NGOs such as the Red Cross and Greenpeace as well as various UN branches and regional organizations like the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

Like many major cities in developing countries, however, it faces many challenges. Poverty still affects a great deal of the population, as there are high rates of unemployment. The city is afflicted with high rates of crime, pollution, and a lack of adequate sewage treatment and infrastructure to accommodate the growing population (Donnelly et al 1994). Additionally, recent political events involving the latest military coup in 2006 has had a negative effect on the economy. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Britain and many Pacific Island countries have applied pressure on the military

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<sup>8</sup> When combined with the nearby communities of Lami and Nausori, the population of the Greater Suva area is approximately 110,000.

government in an effort to restore democracy. Since leaving Fiji, the situation has worsened with the current global economic situation. The Fijian currency devalued by 20% on April 15, 2009 (CBC April 15, 2009) in a bid to entice tourists and stabilize the economy. Many predict that this will only cause more hardship for people. On a social level, the current administration has steadily chipped away at basic human rights and freedoms. The government has censored all media outlets and on April 10, 2009, it abrogated the Constitution entirely (Fiji Times April 10, 2009).

Despite the increasing hardships in the city, I expected to locate the most intermarried couples here due to the cosmopolitan nature of the city, as opposed to rural areas or smaller towns. Additionally, on previous visits in 2005 and 2007, I had the opportunity to observe several intermarried couples, so it was an ideal location to carry out fieldwork.<sup>9</sup>

### **Grounded Theory and Post Colonial Approach**

Since my overall perspective is influenced by post-colonial theory, I am concerned with how the experiences of the colonial past have helped shape the current state of affairs in Fiji in terms of culture, gender relations and roles. Loomba (1998) suggests that post-colonial theory can be defined as, "...the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism" (1998:12). In the context of my work, then, this contestation is evident in these intermarriages where not only are race barriers being broken, but so are gender roles that were previously heavily influenced by Christian and colonial thought. However, the remnants of colonial domination are still evident today in the way research is carried out in formerly colonized countries, with outsiders frequently controlling research among indigenous populations with little regard for the studied populations (Tuhivai-Smith 1999). In order to minimize this critique, I attempted to follow the research guidelines set out by the Fijian government. This includes the way I obtained a research permit, the way interviews were conducted, and the way data was

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<sup>9</sup> I spent four and a half months studying at the University of the South Pacific in 2005 on an exchange program. In 2007, I returned to Fiji to volunteer with the Red Cross Society.

analyzed and disseminated. I also had discussions with participants asking how they would like to see the data analyzed and disseminated.<sup>10</sup>

Because I interviewed indigenous Fijian men and non-Fijian women, the way data is represented will be important in order to provide balanced insight and minimize any ‘colonizing’ potential. This includes Thaman’s (2003) belief that researchers must be open in accepting Pacific perspectives and ways of knowing. I acknowledge that while my key concepts are related and complementary to each other, they are rooted in Western thought and may be considered problematic by some because of the involvement of an indigenous population in my project. Therefore, I must be aware of the colonizing potential of my research, as Tuhiwai Smith (1999) and Thaman (2003) point out, in that I will be representing the experiences of some members of an indigenous group.

In order to bring participants’ experiences to the forefront, I employ an inductive or grounded theory approach to partially counterbalance the predominance of Western concepts in my theoretical approach, data and analysis. Charmaz (2002) warns, “...the researcher needs to achieve a balance between hearing the participant’s story and probing for processes” (2002: 678). To this end, I am striving to find this balance between sharing the personal experiences of these men and women, while exposing and analyzing the underlying social structures and processes that are shaping their experiences.

## **Research Participants and Methods**

In conducting this project, I was looking for a specific marriage formation, within a specific age group. My goal was to interview indigenous Fijian men who were married to non-Fijian women (preferably of European descent), and between the ages of 20-35 years old. In order to locate participants, I used a snowball sampling technique (Warren, 2002, Bernard 2006). I sent out emails and used word of mouth to locate potential participants. If they agreed to participate, then I asked if they knew any other couples in their social networks who may also be willing to participate. One of the biggest challenges I found was that while several people suggested many couples, when I attempted to locate them, I discovered they had left Fiji and were now residing in the

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<sup>10</sup> I obtained a research permit from the department of immigration and foreign affairs a few days after arriving in Suva.

wife's home country. However, in total, I was able to locate five couples. This number is manageable for one person, and allows for initial explorations into this unstudied topic. Nicole Constable (2003) used this case-study technique for work on migrant marriage partners in Asia. The 11 participants I interviewed ranged in age from their mid-20s to their early 30s.<sup>11</sup> While the participants come from diverse socio economic backgrounds, they all currently enjoy a standard of living that is high by Fijian standards. They are all employed in various, salaried 'white collar' office jobs such as media, real estate and upper management. Below is a chart summarizing the male participants, their age, who they are married to and number of times I interviewed or interacted with them.

**Table 1. Summary of Participants and Interviews**

Pseudonym	Age	Married to	Years Married	Number of interviews and interactions	Photovoice (Y/N)
Pita	29	Beth (UK)	3 Years	2	N
Kitione	29	Lena (Fiji)	9 Years	7	Y
Aisea	27	Nicole (Aus)	9 months	Lived with them	Y
Emosi	25	Anna (Aus)	9 months	2	N
Marc	28	Kim (UK)	Engaged	3	Y

Beth and Kim are originally from England, while Nicole and Anna are originally from Australia. Interestingly, Lena has Scottish heritage on her mother's side, is of mixed ethnicity and grew up in Fiji. She adds another layer of complexity because even though she grew up in Fiji, her values are rooted in Western thought.

### Photo Analysis

All interviews with the men began with an 'ice breaker' exercise where participants examined a series of photos collected from the *Fiji Times* archives (see Appendix 2). They then selected the ones that caught their attention the most and were asked to discuss them and why they chose the images they did. I also asked them a few other questions regarding masculine behaviour and which photos embodied Fijian masculine qualities the most or least. According to Schwalbe and Wolkomir, "...many

<sup>11</sup> I interviewed 11 participants, though I only use 10 of the interviews throughout this study. The 11<sup>th</sup> interview was with an un-married Fijian male who was known for dating non-Fijian women and I wanted to get his perspective on the phenomenon I was studying. In the end, while interesting, his interview did not fit into this thesis.

men are more willing to describe—and to show—emotions when looking at photographs than when merely conversing” (2002: 211). As a warm up exercise, I found this activity worked well and encouraged my participants to talk and start thinking about issues they may not normally think about. It also helped them to relax.

## **Interviews**

Interviews were the most direct and focused method of obtaining information about how these men negotiate their marriages and masculinity. As Warren (2002) points out, “The purpose of most qualitative interviewing is to derive interpretations, not facts or laws, from respondent talk” (2002: 83). That is, while respondents are interpreting their experiences, as they understand it, my role is also to interpret what they are saying as the interview is ongoing, in order to draw out conceptual ideas and processes.

All participants were asked the same questions (in English), and it was a semi-structured interview (see Appendix 1). My interviews took place in a variety of settings or contexts, ranging from an office meeting room to a parking lot on a hot, humid day to a Sunday afternoon amidst other extended family members. These social contexts, in addition to the interviews, provided various distractions, but also enriched the interviews by providing further layers that gave meaning to what the participants were saying. The interviews took between 90-120 min depending on the individuals. After, participants were encouraged to ask any questions they may have or raise any issues they felt were important but were not addressed. The interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder. I also did follow-up interviews with four out of the five couples to clarify any remaining questions I may have had.

Once all interviews were concluded, I asked all participants what they would like me to do with my research results. All replied that they would like to read a copy of the completed thesis, which I will ensure they receive. As well, as a token of my thanks for taking the time to share their experiences with me, all participants received a small gift from me.

## **Photovoice**

After the interviews were complete, I asked participants if they would like to participate in a photovoice project. If participants were interested in participating, then I

explained what it was and what was required. The couples chose the issues they wanted to address. According to Wang (1997):

Photovoice is a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique. It entrusts cameras to the hands of people to enable them to act as recorders, and potential catalysts for change in their own communities. It uses the immediacy of the visual image to furnish evidence and to promote an effective, participatory means of sharing expertise and knowledge... (1997: 369).

While the original intention of Photovoice is to affect policy change through the voices and images of people who would not usually have that opportunity, I hoped to incorporate it into my own research. As a participatory methodology, Photovoice fits in well with my desire to incorporate a post-colonial approach by giving participants another tool to express themselves and raise issues they feel are significant, but may have been overlooked during the interviews. Unfortunately, this method did not work out as well as I could have hoped due to a variety of reasons including limited technology and limited time. I had two digital cameras at my disposal, however, both were not functioning well due to their age and the intense humidity they had been exposed to. In fact, one camera ceased to work entirely. As well, two of the couples did not wish to participate, as they were extremely busy with their own schedules. In the end, three couples took part, though they did not take many photos. They expressed difficulty in remembering to document their lives throughout the day when discussing their photos. I was able to collect data from this exercise in the form of follow up interviews, and I use it in the analysis in the following chapters. I would attempt to use this methodology again, though I would allow for much more time, better equipment and a more precise discussion of the goals of the activity.

### **Participant Observation**

The last major method I employed was participant observation. This method requires that researchers spend considerable time in the field participating in everyday life, though not interfering with the situations observed (Jorgensen 1989; Spradley 1980; Bernard 2006). This technique was useful for me because it was an effective means of gathering data for an emerging phenomenon such as this particular marriage dynamic in

Fiji. In particular, I was able to observe the interactions between the couples in their homes, focusing on the division of labour, between each other and with their children, if they had them. I was able to visit and interact with all the couples a minimum of two times, though I did not always formally interview them. I spent several hours over several days walking through mainstream public areas and neighbourhoods observing family life to compare similarities and differences. I also attended church, had informal encounters with participants, and had an opportunity to visit a village in the highlands. I would then discuss my observations with my key source as mean of verifying accuracy (Bernard 2006). Combined with the interviews and other methods, I was able to collect a considerable amount of data as well as cross-check and verify informal data through the other methods.

Recognizing that data collection cannot possibly be an unbiased activity and that my very presence and personality may alter the results I collect, I could only try my best to be aware of my actions and people's reactions to my presence. As well, because I was a female outsider researcher examining masculinities, I needed to be aware of how my position and gender affected my participants and the ways my presence influenced their behaviours and answers (Atkinson and Hammersley 2007). Being a woman, and attempting to articulate the experiences of men is challenging in that I am not a man from a formally colonized developing country and therefore cannot fully comprehend their various experiences (Heron 2007). I also believe, however, that being a woman did not hinder me greatly. Both the men and women I interviewed appeared to respond positively to me. Since the women and I shared a common background and/or social values, this provided an inter-subjective context for discussion.

My previous experiences in Fiji (2005 and 2007) helped contribute to my ability to interview the men. In combination with my explicit desire to make these men the 'experts' on this topic, they could share their experiences in a non-threatening environment while I was there to ask questions and listen. On several occasions, I was told by local residents that they were more comfortable talking to me than other visitors because of my mannerisms. They told me it was because I would sit on the floor, eat with my hands, play with the kids and did not expect special treatment.

There were other significant factors that appeared to contribute to the warm and relatively cooperative reception I received from most people. These factors include my appearance and the tattoos on my right foot. Being of Japanese Canadian descent, my appearance has and still causes some confusion for local residents, particularly once I am tanned. This is when I start to look like I am from a number of Pacific Islands or even half Fijian. Because I “look like so and so,” this allowed me to move through communities with more ease. Surprisingly, the tattoos on my right foot were an ice breaker conversation topic that was always initiated by the participants and seemed to make them more comfortable with talking to me.

### **Limitations of Research**

Interviewing men is not necessarily a straightforward activity, particularly if you are a woman. Schwalbe and Wolkomir state, “An interview situation is both an opportunity for signifying masculinity and a peculiar type of encounter in which masculinity is threatened” (2002: 205). That is, men have the chance to portray themselves in the best light possible, but it can also be perceived as a threat because they do not have control over the questions or level of interaction. Recognizing this as a real possibility with my own participants, given the nature of my topic, I did my best to minimize the feeling of threat or judgement by having the participants decide on meeting times and locations. I also explicitly put them in the role of ‘expert’ when conducting interviews in an attempt to facilitate conversation. Other factors, like open body language, eye contact, occasional “mmmmhmmm” sounds and giving them time to think before answering also appeared to help. Despite these efforts, there were some challenges.

Though I had a small voice recorder that I tried not to emphasize, I noticed that all the participants were quite aware of it. The men in particular appeared to be concerned with answering questions “correctly.” In other instances, they would censor themselves mid-sentence or “shhh!” their wives if they started to say something they did not want to talk about during couples interviews. As I was interested in trying to collect as much information as I could and did not want to jeopardize my relationships with them, I did not push this when I saw it happening, yet it is clear that participants only told me what

they wanted me to know. It was hard to work around this, and ultimately, this is a major limitation of my data. I also believe, however, that I gained more trust with participants as time went on throughout the interviews and in subsequent follow-ups, which allowed them to speak more openly.

In terms of data collected, I was not able to properly address some issues that were raised by participants, such as discussions regarding violence and domestic violence. My interview questions were targeting a different phenomenon and while I noted comments from time to time, I was not fully prepared, nor comfortable in probing further.

Though I reached my minimum goal of interviewing five couples, I would like to have interviewed at least two more couples to further validate my data. I was limited by my time on the ground and the amount of time it took to locate couples. Because I was working with a particular population, it was challenging to find couples, as most who were recommended to me were no longer in the country. Once I was able to find willing participants, I was restricted by their availability, which resulted in less contact time than I would have liked in some cases, though I was able to meet all the couples at least twice even if it was only for a short period of time. Taking the lessons learned from this, I would use many of the same methods, but allow for more time so that there is a larger sample group. Further, in order to effectively utilize the photovoice method, I would allow for more time and better cameras. Regardless, the data I was able to collect through these methods provides significant insight into the experiences of these men. In order to understand their experiences however, it is important to situate them within the colonial historical context, which is discussed in Chapter 3.





### **Chapter 3: A Colonial Legacy in Fiji: The Reconstruction of Fijian Men and Women**

This chapter is a brief overview of Fiji's history from the early 1800's onward. The topics I focus on in this chapter can be used as a reference point and as context to explain (in part) where certain gender ideals in Fiji can be traced back to. Specifically, I describe aspects of Fiji's colonial experience starting from the early missionary period (1800 onwards) to the official colonial period (1874-1970). This allowed for the intersection of Christian ethos and values, British gender role expectations, miscegenation fears and global values to collide, take root and flourish. I suggest that the intersecting factors profoundly altered Fijian society on many levels. This includes redefining acceptable expressions of manhood by setting a new hegemonic standard.

Traditional British gender roles and expectations were imposed on the indigenous Fijian population during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This resulted in women becoming explicitly associated with the household while men were groomed to become providers, soldiers and athletes (Jolly 2001; Teiawa 2005; Ravuvu 1986). Rules regarding who could marry whom were created as racial boundaries hardened with the arrival of white women (Heartfield 2003; Stoler 2002). Finally, ideas surrounding capitalism, progress and development were founded, introducing specific Western values into the Fijian social fabric. I suggest that the values established during this period contribute to the struggles Fijian men are facing today in terms of gender roles and ideals, marriage and values surrounding work and progress. As well, I argue that this experience placed Fijian society in a position that makes them relatively accepting of new emerging global values because of their colonial experience and the values held by colonizers that have evolved over time. I start by examining how the introduction and establishment of Christianity set the foundation for later ideas surrounding gender roles and global values. I then explore the impact of the colonial experience on Fijian masculinity and the family. This is followed by a brief discussion regarding colonial beliefs and who was permitted to marry whom. I conclude by examining how the values established during the colonial period affect men today, especially in terms of work and the ability to provide for their families.

## **Establishing a Moral and Religious Foundation**

This section is a brief history of the missionary experience before official British colonization. It includes how the indigenous population was converted, how this was justified and some of the long-term social impacts. Before the British were officially established in Fiji in 1874, the Wesleyan missionaries had been working to convert Fijians to Christianity. From 1819 onwards, the missionaries moved outwards from New Zealand, spreading to the islands of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa (Eves 2006:727). According to Eves (2006), while the Methodists believed that all people were of equal value, their cultures were not, so they tended to take a paternal approach to Pacific Islanders. They were referred to as ‘child races’ and, “Like children, they were believed to not be entirely responsible for their actions, their behaviour was deemed undesirable and they were in need of the correction and guidance provided by education” (Eves 2006:740). This justified the “benevolent and guiding” interventions of both the missionaries and colonizers to make them good civilized Christians, while also reinforcing inequalities, and “...civilizational hierarchies founded on evolutionary ideas” (Eves 2006:740). Though it was not always a peaceful process, Fijians were relatively open to the idea of a Christian God and, in the early days, they incorporated it into their existing religious framework (Scarr 1984; Donnelly et al 1994; Tomlinson 2009).

With the introduction of missionaries and their wives, the focus soon turned to the home and the reconstruction of gender roles (Jolly 2001). That is, the patriarchal and highly gendered family ideals promoted by evangelical Christians (largely through the emerging British middle class) that underpinned the expanding British Empire, were imported to Fiji where these values could be imposed on local populations (Davies 1997; Jolly 1998). The early missionaries sought to reorganize the family and marriage structure by promoting monogamous marriages, where husbands and wives lived in the same home (Jolly 2001). Men’s roles were reconstructed to become “providers” for their wives, and “heterosexual conjugality” (Jolly 2001:281) became privileged over traditional kinship patterns, lineages and clan structures. This was a long term project, but highly effective in establishing a framework for the dominant (British) masculine and

feminine gender ideals that would be further reinforced by the arrival of the colonial administration (see Figure 2).

Today, Christianity is still a vibrant and influential part of Fijian life (Ravuvu 1983). Most Fijians can be found worshipping on Saturday or Sundays depending on their denomination (see Figure 4). Though there are many denominations active in Fiji, the Methodist Church still holds the most influence and members (Fiji Bureau of Statistics 2007; Varani-Norton 2005; Tomlinson 2009). Tomlinson sums up Fiji's contemporary religious experience by saying, "...Fijian Methodism is more like the caffeine of the masses, energizing people while intensifying their anxieties" (2009:25). That is, while it is capable of inspiring people to carry out their Christian activities, it also incites insecurity because men and women struggle to live up to the expectations imposed on them in terms of behaviour and service to the church community (Varani-Norton 2005). Specifically, there is a profound sense of loss of how things ought to be or were in the past. This sense of loss applies to all matter of social relationships, but significantly includes chiefly behaviour and the way men ought to behave (Tomlinson 2009). In this context, moral and traditional values come into conflict. To explore these complexities, it is necessary to examine how Fiji's colonial experience was carried out.

### **Colonialism in Fiji**

Fiji's colonial experience was unique compared to the rest of the region. This section briefly explores Fiji's colonial experience by focussing on underlying ideologies that influenced British policy. This is important because these values provided justification for the British to alter the fabric of Fijian society as they saw fit, though I focus specifically on men and the family.<sup>12</sup> Many academics (Thomas 1990, 1994; Jolly 1998, 2001; Kelly 1989, 1997) have noted that while there was a considerable effort to preserve the Fijian culture (see Figure 3), there was less interest in preserving the indigenous cultures of Vanuatu and Australia. Thomas states that:

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<sup>12</sup> It is important to note that when discussing links to the colonial past and the acceptance of global values, these values were never fully accepted, which resulted in unexpected consequences (Stoler 2002). Specifically, I mean that even though the colonial experience profoundly altered Fijian society and values, Fijians still maintained elements of their culture which resulted in a hybridized colonial society.

British policy thus responded to native populations on the basis of social evolutionary criteria: the rights of those near the bottom of the ladder, such as Australian Aborigines, received extremely scant notice, while indirect rule was appropriate for peoples with more developed technologies and recognizable hierarchical social institutions, whose cultures were also more fit for study and preservation (1994:109).<sup>13</sup>

In part, this can be attributed to the ideas of the “Pacific Romance” and the “colonial project.” Kelly defines the ‘Pacific Romance’ as the “romantic idealization of the ‘savage’ indigenous Fijians and the project of civilizing them” but says that we must situate “romance and that civilizing project in the larger context of the colonial project in general...” especially in regards to Fiji’s colonial experience (1989:383). An important part of the Pacific Romance construct included the warrior image, which still influences values today. Closely related to the “Pacific Romance” construct are what Thomas calls the “colonial projects.” Thomas says ‘colonial projects’ are “culturally and strategically complex; they entail a whole worldview that imagined metropolitan society, rival powers and colonized places in certain terms...” (1994:106). Both concepts are important in Fiji because the British had a strong desire to study and civilize them, but also projected their values and world views onto the new society they were creating.

Fiji’s colonial experience was “...an elaborate and paradoxical affair, characterized by intense interest in indigenous society and a singularly paternalistic and protective attitude towards it” (Thomas 1994: 107).<sup>14</sup> The British appeared to accord a high level of respect to the native Fijian order, which was unique at that time. Fijians were judged as good candidates for ‘indirect rule’, which Kelly (1989) defines as, “the

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<sup>13</sup> In this case, evolutionary criteria was based on how complex and hierarchical the society was. For example, comparing the Solomon Islands to Fiji, Thomas writes, “...they lacked the pomp and autocratic power that constituted an indigenous aristocracy of the kind that the British respected and empathized with...” (1994:109).

<sup>14</sup> This idea also helps to shed some insight on how the indentured Indian population arrived in Fiji. According to Lal (1984), the emigration of indentured Indian labourers to Fiji was part of a larger process of labour migration from India that started after the abolition of slavery in India in 1834. After Fiji’s cession of power in 1874, the British found themselves with a large debt to the Americans, a depressed economy and they were suffering from a labour shortage (1984:126). Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, governor at the time, decided to import cheap labour from India in 1879 because “...if the local population was suddenly exposed to the alien challenges of the plantation regime, they might decline disastrously like indigenous peoples elsewhere” (1984:126).

creation of an indigenous Fijian polity within the colonial polity; control of the indigenous Fijians through the controlled authority of their chiefs” (1989:374). Essentially this means a martial presence and the overt threat of state violence was not needed to subdue the population because of a more subtle control that was exercised through existing power relations—in this case, the chiefs. Ironically, Heartfield notes that while the British made a show of promoting equality before the law and the idea of opening up the land to indigenous labour and exploitation, racial boundaries were still maintained (Heartfield 2003:74; also see Thomas 1994; Stoler 2002, McClintock 1995).

This is also the period in which the emerging modern values that underpinned the British colonial project were established, particularly the ideas of progress and development. If Fiji was to become more civilised, a series of steps needed to be taken ranging from moral and ethical standards, to establishing infrastructure and improving health and hygiene (Thomas 1994; Jolly 1998; Lukere 2002). I argue that these colonial values were the foundation for some of the emerging global values that Fijians are starting to embrace. One of the best examples of how British ideas surrounding work, progress and development were carried out is reflected in how the British handled the decrease of the Fijian population while simultaneously reshaping gender roles within the family.

### **Saving the Fijian Population by Transforming Gender Roles**

Concerned with the rapidly declining population, the British launched a massive inquiry to determine the cause of the population loss in 1896. At that point, approximately one quarter of the Fijian population had died from various causes, though disease was the primary factor (Lukere 2002:103). The result was a detailed report known as the “Report of a Commission of Enquiry into the Decrease of the Native Population” otherwise known as the “Decrease Report.” This section explores the impact of the Decrease Report and the resulting British policies that fundamentally altered Fijian family life and gender roles.

In the “Decrease Report,” both indigenous and external causes were considered. It included input from colonizers, missionaries, anthropologists and high-ranking chiefs. A

partial list of indigenous causes included: loss of male virility,<sup>15</sup> abortion and infanticide, warfare and head hunting, polygamy, sexual depravity, unsanitary habits, unskilled midwives and mothers (Jolly 1998:186, 2001:277). Interestingly, Fijian men also blamed the effects of Christianity on conjugal relations. According to Fijian practice, once a child was born, the parents could not have sex for at least twelve months lest the health of the child be compromised (Jolly 2001). Therefore it was not unusual for the mother to live with her own kin during this time instead of with her husband's. With the introduction of Christian moral codes, however, this practice was compromised, as parents were strongly encouraged to live with each other and not with their extended kin (Jolly 2001). The exogenous causes included: introduced diseases, labour, trade, new food and alcohol. The British also included "psychological causes" induced through European contact, which resulted in a, "...growing disinclination to bear children" (Jolly 2001:278).

Surprisingly, the "Decrease Report" blamed Fijian mothers and their poor mothering skills for the decline in the Fijian population. This was later used as justification for maternal intervention. Specifically, the report refers to "high infant mortality as a result of native customs, unskilled midwifery, work during pregnancy, etc." among other causes (Decrease Report 1896). But as Thomas notes, "the assumption that depopulation proceeded prior to the white impact located its causes in native behaviour and customs, which could then be represented and described in relation to the problem. Efforts to deal with population decline would also deal with behaviour and customs" (1994:113). That is, by assuming that depopulation was in progress before the arrival of white people, the British could blame "native behaviours and customs" and the solution was to modify whatever behaviours and customs the British found problematic.

The British administration took the Report's recommendations seriously and began implementing a series of policies in an effort to alter indigenous customary practice and behaviour. This is significant because, while the colonial administration sometimes distanced itself from the missionaries and their, "...zealous promotion of

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<sup>15</sup> According to Jolly, "the propensity to die out is typically associated with a loss of virility in men expressed both as a fact about their bodies and activities. The problem was patent in the male psychological response to pacification and colonization—the masculine arts of warfare and cannibalism has disappeared but had not been replaced by equally invigorating activities" (1998:186). According to early anthropologists, this was an environment where men had little will to stay if they could not pursue the activities that defined them as men.

monogamous, nucleated couples,” frequently the values and outcomes of both institutions were in line with each other (Jolly 2001:281). In this particular case, not only did these recommendations target motherhood and childrearing practices that could be corrected with “proper” teaching and science to back it up, but it also provided a legitimate means for the state to reorder the family and household. This meant that specific roles were imposed on men and women that would supposedly save the Fijian population from its imminent demise. If the population was to be saved, then the mobility of women needed to be restricted which effectively tied them to the home, limiting their ability to contribute to household income (Jolly 2001).<sup>16</sup>

The implications here, I argue, are many. First, men had to become providers in a more Western conventional sense, working in the public realm to provide for their immediate families, because their wives could no longer contribute outside the home the way they used to. Marriage, in the Western sense (see Nock in Chapter 1), and the nuclear family were heavily promoted by both the church and the state, and men were clearly established as head of the household. In doing so, many of the hegemonic masculine values that appear “traditional” and are prevalent in contemporary Fijian society, such as men as breadwinners, can be traced back to this period. Second, by referring to so-called appropriate ways of childbearing and child-rearing, the British were able to inject ideas of progress and global values into the existing value system in terms of modern health and maternal care as well as ideals surrounding gender roles and manhood. Third, this was also the period in which racial boundaries were hardening and who could marry whom was being clearly defined. This was a highly charged issue, and the effects linger today.

### **“Who bedded and wedded whom...was never left to chance”**

Stoler (2002) states that the introduction of white women into colonized populations heightened and reinforced the social and political differences between the colonizer and colonized. According to her, the arrival of these women tended to coincide

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<sup>16</sup> Conveniently, by limiting the movements and activities of women, the colonial state ingratiated themselves further with the local chiefs, who were looking for legitimate excuses to control the behaviour of women (Jolly 1998, 2001).

with a planned political stabilization that was executed in response to some perceived vulnerability in the colonizing power (2002:33). One major trend was to outlaw any sexual unions between colonizers and the colonized (usually in the form of concubines), even if administrators had previously and quietly turned a blind eye (Stoler 2002; McClintock 1995). In this new context, concerns over the safety and virtue of women became an issue and native men were portrayed as having no self-control (frequently alluded to as the “Black Peril”). This allowed colonizers to further justify segregating themselves from the colonized, establishing superiority while simultaneously controlling the activities of their women (Stoler 2002:58). Any perceived threat to the virtue of women was also perceived as a challenge to the dominance of colonial rule and to be harshly punished, as it also potentially exposed the ruling man’s inability to protect women (Stoler 2002; Knapman 1986).<sup>17</sup> One of the greatest perceived threats to colonial superiority came, however, from the children of interethnic unions. These children represented racial contamination and moral degeneration that threatened the divide between ruler and ruled because they could not necessarily be placed in a single category. Therefore, nothing was left to chance when it came to marriage and families (Stoler 2002:47).

These sexual and racial tensions were no different in Fiji. From the beginning of the colonial period, Fiji was a multicultural community comprised of Tongans, Samoans, Rotumans, I-Kiribati, Tuvalu and approximately 4,000 Melanesian labourers. As well, there was a small group of Chinese merchants and the Europeans (Scarr 1984:78). In the early days of European contact, it was not unusual for European men to take Fijian wives who would then bear them children. In fact, it was encouraged by early colonizers in Fiji and other islands like Samoa, as it allowed for strong relationships to develop (Shankman 2004). In the case of Samoa, many chiefs saw it as an opportunity to acquire valuable trade goods like guns (de Bruce 2007; Shankman 2004). This changed dramatically,

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<sup>17</sup> While ruling men went out of their way to control women, Stoler (2002) and Knapman (1986) point out that women also helped intensify racial tensions and separation in their own right. According to Stoler, because life was even more difficult abroad than at home, women favoured a moral order that would restrict the sexual behaviour of men and the home and garden became sites of their control (2002: 34). She later on notes that they were the ones accused of being the “..bearers of racist belief [who also] put them into practice” (2002:57).

however, as the British became more established and especially after the early settlers, who were mostly men, started to bring their wives over.

Once the wives of missionaries and colonial officials began to settle in, the racial lines began to harden (Knapman 1986). Even before the British were established, there was a growing belief that the lack of sexual control between European men and Fijian women was a reflection of weakening European social values and privilege, which in turn was interpreted as a loss of political control (de Bruce 2007). By the time of Cession, British administrators discouraged intermarriage on threat of severe punishment. It should be noted that the general assumption was that this applied to men, as women were not usually in this position (de Bruce 2007). If a white woman entered a relationship with a Fijian man, the moral outrage was profound. She would be labelled a depraved soul and essentially ostracized from white society (de Bruce 2007). This is best illustrated by the case of Stella Sangorski Spencer who, in 1915, was charged with slapping a Fijian. More importantly, she was accused of betraying her race and engaging in sexual relations with a Fijian (Heartfield 2003). Spencer and her husband were also suspected of being sympathetic to the native cause and therefore suspected of subverting the established status quo. There were several issues surrounding this court case, including the belief that Fijians were going too far in their desire to control their own businesses instead of staying in the village where the British wanted them. The possibility of sexual relations between a white woman and an indigenous Fijian man, however, was front and centre (Heartfield 2003).

Heartfield notes that while Fijians suffered brutal physical abuse at the hands of British, that a British woman should be tried for slapping a Fijian at all is remarkable. At her trial, it quickly became clear that Spencer was not on trial for physical abuse against a native so much as for ‘associating with Fijians’ (Heartfield 2003:78). As she became more frustrated with her treatment, she attempted to invoke her rights as a white woman and was informed by the chief prosecutor that she was “... not a white woman” (Heartfield 2003:79). In his response, it becomes clear that her romantic links to an indigenous Fijian were thought to be so grave by the prosecutor and British society at large, that she was perceived as being outside of white society in Fiji (Heartfield 2003). Her rights and prestige as a white woman were no longer valid and by making her a

social outcast and an example of her, the colonial administration was also able to reinforce those racial boundaries and so-called appropriate behaviours that promoted superiority over Fijians. This case highlights the entrenched belief that sexual relations between different cultures and ethnicities during this time were considered undesirable at best, but absolutely unacceptable to most and a punishable crime (de Bruce 2007; Stoler 2002; McClintock 1995).

Intermarriages have a historical precedence in the Pacific, which is significant as the suspension of such practices can be traced to the colonial period (Stoler 2002; Shankman 2004; de Bruce 2007). Before colonization, intermarriages were established in order to strengthen unions between Tonga, Fiji and sometimes Samoa (Donnelly 1994). This is noteworthy because if intermarriages were practiced historically, that experience might shape current notions about the acceptability of such intermarriages in Fiji, to some extent. As well, there appears to be a growing number of European women who are choosing to marry outside of their own ethnicity in general, and is reflected in intermarriage data collected by national censuses (Globe and Mail 2008). This shows that certain colonial values continue to be eroded as non-Fijian women and indigenous Fijian men engage in relationships that were previously considered taboo even during their own parents' lifetime (Ravuvu 1983; De Bruce 2007). In contrast, two images of ideal manhood that were born during the colonial period have, over time, strengthened in their cultural impact within the Fijian context. These are the Fijian soldier and the Fijian athlete images.

### **Re-Construction of Masculine Gender Ideals: Sports and the Military**

The history of militarism in the Pacific and Fiji is long and can be traced back to the pre-colonial period. The events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been of particular importance with regards to WWII, nuclear testing and constructions of contemporary masculinity (see Teaiwa 2000, 2005; Dvorak 2005; George 2008; Tengan 2008). Because this topic is so complex and large, men and the military are not the focus of this thesis. However, it is important to situate Fijian masculinity within this framework, as it does affect constructions and understandings of dominant ideals of Fijian masculinity. Militarism pervades Fijian society on all levels, providing a cultural, historical, institutional and

social point of reference that all males must reckon with at some point in time (Teaiwa 2005).

Fiji's military is understood as a "bastion" of masculinity in both the historical and contemporary context (George 2008:172). Before the intervention of European settlers, Fijians were recognized as fighters (Ravuvu 1988). According to Ravuvu, "warfare was closely associated with the training and initiation of youths for manhood" (1988:1). After killing their first victim, young men were celebrated in their villages and young women would greet them as they came back triumphant (Ravuvu 1988:2). The Fijians admired displays of physical strength, aggressiveness, courage and adept weapons handling (Ravuvu 1988:3). The warrior was the hegemonic ideal back then and appears to persist today, though it has been somewhat modified.

Although the British did not initially think the Fijians would make appropriate soldiers in the late 1800's, the Fijians took well to the European military standards and earned the respect of the British in both World Wars and continue today as members of the British Army, overseas peacekeepers, and mercenaries (Ravuvu 1988; Teaiwa 2005). According to Teaiwa, "Fiji's modern military roots may be traced to the colonial administration, but more specifically to a Fijian discourse of loyalty and service to the Crown of England" (2005:205). The combination of loyalty to family and clan and the martial ideal has diminished over time. It may in fact be strengthening in cultural terms, particularly in the wake of a series of coups (Teaiwa 2005). As alluded to earlier, militarism is embedded in many institutions and the values associated with this are instilled in boys from a young age through participation in organizations like the Boy Scout and sports like rugby (Teaiwa 2005).

Like the Maori in New Zealand (Aotearoa), indigenous Fijians have been constructed to be the eternal warrior. Hokowhitu's (2004, 2008) work with the Maori makes for a compelling case. He shows how over time, the manner in which the British took the warrior image and channelled it into rugby, resulted in international fame in the form of the All Blacks among other teams. Through government institutions and the education system, contemporary Maori masculinity is constructed to be either the warrior athlete, or the blue-collar employee with little hope for career advancement. The athlete is celebrated while the blue-collar worker is not (Hokowhitu 2008). Similar patterns can

be seen in Fiji, where international rugby players are seen as national heroes (when winning at least) and play for teams such as the Fiji *Bati*, which is a Fijian term for the descent group of warriors who protect the chief (Teiawa 2005).

Ravuvu notes that in 1938, after Fiji beat New Zealand's Maori team in a rugby match, Fiji's governor, "...expressed his hope that the Fijians would do their military duty in the same way they had achieved sporting victories in New Zealand" (1988:12). That Fiji's representative to the Crown made a direct link between sports and military performance is significant. It is indicative of how the British were able to harness the pre-existing warrior ideals and re-mould these values into their military and sporting frameworks, while simultaneously reconstructing Fijian masculinity. No longer was the Fijian man a heathen warrior. Now he was to be a disciplined, military body who excelled at aggressive contact sports like rugby (Teiawa 2005).

The intersection of complex layers of masculine ideals begins to emerge here. I suggest that the provider ideal comes into conflict with the warrior and athlete ideal, as the latter two requires that men spend more time with each other than with the wife and children they are supposed to be responsible for. Today, many Fijian men spend significant time away from their families serving in the British Army, private security firms or as professional rugby players in a bid to earn more money than they could ever hope to at home in an effort to provide for their families (Teiawa 2005). In this regard, Fiji is not unique. Throughout the region, men and women leave their countries to pursue the possibility of better economic prosperity overseas, sending home their earnings in the form of remittances (Teaiwa 2005; Knauft 1997). These earnings often sustain island economies. More importantly however, the need and ability to earn cash is also increasingly linked to men and manhood (Connell 1995).

In Melanesia, Knauft (1997) provides considerable insight into the relationship between economics, men and changing social relations. Knauft states that economic success has become increasingly linked to a man's sense of masculinity. He says, "male prestige is increasingly dependent on the acquisition of cash and commodities..." (Knauft 1997:250). Men, particularly in developing regions, are finding themselves caught between the desire to find financial/material success while maintaining their local roots. Specifically, Knauft says that men begin to act more individually and their goals and

aspirations come into conflict with their kin and obligations of reciprocity (1997: 243). That is, as men earn cash, their personal desires interfere with the expectations of their immediate and extended families who expect these men will provide for them. These men experience a profound sense of failure when they do not succeed in meeting their own expectations and those of their immediate and extended family, which challenges their identity and masculinity.

In Fiji, the idealized agricultural way of life, with clearly defined gender roles is blurring rapidly. The belief that men will do what they are supposed to do and women will do what they are supposed to do therefore maintaining a balance, is now complicated by other factors. These include several anti-government coups that have resulted in a resurgence of nationalism and militaristic masculinities (Teaiwa 2005; George 2008), economic globalization (Friedman 1994; Tomlinson 1999; Gikandi 2001) and emerging global values. The idea of man as breadwinner also continues to persist, even as women are encouraged to be more independent. Additionally, Brison notes there is considerable tension as, “Western mass media and several waves of development policy in Fiji [have] stressed the need to shake individuals free from communal constraints to realize individual goals and desires” (2007:42). That men struggle between conflicting values systems is not surprising under these circumstances, yet most of the men I spoke to all appear to endorse the idea of progress and the necessity of developing the “Western” way, despite the tensions that arise. I locate my project at this confluence of historical contexts, gender ideals and traditional and modern values.

Fijian men who marry European women challenge many previously established social norms, particularly those involving gender roles and intimate relations. Their wives embody many of the modern values surrounding independence, individualism, the pursuit of dreams and goals and progress. That is, they are independent women who work and have taken on the role of provider and enabler within their marriages. They challenge the ideas of what a man should be doing in terms of being the provider and being head of the household. In some ways, however, the wives also support their husbands in achieving their own personal goals by increasing their physical and economic mobility. This results in the general acceptance of these values among the men, but also a “bargain” that allows them to keep those features of Fijian manhood that are important to them. There is also

the potential, however, that some colonial patterns are being played out within these marriages. By this, I suggest that ideas surrounding work and progress are imposed on the men, though this is not necessarily a conscious imposition. This idea is explored more fully in Chapter 6. The next three chapters explore the dynamics of these intertwining relationships, the tensions that arise and the implications this has for Fijian masculinities amidst rapid transformations.



**Figure 2.** Since the missionaries brought their values and expectations to Fiji, women have been explicitly responsible for raising children and managing the family. While more women are working, the expectation remains in place. In this shot, the young boy was crying because he wanted to spend time with his father, but since it was not deemed appropriate for the father to do so, the grandmother intervened and took over his care.

Photo: Sayuri Holman



**Figure 3.** Traditions still hold strong in Fiji, particularly for special events. Men gather to participate in the making of a village elder in a village in Tailevu.

Photo: Sayuri Holman



**Figure 4.** Most Fijians can be seen in church on the weekends. Christianity and the values associated with it still plays a dominant role in the lives of most Fijians. This includes values surrounding work and men as head of the household.

Photo: Sayuri Holman

## Chapter 4: “He has to be one who is good in both worlds”: Negotiating Masculinity in Contemporary Urban Fiji

...my wife earns way much more than me. So if family obligations [come up], like *solu*,<sup>18</sup> I'm expected to throw in a bit of money and I have to go to my wife and sometimes she says no. You know...things like that. From the point of view if the guy earns much less than the wife, he doesn't run the household. [SH That's the view that everyone has?] No no, I mean that's the ideal view. I've had to accept the fact that she...I mean it's not an issue to me, but it is for other people. It's quite irritating. (Kitione, interviewed in Suva, Fiji Nov. 7, 2008)

To obtain respect in the community, Fijian men are under intense pressure to behave a certain way. They must live up to both customary kin-related obligations as well contemporary expectations of hegemonic masculinity. In the quote above, participant Kitione is aware of an existing ideal of how a man ought to be in Fijian society. This includes earning the bulk of the household income and being head of the household. He is also acutely aware of his inability to live up to it and alludes to the social pressure he endures constantly.

This chapter defines the contemporary hegemonic ideal and then explores the tensions and challenges of not living up to this ideal in the context of intermarriage. Specifically, I focus on the idea of work and how work relates to a man's sense of his own masculinity. I trace the notion of work back to the early missionary period and show how the Christian work ethic is closely linked to both masculine ideals (man as provider) and emerging global values (i.e. capitalism). I argue that the Christian work ethic is largely responsible for the stress and anxiety that men feel, particularly when they do not live up to these expectations. I will address other dynamics of these intermarriages in more detail in Chapter 5.

First, however, I begin by identifying the bundle of characteristics that defines the ideal contemporary Fijian male. These include: being the head of the household and being the provider, being physically and emotionally strong, and being connected to the

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<sup>18</sup> *Solu* translates literally to “gift.” Fijians are expected to contribute money or other gifts to various events including community events, weddings and funerals.

*vanua*. I will then use one participant case study to examine how one respondent positions himself in relation to this ideal. Specifically, I explore the unconventional roles he takes on because his wife is the primary provider, which illustrates the conflicts that arise, the challenges he faces and how he manages to reconcile the Fijian male ideal with the reality he lives in. I will then explore the idea of the Christian work ethic, which has been reinforced amongst the Fijian population for the last 170 years and can be traced back to the arrival of the missionaries and later, the British colonial administration.<sup>19</sup> This is followed by another case study from another participant. His wife is also the primary provider within their marriage. The idea of work and having a strong work ethic in order to provide for his wife emerges here. Though this participant is currently not in a position to be the primary provider, this case study demonstrates the pressures he feels and also shows how internalized the work ethic is in himself and many Fijians.

### **Constructions of the Contemporary Fijian Hegemonic Male**

Before Christianity was established in Fiji, the warrior ideal and a man's ability to fight was highly respected. In addition, being loyal to one's chief was expected (Ravuvu 1984, 1988). These two characteristics affected Fijian society on all levels. Today, identifying the key characteristics of the contemporary Fijian male is not as simple a task. Physical attributes such as strength, athleticism and the way one carries oneself still play a role in defining the hegemonic male, as well as how he behaves (Ravuvu 1988; George 2008; Tomlinson 2009).<sup>20</sup> Activities and characteristics that appear to be important to the performance of being a "proper" man include participating in the military, playing sports like rugby, being a good Christian man, and bonding with men while sitting around the grog bowl (otherwise known as drinking kava—see Figure 5). Additionally, men must also maintain their connection with their *vanua* or land.

Ravuvu's definition of *vakaturaga* (the chiefly qualities that include being the protector and provider for his family and clan) is still important, but appears to hold less

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<sup>19</sup> Even though the Indians were brought into Fiji to work the sugar cane plantations, hard work was promoted among the Fijians in terms of working the land (Lal 1984, 1993; Ravuvu 1983, 1984, 1988; Scarr 1984; Kelly 1989, 1998).

<sup>20</sup> This vague idea was raised by all participants, but when pressed could not define it precisely. They seem to be referring to a confidence and a projection of being 'in control,' which is a hallmark of generalized global hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2005).

influence over the average man in the contemporary context as the chiefs continue to lose more power (Fiji Times April 12, 2007). Some men even express criticism and frustration at the way chiefs are now behaving because they no longer embody the values of *vakaturaga* (“the ways of the chiefs”) or set a positive example (Tomlinson 2009).

Indeed, one participant, Pita, says:

*Vakaturaga* is like being a gentleman. You’re saying for chiefs, but you should have chiefs like that who go out to the people and command leadership. But I hardly ever see it now. People have more money now or something and they’ve lost it. It’s more like if you’re going to get something out of it, then you’ll do it but [that is] not how it’s supposed to be... There are a lot [of people] hungry for power. They don’t want to know what happens to their people as long as they get there. Usually chiefs look after their people, but now they get the least money...  
*Vakaturaga* means you lead the people the way you should but there’s a lot of bullshit *vakaturaga* out there...

Pita interprets many of the new emerging global values as driven by personal interest and benefit, which has a negative effect on the community in this particular context. Tomlinson found similar frustrations on the island of Kadavu where men lament the loss of chiefly power and practices (2009:74-75). The old system of checks and balance that are supposed to be handled by the chiefs is no longer effective and perhaps no longer as relevant either, particularly for those residing in urban areas. Furthermore, tensions arise when there is a conflict of interest between local customs and emerging global values. For example, more and more men (and women) are moving towards Fiji’s urban areas in hopes of a better standard of living and a chance at paid employment (see *Fijians in Town* 1986; Tomlinson 2009). As well, boundaries demarcating specific gender roles are blurring as men and women face the erosion of established gender norms and boundaries, upsetting neo-traditional practices and customs. The following case study illustrates this trend.

### **Kitione: Navigating the Traditional and the Global**

On first glance, Kitione appears to live a life that many people would envy. He has been married to his wife, Lena, 29, for almost 10 years and they have five children. Kitione, 29, is a former national level athlete who held a national record in track and field

until recently (see Figure 8). He remains an active track and field coach and likes to take his children onto the track with him from time to time. During the day, he works at a local publication and covers high profile athletes and news stories. Most of my interviews with him took place in his office at work, as it was a convenient location for both of us.

When asked to define the ideal Fijian man, Kitone says a Fijian man is of strong character. Additionally:

He has to be the one who is good in both worlds. Like he can be successful career-wise, but if you have no connections to your *vanua*, then you're not—If you don't have land, that's the most important...If they're successful, they must have a home in the village, if they have land, they have to be planting on the land. Yeah, there are some very successful men but they're not recognized in their communities because some of them prefer to stay on one side. They don't care about family and village obligations.

In this response, Kitone discusses how customs still hold considerable influence, particularly in the rural areas, where these ideals remain strong. He also alludes to the idea of living in two worlds: that being “traditional” Fiji and globalizing Fiji. He suggests that some men can, in fact, balance the expectations of both worlds, but that it is difficult and many men may find material success by Western standards, but in turn they lose the respect of people who hold with customary ways. The transition to a largely cash economy is also impacting married couples.

When it comes to issues surrounding money, he is concerned with who makes it and who controls it. Kitone still experiences pressure from friends and family who cannot or will not accept his lifestyle. In particular, he refers to issues surrounding money and who controls it. His wife, Lena, is the primary breadwinner and spends 12 hours or more a day at work, six days a week. His friends sometimes give him a hard time because he does not necessarily control all aspects of his household finances (though he does set and manage the budget). Says Kitone in reference to his friends,

They just can't seem to...like she can buy things with this much, and I can't buy this with this much. Sometimes my friends want to go out and I have to ask because she's got the cash (laughs out loud) and they say bullshit! Truzup! [SH but you're ok with it?]Yeah I'm ok with it...(voice trailing off).

Despite the fact that he has been living his current lifestyle for several years, some of his friends still appear to have difficult time accepting it, implying that if he is a real man then he should not have to ask for money. Though Kitone finds this kind of teasing annoying, he tends to shrug it off because he and his wife are only doing what they see is best for their family, even if it means role reversals. It appears to have given both of them appreciation of the other's traditional role as well with Kitone jokingly saying, "Most of the things, I push it up to her. 'What do you want to do about this?' And then she tries to push it back and says 'You're the man!' and I say, 'No no, you want to be the man...'" (laughing out loud)."

Since Lena's job pays more, they made the mutually agreed decision that her career would take priority over his. It was a pragmatic decision that made the most sense to them. Because of her long hours, Kitone tends to drop off and pick up their five children from school. He is usually responsible for cooking and cleaning, though Lena helps out in the evenings as well, when she comes home from work (see Figure 6). In fact, while I was talking to his wife at their home one evening, Kitone came home later. Without missing a beat, he quickly prepared baby food and began feeding his youngest son, while trying to calm the older children, who were happy to see him (see Figure 7). He knows his behaviour is unusual but has accepted it. In contrast to other men and conventional gender roles, Kitone says,

I think most of them look at the line and they don't cross it. I've been to houses and after we eat dinner and there's a pile of dishes and so I'll start washing them. The men say 'Don't wash it! My wife will do it.' At home, washing is the only thing I won't do. The laundry. I don't like doing it and she says she'll do it. But sometimes I just want to sit down and she'll walk in and say 'Hey the house doesn't look good' and I say 'I'm just not up to it.'

He goes out of his way to distinguish himself from other men saying he is more than happy to do dishes because he believes it is more than fair that he takes on some of the workload, regardless of where he is. He highlights the attitude of some of his friends and their firm belief that household chores are absolutely the realm of women's work, which shows that neo-traditional roles are still actively maintained. This can be explained, in part I suggest, by the strength of the Christian influence in Fiji. Women are

still expected to take care of the home, and men are still expected to be the provider and as Kitione suggests, few men are willing to cross that “line.”

This experience appears to have precedence in Oceania. Brison (1995) illustrates how complicated and messy the construction of masculinities is over time and attributes this chaos to the effects of the colonial legacy in the Sepik province, Papua New Guinea. She alludes to the fact that the men are living in the here and now, but definitions of masculinity are defined by an older colonial standard where leadership and certain types of aggression were valued—the Kwanga’s hegemonic masculinity. Today, if men display these character traits, their community frowns upon them saying they are dangerous and do not take the consequences of their actions on other people into consideration. They believe these men are acting in a strong way, but it is selfish because they are doing what they want. However, if a man does not behave this way and is sensitive to other people’s concerns, then he is perceived as weak and not a good example of what a man should be (Brison 1995:156). This is further complicated by the powerful colonial and missionary influence. Importantly, throughout the region, the Christian missionaries promoted peace and the end of warfare resulting in men feeling emasculated and lost without a defined role (Jolly 1998: 186-187). Warfare and head hunting were central in proving manhood (Jolly 1998). If they were unable to prove they were men, they were unable to gain a wife. In this context, the impact of the missionaries was profound as they sought to recreate new ideals of manhood that did not involve bloodshed. The lasting legacy, however, results in Kwanga men who struggle to balance older masculine values with contemporary Christian values today.

### **Noqu Kalou, Noqu Vanua**

According to the most recent set of official statistics, more than 99 per cent of indigenous Fijians identify as Christian of some denomination (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2007). This statistic is important for several reasons. First, it indicates how pervasive and well-established Christianity is in Fiji. Second, discussions surrounding a Christian work ethic become relevant, particularly in conjunction with neo-traditional gender roles. Third, there is cultural significance attached to the Christian faith. The phrase, *Noqu Kalou, Noqu Vanua* refers to the Fijians’ intertwined relationship between the people, the

land and God.<sup>21</sup> It literally translates to “My God, My Land” (Varani-Norton 2005). *Noqu Kalou, Noqu Vanua* suggests that individuals have roles and expectations they are expected to conform to and to not meet these expectations risks judgement being brought down upon him (or her). For men, living up to Christian ideals, taking care of and working the land, and providing for their families is the expectation (Jolly 2001; Lukere 2002). They may also be expected to participate in their churches, volunteering their time (Varani-Norton 2005). Christianity, then, plays a significant role in constructing part of the Fijian masculine ideal. One participant, Pita, says, “I think Christian values really do affect me a lot. Because Christian values tell you, you are the provider in the house and if you are a man you have to look after your family the way Jesus looks after the church. So I think Christian values really put into the man that he should be the provider and the head of the house.” In this quote, the idea of the Christian work ethic and providing for the family emerges as a lasting ideal.

As argued earlier, the early missionaries established a powerful influence in Fiji and throughout the Pacific Islands with regards to shaping gender roles (Jolly 2001, 1998, 1989; Lukere 2002; Thomas 1994). In the following section I argue that in addition to this, they also laid the foundation for a particular type of work ethic that is valued and respected today.

### **The Christian Work Ethic**

The idea of the Christian work ethic has been reinforced amongst the Fijian population for the last 170 years and can be traced back to the arrival of the missionaries and later, the British colonial administration. I suggest that this experience set the foundation for the general acceptance of many global values, influences many of their professed values today, and is intrinsically linked to their social identity and masculinity. According to the Hawaiian academic Tengan (2008), the idea of the “lazy native” is one of the “...oldest and most pervasive discursive tactics used by settlers...” around the world, and the Pacific experience was no different (2008:44). Because they believed natives to be both idle and indifferent resulting in many social ills, Tengan writes that,

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<sup>21</sup> The phrase “My God, My Land” is deeply ingrained within Fijian society. So much so, that even when academics refer to it, they give only a cursory explanation before moving on, and few people question the relationship, though this is starting to change with work from Varani-Norton (2005), and Tomlinson (2009) among others exploring this.

“...they [settlers] proposed land ownership and the discipline of the capitalist work ethic as the solution to depopulation...” among other problems (2008:45). While Tengan recognizes capitalism as the means by which colonizers injected ideas surrounding work ethics in Hawaii, I would take this a step further and link it to the Christian work ethic as well, especially in Fiji.

This section explores the value placed on the idea of the “Christian” work ethic and what it means to be a man in Fijian society today. It also seeks to contextualize this by situating this idea within global narratives regarding the value of hard work and the dominance of neoliberal ideas. In today’s manifestation, the neoliberal idea of working hard to earn cash melds into the previously established Christian work ethos (Weber 2002; Knauft 1999). According to Knauft, missionaries in the region not only introduced Christian morality—they also introduced trade goods and “...fuelled hopes of economic development” (1999:183). In turn, these “...linked developments promote an ethic of discipline, individualism, and male labour associated with the acquisition of trade goods and with commercial developments in general” (Knauft 1999:183). There is, however, recognition that the current economic situation in Fiji and globally makes life challenging. These rapid changes are reflected in the dominant cash economy, loss of access to subsistence lifestyles, and of particular importance—the loss of land because of the choice to move to urban areas for better opportunities (Goneyali 1986).

Traditionally, without land in Fiji, a man loses his social status and respect, yet this is the reality for many urban men (see *Fijians in Town* 1986). While the men I spoke to acknowledge this, they also see the work they do now as an important part of their masculine identity and a way to make up for the fact that they might not own or work land. Indeed, some of the men described it in terms of hard work being part of a good Christian life and necessary to get ahead. When discussing this, however, it is important to note that while all the men identify as Christians of some denomination, Christianity plays varying significance in their lives. Therefore, I am more concerned with the idea of the Christian work ethic and how it works with current capitalist values and definitions of masculinity than with specifics of the religion itself.

The idea of work being inherently linked to a man’s self worth and identity is a dominant theme throughout the world (Connell 1995). For the sake of this section, I will

briefly refer to Weber's (2002) *Spirit of Capitalism* to examine the relationship between capitalism and religion because it is relevant in this particular context. In particular, I am concerned with the relationship between Christian ideologies as they relate to work and answering 'a calling' or duty in life (Weber 2002). What is important here, is the idea of work being closely linked to an ideal of a good Christian. By working hard, by contributing to the community, by living up to one's duty, whether male or female, an individual can attempt to live up this ideal (see Varani-Norton 2005). Today, some of these ideals are complicated in that the introduction of cash and different ways of working are beginning to trump customary ways of working (e.g. subsistence farming).

As discussed previously, the colonial experience resulted in profound changes that cut across all levels and aspects of Fijian society. Of particular relevance in this section, is the British policy that sought to keep Fijians in their villages as subsistence farmers in an effort to preserve their so-called "traditional" way of life (see Thomas 1994; Kelly 1998, 1989; Jolly 2002; Lal 1984).<sup>22</sup> With the addition of missionaries preaching hard work as a "good" and necessary part of life and as women were becoming more bound to the home, it fell on men to take up the role as the breadwinner and external "worker" for the family. This ideal has been reinforced consistently over time.

### **Being a man entails being the provider**

The ability to work hard and earn money has taken on new meaning in recent years. Whereas before Fijians were encouraged to work the land as farmers (Scarr 1984; Ravuvu 1983; Kelly 1989), that ideal has become increasingly less appealing for the younger generations as the call of the city pulls more young people towards its lights (Goneyali 1986; Ponter 1986). When discussing the provider role with participants, this quickly emerged as a major theme that causes considerable anxiety and stress for men. Kitone summed up the situation when he said, "if you're unemployed, then you are nothing. Simple as that." When asked to define what a "good job" might be, he said, "it's based on salary."

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<sup>22</sup> Indeed, today, many Fijians continue to be subsistence farmers in rural areas and practice "traditional" ways of living. In Figure 4, men gather around a kava bowl to participate in grog drinking in the highland of Tailevu. Grog drinking can carry on for many hours in a day and is one way in which men bond.

Kitione refers to the fact that being employed is directly related to one's status as a man and as a respectable man at that. It is not even good enough to be employed. A man must be employed with a steady income, which is reflected in the idea of having a salary. In this brief discussion, Kitione makes it emphatically clear that without work, "you are nothing." Though a short quote, it speaks volumes about the judgment placed on people who do not meet these expectations. Here, Kitione's statement appears to support Knauff's (1999) earlier argument that male prestige is increasingly linked to cash and commodities. Increasingly, as men define themselves by global standards, the desire to earn cash and achieve independence emerges as an important issue.

When talking to another respondent, Pita, I inquired as to how important it was for a Fijian man to earn and have money today and was met with this response:

NOW IT IS IMPORTANT! (sits up abruptly and points a finger at me) Before it wasn't because I don't know if you know, but before—(Laughing out loud) this is a very serious question!—we lived very communally, you always have the extended family and if you're not doing very well then I'll come up and help if you were my family. We still used the *kere kere*<sup>23</sup> system. If I need sugar I'll come and ask. Yeah so money wasn't as important and people were living off the land. Now it's important.

Up until that point, Pita had been very relaxed and calm on the couch. When I asked that question, he bolted upright and pointed his finger at me. His reaction caught both myself and his wife completely off-guard and our reaction was to laugh. But it was clear from his physical reaction and his verbal response that as having money becomes increasingly important, so does the need to work extremely hard. The traditional check and balance of the *kere kere* system is not as effective in urban areas anymore, and cash is needed to make up for that. Therefore, if a man wants to provide for his family to a certain standard, then he needs to work hard. When I asked what the consequences were for men who cannot or do not work hard, Pita responded that:

People are just going to be poor and not able to provide.  
It's ok in the villages, they struggle, but it's ok because

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<sup>23</sup> The *kere kere* system can be understood as neighbourly sharing where people can ask for what they need from neighbours and or kin (Scarr 1984).

they still do things communally, farm and go fishing there's still food out there...but if you're in the city it's hard. You've got to fend for yourself. If you don't work then you're going to struggle. You won't put food on the table and kids won't go to school. It's not good for people who don't have work...

In his case, Pita enjoys a relatively high standard of living with his wife and he values his ability to work hard. He is quick to point out that there is a difference between rural and urban living and seems to suggest it is easier in some ways, for a man to provide for his family in rural areas. Interestingly, for him, he (and others) claim that most Fijian men tend to be satisfied just to work and if things get rough, they are grateful to even have a job. In interviews with other couples, they mentioned this idea. For example, Lena commented that, "...Fijians are more 'what we get is enough'...If he has a job, that's enough for him. He's not going to pursue education as long as he is able to feed his family, pay for *solu* and stuff like that. But this is changing now—the trend is changing. You'll find some Fijian men going into professions like lawyers, doctors." Pita claims that because of his wife, he wants better, he wants more and will not settle for something that pays but does not make him happy.

### **Reconciling with Reality**

While all my participants have a clear idea of what their ideal roles should be as a man and as a married man, the reality they live in and practice is, of course, a different matter altogether. As has been noted by many scholars (e.g. Connell 1995; Morrell and Swart 2005 etc.), this is a reflection of the tensions and contradictions that occur in projecting gender. Men are expected to do one thing, but are thwarted for one reason or another. For example, in discussing some of the challenges that may prevent Fijian men from achieving these ideals, respondents gave a variety of reasons, but the most common were: 1) Men are frequently expected to be the provider, but cannot because of Fiji's faltering economy and the high rates of unemployment. According to Kitone, "...there are more angry people in Fiji" right now because they are frustrated with their inability to find work. Additionally, he says there are "...some women who demand that their husbands, because they are men, that they need to do this and or this. It gets to the point where the man packs up and goes. I mean some of these men are just working as security

guards.” 2) Women are continuously gaining rights and able to assert themselves and are able to be more independent. One respondent, Aisea, says, “...In Fiji, you know the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre, UNDP, UNAIDS and all these things. You know they do awareness about rights and it’s creeping in there—house is not just for women, it’s for both of them.” For him, the combination of these agencies is making men and women more aware of their rights, which is slowly affecting change. 3) A deeply ingrained belief that gender roles are set and should not change. In holding onto gender ideals, Aisea says, “I think they don’t want to deny their masculinity. Like, ‘I am boss of the house. Head of the house, what says goes, you look after me.’ I think it’s just ignorance.” He believes the patriarchal nature of Fijian society, which is also reinforced by the church, is a major contributing factor that limits men and women from fully reaching the potential of their marriages.

Reality, it seems, does little to diminish the hegemonic ideals. In the case of my participants, I was curious as to how these men situated themselves in relation to the ideal and how they rationalize and explain their situations. In the next case study, Emosi’s story stands out as he discussed his intense desire to be the provider and how it reflected on his manhood.

### **Emosi: The (self-inflicted) Provider Imperative**

Emosi, 25, has spent his whole life growing up in and around Suva, though he has also lived in other towns around the main island of Viti Levu.<sup>24</sup> He has been married to his wife, Anna, for nine months and they do not have any children. In particular, he is burdened by the idea that he must be the primary provider. Though he is working now, this was not always the case and his wife provided for the both of them during that time. Even now, Emosi finds it difficult to come to terms with his wife’s income-earning ability, though he especially struggled while he was unemployed. Says Emosi,

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<sup>24</sup> Emosi is of Rotuman descent, which differentiates him from indigenous Fijians, yet the pressures he feels and his experiences are surprisingly similar to those of other indigenous participants. According to Rotuman traditional culture, a man is the provider meaning not only does he bring home the food and money, but he also takes care of domestic affairs like chores around the house. Quoting Malo, Hereniko suggests this is because many believe, “...a woman is considered weak and in need of protection” (1995:84). If a man is doing his role well, his wife should not be stressed in any way and he earns respect as a good and proper man.

I find it really hard. At one point I wasn't working and she was working. Yeah that was just stay at home. It was really hard to lie down, staying at home and not doing anything. I sent out so many applications too, and didn't hear from anyone. And just her coming home and to take money from her to do the shopping didn't feel right. That part of my life was really hard for me. I just didn't want to accept the fact that I wasn't the provider.

In this excerpt, Emosi makes it clear that he puts a lot of pressure on himself to perform financially and he firmly believes that men need to be the provider. He seems to feel that his masculinity was challenged by not working and living up to what he believes his role to be. Even though he has a career now, Emosi continues to put pressure on himself to earn money and provide for his wife. When I asked if contributing to household income eased some of his anxiety, he stated that he could, “not just contribute—I have to contribute MORE. That's really important.”

Interestingly, when I asked his wife about this period, she said the most he ever said was that it made him uncomfortable that she earned more than him, but left it at that, indicating he downplayed his personal anxiety when discussing it with her. Additionally, the idea of having money and cash plays a big role for him. When asked what was more important, job satisfaction or the amount of money he makes, his response was memorable. Since his wife was in the other room, he leaned forward and whispered, “It's how much I make!” When I asked why, he continued to whisper so his wife could not hear him in the kitchen.

She makes too much money. She's really stressed out at work and one of the reasons for us to save up is because she wants to go into NGOs. So, for now, I really need this job to work for me and by the end of this program I really need to be completely successful. After this program I will be settling in and [with] lots of good pay that can support the two of us. After I'm going to ask her to leave her job and just do volunteer work with NGOs so she can get in because it's quite hard to get in.

Emosi's whispering suggests that he is deeply uncomfortable with the fact that his wife earns more than he does. He firmly believes that he should be the provider because it reflects directly on his manhood and his masculinity. That he was whispering his replies is also indicative of the contradictions and negotiations he must address in his

day-to-day life. Anna, his wife, is aware that he is uncomfortable with the current situation. She informed me that they do talk about their life together and that he is open-minded and progressive compared to others. Emosi, however, still appears to hold onto many conventional values even in the face of his most unconventional marriage.

When asked how important being financially successful was to him in reflecting his sense of manhood and desire to be a good husband, Emosi replied that it was very important to him. When asked why, he explains:

I want to be successful in life, at work. I want to bring up my kids into a better life than I had. And I want to be able to provide for my family whatever they need and I want to be able to pay for my kids airfare when they go see grandparents. I want a better life for my family. I have no land or farm, so I might as well do this.

Here, Emosi is explaining his desire to improve his life and the life of his future children. He believes it his responsibility to provide not only emotionally, but also materially, which requires a cash income. Significantly, he also addresses the fact that he does not hold any land himself, nor does he farm, which he expressed admiration and respect for earlier in the interview. Since he does not have the typical markers of customary hegemonic masculinity (owning and working the land), he is attempting to make up for it by earning cash and working a white-collared job. This in turn is viewed as an acceptable way of providing for the family. It is also an indication of how the cash economy is quickly replacing the local subsistence economy.

For Emosi, the fact that his wife currently earns more money than him is a negative reflection of his manhood. This is not easy for Emosi to accept. He has deeply ingrained expectations of what he should be doing as a man and he articulates this in terms of work and his ability to earn cash. I would suggest that this can be attributed, in part, to the Christian work ethic that is imbedded in Fijian society. Emosi does identify as a Methodist, though he is not the most devout person. This is important because it demonstrates that while he may not practice his religion to the same extent of other people, the values promoted by the church, help shape his ideals of manhood. And though some may suggest that this is more a reflection of capitalism than religion, I

would suggest as Knauff (1999) and (Varani-Norton 2005) do, that the church has simply incorporated capitalist values into their own rhetoric and belief system.

### **Transformations in Fijian Masculinity**

While conducting fieldwork in South Africa, Sidaris (2004) noted that, “literature on men also shows that the requirements of new behavioural standards resulting from social and political challenges have opened a space for reflection amongst men and even criticism of past models of manhood” (Sidaris 2004:34). Her research focused on a small group of men who actively reject violence towards women, despite being taunted or even beaten by other men for their choices. This small group of men are aware their behaviours stand in contrast to the hegemonic norm, but they criticize the existing model as out-dated (Sidaris 2004).

Though not the same context, the men in this study exist in a reality that has been disrupted by social and political challenges and are actively reflecting on their manhood as a result. Both Emosi and Kitione are reflections of Fijian masculinity that is in a state of transformation. Masculinity is complex and multi-layered with customary values and neo-traditional values intersecting with lingering colonial (and Christian) values and global values, which results in these men actively engaging in their projection of their masculinity. They are caught between the conflicting values of the neo-traditional and contemporary period and the masculine expectations each period entails.

This is further complicated by the influence of the Christian work ethic. Christian missionaries introduced values surrounding gender roles, trade goods and wage labour into Fiji. Since women were expected to stay home and raise families, the realm of paid work became the realm of men. The ideal of men as providers has continued to persist. Connell (2005) argues that as the globalization process progresses hegemonic masculine traits within a society tend to be reinforced, where men can continue to maintain the status quo. However, I would suggest that while this may be a general trend globally, the globalization process also allows for women from developed countries to travel where they want and marry whom they want. These women also challenge traditional expectations of manhood, as the men in this study have discovered, which is the topic of Chapter 5.



**Figure 5.** Men getting ready to start a kava session in the mid-afternoon. Kava drinking is considered central to the social lives of Fijian men and is one of the ways men talk and relax. To not participate would be viewed as highly unusual. Photo: Sayuri Holman



**Figure 6.** Lena preparing a late night snack for the family after a long day at work. This is an example of sharing the division of household labour, because Kitone also helps out. Photo: Participant



**Figure 7.** This shot of Kitone feeding his youngest son was taken during his photovoice project and shows one of his more unconventional activities. It is not unusual for him to prepare the food and feed



**Figure 8.** Kitone is actively involved in raising his children, dropping them off and picking them up from school. Here, he has two of his five children on the track with him where he also coaches. Photo: Provided by Kitone.

## Chapter 5: “I’m a triangle and he’s a circle”: Negotiating Masculinity in Marriage

Earlier on, I was frustrated because, I don’t know what came over me, because I was like she has to behave like a Fijian woman, but I have to remember, she’s not from a Fijian family. [SH Can you give me an example?] [Lena (laughing hysterically) I’m only hearing this for the first time!] No, she’ll always have her side. With Fijian women, you just say, ‘hey go do it,’ and they do. But with her you say, ‘go do it and she’ll say, ‘Why should I? You go do it!’

For Kitione, 29, the beginning of his marriage was an eye-opening experience. Both he and his wife Lena agree that neither knew each other well enough and had to adjust to each other’s expectations and behaviours. For example, when Lena is speaking her mind loudly at a family gathering, Kitione’s uncles have been known to say, “You tell that lady to...behave herself!” indicating it is his expected responsibility to control and discipline his wife. She, however, is not as compliant as a Fijian wife is imagined to be. More importantly, she challenges Kitione’s masculinity by challenging his assumed patriarchal authority.

This chapter explores the marriage dynamics of these particular couples and the negotiations that take place daily. I focus on the marriage dynamics between Fijian men and their non-Fijian wives because it highlights the contrast between definitions of marriage (as per Nock and Marksburry’s definitions) and cultural expectations. These marriages also highlight the ways in which men feel constrained and the ways in which they feel liberated in terms of expectations and their manhood. Recent polls indicate that intermarriages are on the rise globally (Constable 2005; Globe and Mail April 2, 2008; MSNBC April 15, 2007; Canada Census 2006). Much of the recent literature in this area has focused on privileged Western men marrying Asian women or those from eastern European countries to find a more “traditional” wife (Constable 2003). Women are often portrayed as victims, though this assumption is being challenged (see Constable 2005; Parker 2005; Suzuki 2004; Thai 2005). In contrast, this chapter explores the dynamics between participants and their privileged wives and the impacts these interactions have on their perceptions of their masculinity.

I will show the expectations and obligations that occur within these relationships and the clashes between differing cultures and values. However, I will also show the idea that these men credit their wives for allowing them to be more and obtain more than they ever thought they could. Hence, although intermarriages can be a burden at times that challenges a husband's worldviews and traditional ideas of masculinity, they also signify a liberation and freedom that gives these men the confidence to pursue whatever goals they may have because their wives enable them. Specifically, I argue these marriages provide a space in which men can move beyond the restrictions of Fijian hegemonic masculinity (and therefore colonial expectations) to create their own masculinity. This reinforces my overall argument that suggests that marriage to non-Fijian women is influential in reconfiguring Fijian manhood because the wives can offer opportunities to their husbands in terms of work, travel and family expectations.

Pollock (2003) notes that even in the post-colonial era, Western notions of marriage set the global standard. She says, "Policy makers and planners often assume marriage, and the gendered roles and obligations which go with it, to be a universal experience in all societies. Both the legal and practical operations of Western society rest on this model of gender relations" (Pollock 2003:89). This is significant with regards to global interactions because although these Western notions of marriage were established during the colonial period, they continue to be reinforced today through the state and church, which figures prominently in the lives of most Fijians. And like many Western countries, many legal and practical operations of Fijian society also rely on this model of gender relations. However, Western women are travelling to regions such as the Pacific Islands and they are bringing their western values (including feminism) with them. This allows them to simultaneously challenge colonized marriage structures and definitions of masculinity as they engage in relationships with these men. The resulting negotiations within marriage between non-Fijian women and their Fijian husbands form the basis of this chapter.

First, I will examine the daily negotiations that take place within marriage and how these relate to transformations in Fijian masculinity. Specifically, I examine the empowerment of women on a broad, social level and how that affects men and masculinity, with special attention paid to Fijian gender roles and expectations. I then

contrast the behaviour of the non-Fijian wives to conventional Fijian wives, using examples from interviews to illustrate the point.

Second, I will explore the idea of “culture clashes” and the differing values that force these men and women to re-evaluate their worldviews through two case studies. By culture clashes, I am referring to the differences in practices, expectations and obligations associated with the separate cultures these couples grew up in and the tensions that arise because of this. One major finding that arose out of the interviews was that all of the men said they imagined marriage to work like their parents’ marriages. They observed specific behaviours and roles within their communities, which tended to be a more functional view of marriage, based on strategy and economic benefits with few public displays of affection (as per Marksbury’s 1994 definition).<sup>25</sup> The women, on the other hand, were looking for more companionship (as per Nock’s 1998 definition).<sup>26</sup> The men all expressed the fact that they do struggle with sharing the division of labour, and though they’re taking on more “women’s” tasks and chores, they do not find it easy to exist outside the neo-traditional Fijian gendered expectations of work.

Third, I will show how these marriages can provide opportunities in new and unexpected ways. One of the most interesting ideas that emerged in talking to these men is the idea that their marriages allow them to move beyond traditional expectations and to achieve certain goals they never thought possible before, particularly in terms of work and travel. The men claim their wives allow them to overcome restraints or barriers they may have felt in pursuing work, and their wives most certainly make travel more accessible for them. By travelling, they observe how men in other countries behave, which many participants claim was influential in expanding their ideas of the roles men can take on, particularly those surrounding childcare and household chores.

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<sup>25</sup> Marksbury’s definition of marriage is a pragmatic approach, where marriage is viewed more as an economic transaction.

<sup>26</sup> In contrast to Marksbury, Nock’s definition of marriage revolves around the idea that individuals are free to choose their partners and can do so out of love among other requirements.

## The Daily Negotiations in Marriage

Generally speaking, most married couple around the world will find themselves negotiating expectations at one point or another. The couples in this project also find themselves in a position where they are negotiating, though they are more unique because of the difference in cultural expectations. Sometimes they engage in small negotiations and compromises like sharing the household chores, and other times they are major, such as how much time is being spent at home or away with friends. This section is an exploration of the gendered expectations and roles of marriage in general, followed by specific examples provided by the participants.

The ability to control women by whatever means necessary is a well-explored topic in Melanesia (see Wardlow 2005; Derne 2005; Knauft 1997; Jolly 1989). In fact, the treatment of women is often cited as one of the main reasons why missionaries felt justified in their work (Jolly 1989). Domestic violence continues to be a reality in Fiji today (Fiji Women's Crisis Centre<sup>27</sup>; Fiji Times Feb.12, 2009). According to Kitione, many Fijian men do not see challenges to their masculinity as a negotiation so much as a loss of masculinity. For Kitione, this can be explained in part, by customary cultural practices. He says,

...the kind of disciplining you give to your children, like using belts and stuff, can also be applied to the wife. I mean every culture it's different. In Tonga, the wife is the boss, in Rotuma, the wife is the boss. Fijian culture, it's because the man doesn't really talk a lot. [SH So you should know your role and just do it and it makes things smoother?]. Mmmhmmmm...but the changes now because more women are getting into jobs they've never done before because they're more educated and participating in forums and those things—I guess it's hard for a lot of men to accept those changes. It's why a lot of marriages don't last.

Here, Kitione equates the empowerment of women with the loss of control for men, which results in failed marriages. Aisea also believes this is a challenging time for men saying, “Nowadays, times are changing. They are getting more aware and rights and

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<sup>27</sup> The Fiji Women's Crisis Center (FWCC) is well recognized in Fiji and uses the media as one of its main tools to further its goals. They issue press releases on a regular basis as well as discussion papers, which can be accessed online at <http://www.fijiwomen.com/>

this way...More women are working, simply because they are now more educated. It's going to be very hard for men." Studies in gender and development have indicated that men in developing countries often equate the empowerment of women with the loss of their own authority, which results in violence and other detrimental behaviours on the part of men (Cleaver 2002; Connell 2005, Sidaris 2004). That Kitione and Aisea also make that same connection is interesting, as it suggests that Fijian men have similar sentiments and tend to react in similar ways to other men worldwide. When asked why Fijian men have a difficult time accepting these kinds of social change, Kitione replied,

It's the way they we're raised I think. Our generation, the one right now between the ages of 30-40, we've really been drilled about how it's supposed to be, like being the man. [SH: Where did these beliefs and values come from?]. I think from way back. If you go to the villages, if you're drinking kava, a woman even now...our grandmother will not come into the house. Sometimes I feel really... 'I say hey come in!' And they say they'll just wait. If they prepare the food, the men eat first and they have to wait. It's like, the man is lazy and the woman has to be submissive. But it's not as bad as it sounds, it's just the way they treat their women and it's different from here. They're still respected.

According to Kitione, a man's age, experience and where he was raised is significant in determining one's acceptance of change. He suggests that because specific hegemonic ideals have been constantly reinforced over the span of their lifetimes, to not live up to those ideals results in potentially devastating for a man and this results in him being unable or unwilling to adapt to social changes (Brison 1995; Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Sidaris 2004).

Having a man as head of the family and household is a common practice globally. To challenge this convention is a difficult process and in some places can lead to social repercussions. For example, Sidaris (2004) notes that among the Nkomazi of South Africa, being head of the household is closely related to a man's identity (2004:30). In her study, she profiles a group of men who are known to openly reject violence against women and children, take on "women's work" and consult with their partners on decisions regarding the household, which makes them unique in their community. Their decision to embrace change has resulted in questions of their manhood, and in some

cases, physical violence against them, as other men react to their choices and appear to perceive this as a voluntary loss of masculinity (Sidaris 2004: 46). According to Sidaris, the Nkomazi men who reject typical behaviours within marriage begin to realize how unstable current gender formations are, which results in confusion, unease and anxiety as they fight the desire to revert back to conventional patriarchal authority (2004:46). It is much easier to fall back on 'tradition and culture' as these ideals provide a clear model of behaviour. I would suggest that the men who participated in my study are in a similar situation with regards to the tension experience as they struggle with the pressure of reverting back to Fijian patriarchal authority.

Additionally, there appears to be an expectation that men and women will know and accept their roles by the time they are married. Pita alludes to the idea of knowing each other's roles and not challenging the status quo saying:

Yeah, I think in a typical marriage that's how it works. Men would do whatever they want and women are expected to just stay home and do the house chores, look after the kids and that kind of thing.

Aisea adds that:

They think 'Oh maybe I'm in the wrong, I'm supposed to do it, I should keep quiet and just do it.' I think most women, Fijian women, no questions asked, just do. No questions asked, just do. And they feel they ask, they are disobeying.

When women challenge these expectations or outright refuse to conform, tensions may arise. The men in this study discuss their reactions and the negotiations that take place as a result. They are situated in an unfamiliar social space, where both individuals are forced to negotiate and compromise to varying degrees.

For Aisea, he imagined he would behave a certain way and do everything for his wife, but admits that once he was married, he tried to revert back to what he knew. "But now I'm married," says Aisea. "Little bit, I think she realize, I tried to go the other way, but she won't give into it. (Laughing) Like be a house wife and all this. I'm not saying she's not a housewife..." Nicole interrupted here to state, "I'm not a housewife." This was a humorous moment as Aisea reflected on the times he has tried to impose neo-

traditional gender roles on his wife and her refusal to cave to his wishes. They do negotiate with regards to housework though he claims she takes advantage of him sometimes.

*Aisea:* I'm not saying I'm the nicest guy ever, like she knows I'm going to come to cook, she just lays outside. So I just tell her, if I cook, you wash the dishes. Like today is a good example. I was going to do everything and she was going to sit there and do nothing and you were going to get the questions prepared.

*Nicole:* And see, it's not like I have to be told, because I hate being told. If I notice it needs to be done, then I'll do it.

*Aisea:* Like she swept this morning.

*Nicole:* That's cuz I was waiting.

*Aisea:* See I really appreciate that. If she wants to be lazy, I'll let her be lazy for a little while. And then I'll poke her in the bum.

*Nicole:* Even though Aisea doesn't demand it of me or he doesn't say, 'Nicole, I expect you to get up and clean the house', there are a couple of times where I feel it's put on me and I'll tell him. I don't understand why it's my expectation to clean the house—why because I'm a girl? He knows I don't fit into a box. He knows, but his family doesn't.

In this discussion between Aisea and Nicole, the issue of housework comes up with Nicole refusing to do housework simply because she's "a girl." Her independence and personal views are clear here and she refuses to conform to conventional Fijian gender roles, particularly in the face of the in-laws expectations. Two sets of values collide when discussing sharing the household labour. This is evident in how Aisea presents his side of the story to myself. In her work, Sidaris describes this phenomenon as being, "...confronted with the capacity of significant women in their lives to assume the responsibilities associated with paternal authority. And they are faced with the contradiction between the will to equality and the domination and benefit that being the head of family implies" (2004:46). She argues that even as men live out these particular relations, they are still trying to reconcile what they understand as tradition with the

desire to change, which results in this anxious negotiation between ideals and the new masculine identity they are reworking.

Even though gender roles and practices are fluid in nature, these roles tend to be idealized in rigid terms (Connell 1995). In the particular context of my participants, the fluidity of gender roles and the ability to negotiate and compromise is an ongoing aspect of daily life. In observing couples, it became apparent that there are times when it is easier to push the boundaries of gender roles than others (see Figure 10 for an additional example). One of the best examples of this give and take came out of a conversation I had with Emosi's wife, Anna.

Anna, who is in her late 20's, is from Australia and originally came to Fiji as a volunteer with the Victoria International Development Agency (VIDA) in the same group as Nicole did. Reflecting back on her marriage thus far, Anna acknowledges (with a laugh and shake of her head) that she and her husband, Emosi, live the way young married couples would by Western standards, sharing the household division of labour and blurring gender roles. Yet when it comes to family gatherings the traditional gender roles are suddenly required. "You go to a family function and he'll go sit over there with the men and I'll go sit at the back with the women in the kitchen," she says (see Figures 9 and 11 for other examples). "They still do the hard work with the *lovo* (an earth oven) and we're doing the dishes, and grating the carrots and serving the ice cream." This example illustrates that while both Emosi and Anna imagine themselves as liberal minded and progressive, there are times when they are both complicit in reinforcing more traditional ideals of what men and women should be doing.

Indeed, family gatherings appear to be a locus for the re-enactment of traditional gender roles as I myself discovered one evening. The couple I was living with wanted to have a *lovo*, as I would be leaving shortly. That evening, as people started trickling in, I found myself in the kitchen with the other women preparing the food, while all the men were outside preparing the oven. I sat on the floor with the other women, trimming a large bowl full of taro leaves, while others prepared the meat and we chatted and gossiped about what we had been doing that day. The expectation that all of us should know and perform our roles in such a setting is difficult to ignore, and I soon found

myself playing my expected role. By participating in such a way, I became aware of how deeply embedded gendered expectations are for men and women, and how challenging it can be to resist what is “normal” by Fijian standards. To behave differently would cause varying degrees of social fallout. The two case studies that follow explore the ways in which behaving outside the norm results in struggles for both partners and the strategies used by the couples to situate their negotiations in terms of ideas regarding masculinity.

**Aisea: “I say ‘Happy Wife, Happy Life!’”**

Since marrying his non-Fijian wife Nicole nine months earlier, Aisea’s life has changed considerably. He now owns his first car and house and he takes pride in maintaining both. On any given day, it is not unusual to find Aisea, 28, doing some household chores around his home. Whether fixing a broken hinge or replacing a window screen that the dog tore down or prepping for dinner and tidying up inside, he is always doing small chores around his home. He explains that because his wife works full time at the International School and also juggles other part time jobs, he feels it is only fair that that he contributes around the house, since his work is part-time. “One thing I try to do when I’m not working that much, I try and do everything,” Aisea says. “See Nicole works full time, and my hours are flexible. I don’t get any questions, and no questions asked. On the other hand we give and take. If I’m working hard and Nicole comes home early, then she says ‘Ok, I’ll do that.’” Known as the “Golden Boy” for the colour of his hair as well as his likeable personality, he also tries to be a role model in his community. Aisea is heavily involved with his church and with rugby, taking on extra responsibilities and leading the youth group as well as playing rugby up to six times a week in various leagues.

Despite his seemingly progressive mindset, there were countless occasions where it was apparent that Aisea was in the midst of a balancing act: He is trying to live up to the expectations of being a married man in Fijian society and he is also trying to live up to the expectations of his very strong and independent Australian wife (see Figure 10). Arguments erupted because of the amount of time Aisea spent time with his family or playing rugby, as I witnessed on several occasions. Despite this, Aisea speaks of his wife

fondly telling me how hard she works, which inspires him to work harder as well, even if it is at home.

Though he does not earn as much as she does, he contributes around the home, taking care of the utility bills and groceries. Says Aisea, "...when I got married, I think I increased the bar for me. I learned that I need to do more [around the home]." He also takes Nicole out on dates and out to dinner, which is not something a typical Fijian does after marriage. He sees it as a way to keep the romance in their marriage alive and Nicole appreciates it. When asked about this, he referred to a quote from something he heard at church and has stuck with him ever since. "I say, 'Happy Wife, Happy Life!'" he says with an uproarious laugh. For him, this means not only contributing around the home and being romantic, but also including her in the decision making process and treating their marriage like an equal partnership. Though this is not typical Fijian male behaviour, Aisea believes his practices are a more enlightened way to live his life. He perceives himself to be different from other Fijian men, but not because he is married to a non-Fijian woman. "It's the mentality and the education", he says. "Those two are the most important." He believes his level of education and desire to improve himself make him unique. His acceptance and internalization of both the values of Western education and self-improvement will be explored in further detail in Chapter 6.

Although he appears to embrace progressive masculine ideas, he also acts very much like a typical Fijian male, going off to play rugby, visiting his family and bringing friends home in the evening. He acknowledges the difficulty in separating himself from his family in order to establish a new "nuclear family" with his wife. He would regularly negotiate his activities in an attempt to please everyone around him. For example, he would come home early and clean up, make dinner for Nicole and then pick her up from one of her evening jobs. Then, he would go play evening league rugby, or afternoon rugby if it was the weekend. Many times, I was inserted as the buffer as well, so it did not seem as bad if he went off to play rugby for hours at a time because I could keep Nicole company while he was away. Sometimes this was a successful negotiation, most times it was not.

Another major source of conflict is the time Aisea spends with his family versus the time he spends with his new bride. The fact that he initially spent more time with his family, despite having his own home, was a frustrating experience for Nicole. She could not understand why he would not want to spend more time with her. She perceived it as a rejection of sorts, where he was choosing them over her, whereas he was trying to adjust to living away from his family for the first time in his life. By Fijian practices, it is considered normal to live or spend time with the extended kin network, even after one is married (Jolly 1998). However, that tends to conflict with Western ideas of newlyweds, breaking away from the family and starting a new one.

Sometimes when you're used to something, you can't get out of it. Like I will have more fun here [his family home]. Because I grow up with them, eat with them and laugh with them. Fijians are bound to do things together. That's why Nicole gets angry to [sic] me. 'Why do you always go to Cunningham?!' Because she wants me to get out of that of that mentality. [SH it's hard isn't it?] It is hard. Like every now and then I miss the laughter, just talking, my mum and my dad, my sister. But, good thing I'm just here.

In this discussion, Aisea explains why he wanted to spend time with his family, moving from generalizations about Fijian culture ("Fijians are bound to do things together") to stating that he just misses what he grew up around. He also checks himself by saying it is a "good thing" he is at his new place, as if to convince himself of it. In contrast to this, in another interview Nicole describes her reaction to Aisea's constant family visits saying:

*Nicole:* Couldn't stand it! Leave and cleave! It says it in the Bible! Leave your family and cleave to your wife!

*Aisea:* But I was slowly leaving my family. Not (snaps). And in their own way they were also letting me go.

*Nicole:* But to me that should have been done on the day of marriage.

*Aisea:* But I never lived on my own before that.

For Nicole, Aisea is not changing as fast as she would like. But she also understands his behaviour in terms of a cultural and social phenomenon, which is in

direct contrast to her own. She just wishes his family was as understanding in that respect.

Another example of the negotiations that took place revolves around having friends over. Nicole has firm rules with regards to drinking alcohol and kava in her home. She does not want any alcohol or kava consumed in her home, as she believes it is the cause of many social problems. Aisea agrees this is a good idea, but sitting and drinking around the kava bowl is one way men socialize (Brison 2007; Tomlinson 2009; Arno 1993). By not doing this, it changes the dynamics for Aisea and his social relations, as this is fundamental to role building for men.<sup>28</sup> If he does want to participate in grogging, he must go somewhere else and do it.

For Aisea, spending time with his family and with his rugby mates appears to be an essential part of his identity. He struggles, though, in finding the balance between establishing his new family with his wife and with the expectations of his friends and extended family. He is someone who tries to make everyone happy, but finds himself caught between his family and his wife. This push-pull dynamic is ultimately problematic as someone always ends up feeling rejected by Aisea. His struggles are not unlike those of Pita, who also finds himself in a difficult position trying to balance his wife's expectations with those of his family and friends.

### **Pita: Navigating Marriage Expectations**

Pita's life has changed drastically since he was married three years ago. He no longer participates in as many grog sessions with his friends, or basketball and other sports he enjoyed. He has a full time job, a non-Fijian wife and a young son now. Pita is in the midst of navigating his own marriage expectations with those of his wife. This is no easy task, as he explains:

You imagine marriages to be the same as in your community. Because you stay together, but that's the thing with us because we already stayed together, but once you change your name, that's it. And then we have to do

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<sup>28</sup> Drinking kava is a social activity that is considered central to Fijian social practices. There are guidelines that must be followed including the order of who is served first, which reflects the hierarchical nature of Fijian society (Brison 2007; Arno 1993).

everything together and I couldn't really grasp it. I thought I would keep doing my thing and she would do hers. I think it has to do with responsibility. For us married, you know us both we were both freely moving and we didn't care about a lot... But you still want to do the same things like before you were married. Like going out, and I still go out to see my family but when you're married, this is your family now and that took me a long time to grasp, but I get that now.

In this discussion, Pita addresses the lifestyle changes he was forced to contend with and frames aspects of his marriage as a restriction on his previous lifestyle. He explains that this was something he resisted for some time, but now understands he has a 'new' family that revolves around his wife and baby. Pita also alludes to the fact that this adjustment period was a source of considerable tension between him and his wife. His wife Beth believes the culture clashes really began to emerge after they got married because they were living together and coming to terms with the expectations they each had. As Pita mentioned repeatedly, he expected to be able to do as he pleased whenever he wanted, without much thought for his wife. In this respect, the ability to move around freely and spend time with friends or extended family, as opposed to a man's new and immediate family, appears to be a normal practice. For Beth, this was problematic because he was not living up to her expectations and ideals. She says,

It was really hard for me because my expectations come from the West and when you get married that is your family, and you move away from mum and dad, so that was quite hard... I think I was part to blame for that too because I was really vulnerable and I really clinged to him and he was the man in my life. I think Dad was really dominant in our family and he took care of our family and I was casting those expectations on him and didn't really talk about it. I was expecting him to just step up and be the man and take care and I didn't really think about the cultural differences and that that wasn't going to happen so yeah, it was a struggle in the beginning.

In response to Beth's comment, Pita replied:

Yeah...different cultures type-of-thing and I wouldn't know if I'm doing the right thing or if she wants me to do this or that until she tells me because I wouldn't know any other way.

Here Pita is referring to the fact that his point of reference in marriage previously was what he witnessed at home and in his community. He was only behaving as others around him did, which was normal to him.

What is significant here are the differences between Beth and Pita's definition of family and her own personal expectations of how a man should behave. For Beth, the nuclear family away from mom and dad is the standard and Pita is expected to actively participate. But for Pita his family includes his wife and son in addition to his extended family and the obligations and expectations that go with that. Beth also has a specific masculine definition deeply embedded in her expectations of how her husband should be behaving. She did not discuss this with Pita, however, and was disappointed when Pita acted within the framework of his own Fijian hegemonic masculine ideal instead of her own Western-defined concept. She added later, rather sheepishly about her marriage expectations, "...I was very romantic and Cinderella-like and that when you get married it's all going to be lovely."

That both Pita and Beth have experienced many challenges and tensions in their marriage is abundantly clear. It came through in the way they spoke to each other at times, the muttered comments under their breaths when one or the other said something they did not agree with and through the ways they described their marriage to date. They mentioned that they had been participating in marriage counselling and going away for weekend escapes in order to try and improve their situation. They were also in the midst of preparing to leave Fiji to try and save their marriage. According to Beth, "...it's been really important to get through those hard times because we've really knuckled down, come into a shelter and focus on our relationship...and I think that's why we're going away so we can keep working on it."

For Pita, the inability to carry on as he had prior to marriage has been difficult. His ability to socialize with his friends and to act carefree is part of his projection of his masculine self. When he has to answer to his wife's expectations, it is perceived as a loss of his manhood by his peers. This is reflected in the way they tease him, calling him an "Englishman." Although they appeared to have experienced some challenging times, it is

important to note that Pita does not believe his marriage was a mistake. In fact, he also perceives his marriage as a sort of freedom. It is a means to experience life in ways he never imagined before, and to practice certain activities that allow him to move beyond conventional Fijian masculine behaviours.

### **Marriage as Freedom?**

This section explores the notion that these marriages can be a means to break free of many restraints men may feel in terms of their ability to work and travel, which they expressed as being important. I am particularly interested in those factors relating to both hegemonic masculinity as well as the colonial experience. I discuss how these two factors as well as the idea of mobility, affect the men and how they see their marriages as opportunities to move beyond these constraints. Despite the tensions and challenges these couples experience, the men also believe their wives offer them the opportunity and freedom to experience travel, new ways of thinking, new ways of being a man and fulfilling dreams they never thought they could achieve. For most of these men, the chance to travel and be exposed to different ideas was a revelation. In particular, seeing how other men behave in marriages left a powerful impression.

According to Pita:

The year after we went together to England and Africa, I've seen how her sister's husband looks after the kids and it was like 'Oh ok...he was always with the kids.' Usually it's the mothers that look after the kids, so I picked up a few hints from him and I said, 'Ok that's a good thing to do.' Because I've seen, hardly, they ever spend time with the kids [in Fiji].

For him, the idea of spending time with his own child became a positive activity because he saw other men he respected doing the same activity, despite the fact that this is not what a Fijian male would normally do. For Aisea, going overseas made him re-evaluate his way of thinking and reinforced the value of hard work. He says:

If you see, people who go overseas oooohh! They really—even when I went overseas! Sayuri! My thinking was like this (Blinders by his eyes)—when I went overseas I was like 'Oh! What is that? Oh really'... Because when I went

to stay with two [Fijian] guys in Australia...he was with an Australian...oooooh! She works hard! Like Nicole!...

This experience made a powerful impression on Aisea and he was constantly praising her ability to work hard, but also looking to always keep busy himself.

It is not only travel that is meaningful to these men. They also perceive their marriages as allowing them to experience more, to become more than they ever thought possible. The idea that there were limits on what they can achieve in life was something that came up repeatedly and was startling for me. But as I talked more with them and later analyzed the interviews, the idea of colonial scarring began to emerge. For example, Aisea commented on how some people "...are just so negative. They just downgrade themselves." Here, he means that some people feel they cannot achieve goals like buying a new home. He added that a lot of people are also intimidated by how nice his home is and that they are afraid to go in because it is "...too nice, or maybe they'll break something." Indeed, I argue that these scars are significant with regards to these men because the old colonial constraints still appear to leave a powerful impression in terms of what is suitable for Fijians and what is suitable for Europeans (Thomas 1994; Kelly 1989, 1998; Heartfield 2003). In contrast, their marriages appear to allow them to move past the old colonial constraints they perceive as applying to them. In turn, this allows them some space to also re-imagine what it means to be a Fijian man on their own terms.

For some of the men, the idea of being able to move beyond these ideas of restriction through marriage was a much more personal revelation. Says Pita:

Yeah we don't know what's out there for us but we say if we don't do it now, then we're never going to do it. But work is not fulfilling right now. I do that...typically a Fijian male will just stay with it because it's a job. But if it affects your family, and I've seen it affect mine, it's not good. Traditionally I think people will go on saying it will be better one day... I never would have thought of it before. Just knowing opportunities are there...after I met Beth I was able to travel and I never had even though I worked at the airport for 5 years and you see people come in and come out and someone told me when you work at the airport you want to travel...I didn't move overseas but I happened to go overseas because of her and it opened up a whole new horizon for me, for what I can do...I just

thought, ‘Why didn’t I do this when I could years ago if I knew how to do it? And find out how to do it?’ Maybe I would have done it on my own.

Pita alludes to the fact that many Fijian men will stay with a job, regardless of satisfaction, because at least he has a job. This can partially be explained by the idea of loyalty as a valued cultural practice (Ravuvu 1988), but also as a reminder of the colonial experience and the idea that only some groups of people can move beyond their original station in life (also see Heartfield 2003). He stands in contrast to this idea, admitting he is not happy with work and he is looking for better opportunities elsewhere—something he might not have considered at an earlier point in his life. The idea of expanding his ‘horizon’ was an awakening for him, which he attributes to his wife. I would argue here, it is because of the underlying social belief that only certain people (i.e. Europeans and wealthy or high ranking Fijians) are able to achieve these things, but not the average person (see Tengan 2008). That he has now travelled and believes he can achieve what he wants indicates he has broken a colonial bond in large part because of the support his wife provides (see Heron 2007).

In Emosi’s case, he believes the support of his wife allows him to live a more fulfilling, less self-centered life. Says Emosi,

First of all, I think I can think outside the box and I don’t think of myself anymore. It’s not me, me, me. It’s balance. She’s brought things out of me like things I’ve never seen before. Like I’ve picked up a camera and I’m taking lots of pictures. That’s one thing I like to do now. Another thing is I’m successful at work now. I never would have got to this position now. She drove me to do these things. She drove me to apply to jobs. She didn’t tell me to, but it was just the feeling that I’m letting her down and every time there was a rejection, she was there for me. She’s given me a better view of life than what I used to think of life. And most importantly she made the values that were taught to me more realistic. She made it something you can actually live by and you can be happy in life.

Like Pita, Emosi attributes his wife Anna, for allowing him to become more than he ever thought possible. In his case, he has discovered photography and in terms of work, he now has a respectable white-collar career ahead of him. This is significant because earlier in the interview he was frank in discussing his lifestyle before meeting

Anna. He claims he did not care about much and did not have much ambition in terms of work or school or even marriage. Emosi says, "...when we first met, I was in uni and I was a binge drinker, bumming around and irresponsible (laughs). Just didn't give a shit about anything. I was a free spirit. My plan was to get married at 40 and kids at 41—if someone took me in." Because of his wife, he is able to achieve what he wants, and also transform himself as he sees fit.

The opportunity to travel and observe other ways of being a man appears to have left a deep impression on these men (e.g. helping around the home, spending time with children). It has allowed these men to take the ideas they like and incorporate them into the way they present and practice their masculinity. It may be outside cultural expectations, which results in others teasing them, but it is their way of transforming their masculinity and their way of breaking free of the shackles of Fijian hegemonic masculinity. Interestingly, while they may be moving past Fijian expectations of manhood, it could be argued that they are simply replacing it with a more global definition. Connell suggests that, the colonial experience exported the "...European/American gender order to the colonized world" (1995:199). Connell argues that through globalization, this trend is accelerating with a general acceptance of this model, resulting in the loss of indigenous gender regimes. I would suggest, however, that this particular transformation is more hybrid in nature, because it is taking place within a marriage to a non-Fijian woman. Because of the potential offered through this marriage formation, the men pick and choose what traits they can live with and are reconfiguring it to create something new and hybridized.

### **Conclusion: "I'm a triangle and he's a circle"**

Fiji is frequently imagined in a semi-stasis where outsiders like to think of Fiji as a "traditional" place and the old values still rule (Thomas 1994; Kaplan 2007; Kelly 1989). And in many places, these ideas hold true. As Brison states, "...Fijians find themselves assigned a place in a world system as bearers of a quaint pre-modern culture which makes it difficult for them to imagine their lives in other ways" (2007:140). But change is occurring rapidly, and it is challenging many of these long held assumptions through the introduction of new ideas. The couples in this study are just one example of

the changes taking place, challenging long held ideas surrounding gender and masculinity through the changes brought about by their marriages.

This chapter was an examination of certain dynamics within these marriages and how it has affected the transformation of the participants' masculinity. In particular, I focussed on the idea of cultural practices and clashes, the daily negotiations that take place and the idea that despite the conflicts that arise, these marriages are an opportunity to experience freedom from certain masculine and lasting colonial ideals.

For these men, the women they marry are the living embodiments of change, new ideas and values. They challenge traditional notions of masculinity—the very ones that were remoulded and reinforced to be what they are today 170 years ago (Jolly 1998, 2001; Thomas 1994; Stoler 2002). Their marriages are proving to be the space of daily negotiations between traditional values and contemporary values that may, on first glance, appear to undermine traditional Fijian masculinity. However, when examining what these men say, these marriages are also opportunities to fulfil dreams and find a freedom of sorts from the same values that say they must behave in particular ways. They are able to move beyond the bonds of the hegemonic ideal to transform into something else that allows them to embrace emerging global values, which is the main topic explored in Chapter 6. This is not an easy or clear process and it tends to be filled with doubt, anxiety and tension (Tomlinson 2009; Brison 1995, 2007). Kitione sums up his experience in negotiating this new masculinity and the toll it takes on him by saying, "...sometimes I sit there and think, 'Fuck, what did I get myself into?'," a sentiment that, perhaps, many men may feel at some point in time or another. Nicole and Aisea see it more as being different, but not incompatible: "I'm a triangle and he's a circle," says Nicole. And Aisea states, "Some of it clashes...but at the end of the day it will match. You will work something out."



**Figure 10.** Aisea and Nicole go for a Sunday stroll along the seawall in Suva. For Nicole, the time they spend together is very important and he is learning to compromise for her. In this shot, he is even holding her hand, which is very unusual for a Fijian man. Photo: Sayuri Holman



**Figure 9.** Women tend to sell the fresh produce in the markets, while men are supposed to work on the farm. This shot was taken at Suva's main market downtown. Photo: Sayuri Holman



**Figure 11.** Women prepare food for a special event in rural highland Fiji. This typical behaviour for women to do the food preparation, while the men gather to drink kava in another group. The division of labour is clearly demarcated in group situations, as Anna discussed and as I personally experienced. Photo: Sayuri Holman

## Chapter 6: “The Western Way”: Embracing Global Values, Transforming Masculinities

Oh man, Fijian lifestyle—I mean at that time it was alright, but at this time if you have that old age mentality you’ll face a lot of problems. [SH: So traditional roles for Fijian men and women, you don’t buy into them completely?]. No, no. I don’t agree with all of Fijian culture. It’s very wrong. [SH All of it?]. Some of it. It’s give and take. (Interview with Aisea, November 3, 2008)

One day while talking to Aisea about the relationship between working and being a man, he said that as long as men (and women) are productive and working, they will succeed. He also had some strong criticisms, however, regarding traditional Fijian culture and practices. I was surprised at his comment about Fijian culture being “very wrong” and when I asked for clarification, he spoke in terms of traditional gender roles and who does what work. For him, being able to move past gender roles is important, as is moving beyond the tendency for “laziness.” He sees laziness in the village as an “old-age mentality” that prevents people from improving their conditions. This is significant because Aisea’s statement reflects both the colonial image of the “lazy native” as well as the internalized belief in progress and improving one’s situation, which is a cornerstone of what I have defined as ‘global values’ (Tengan 2008; Knauff 1997, 2002; Foster 2002). That is, those values associated with a modern lifestyle that includes the idea of progress and improvement in one’s life.

Up to this point, I have explored the transformations in Fijian masculinity within the context of intermarriage as a specific phenomenon amongst a particular group of men, which is a deeply personal experience for them. My goal in this chapter is to situate the experiences of these men within the global macro-structure that encompasses neoliberal and other global values that have come to dominate daily life in Fiji and abroad. Significantly, while the participants spoke favourably about many ideas rooted in Western thought including the value of work and education, they also criticized their customary, learned Fijian values on a broad scale. I argue that these men critique and challenge many of their own traditional values about culture and gender in favour of emerging global values. This chapter examines the relationship between transformations

in Fijian masculinity, the colonial experience and the idea of these men embracing global values as a result of their marriages. I will examine how my participants critique their own culture in terms of the “right” and “wrong” ways of achieving progress, and what aspects of global values they embrace. This applies to all areas of their lives including work, personal goals and the way they perceive gender roles and expectations. I use one case study to profile a couple, who articulate “global” ideals and values. Their case serves to highlight the complexity of masculinity when it intersects with colonialism, global values and the dominance of neo-liberal values. Sometimes this intersection results in the reinforcement of old values and sometimes it allows for newer expressions of masculinity, with varying degrees of tension (see Connell 2005).

Finally, Fiji may be considered a decolonized society, but some continuities continue to persist through a variety of mechanisms including economic globalization. The last section will be followed by a brief, exploratory discussion regarding how much influence the wives’ own values have on their husbands and what some of the implications may be. Specifically, I explore the colonizing potential the wives have on their husbands with regards to their imposition of global values and the seeming acceptance of these values by the husbands. This dynamic is not well explored, but is important as it demonstrates that the colonial past continues to affect the present.

### **“It might be Western, but there’s no other way”**

This section explores the idea that while the men are expanding their own possibilities of masculinity and manhood, they are now standing back and critiquing their own culture, sometimes in harsh and blunt terms. From their perspective, they believe many social issues and challenges stem from Fijian culture and the inability of some people to accept change. In their desire to explain how their marriages and their experiences changed their worldviews, many of the men appeared to embrace many Western values and ideals, telling me everything that was wrong with their culture and why they are in a better position than before.

The negotiations with certain global values that take place between groups of people and even within groups of people are ongoing and unevenly practiced (Knauff 2002; Foster 2002). To even suggest that groups of people experience and internalize the

trappings of global values in a homogenous manner is problematic, as Knauff (2002) points out. He warns, "...long-standing ideologies of the modern—which have typically incorporated the West and excluded the Rest—can be unwittingly recapitulated in contemporary approaches" (Knauff 2002:3). He goes on to argue that even as particular ideas are relativized and contextualized, modern ideas defined by the West result in a global standard. In a more localized example, both Brison (2007) and Tomlinson<sup>29</sup> (2009) address differing experiences of the global and modern in their own fieldwork in Fiji, which further support Knauff's argument. Brison explores personhood and modernity in conflict with tradition in the town of Raki Raki, while Tomlinson examines the impact of Christianity and the resulting nostalgia of something that is "lost" on the island of Kadavu.<sup>30</sup> Both show how complex and interrelated ideas are with regards to global values within particular societies. With that in mind, and recognizing that all individuals experience global values differently, the following examples illustrate how the men I interviewed understand their roles with regards to their own traditions and gendered expectations.

While talking with Aisea, he explained his point of view on the importance of improving one's mentality to increase one's ability to get ahead in life:

See this family (points to large house behind and talks quietly so they can't hear)? This is the granny's house. They have a son and they have a daughter. The daughter stays downstairs with her husband. The son stays upstairs with his wife. Sad to say, but that's the way they are. I'm not criticizing. You will find that most couples come back to their home to stay because they can't afford to (pay for rent). [SH: Yeah, but it's hard right now economically...]. It is hard! But it also has to do with mentality. I think I'm kind of lucky that I always work on my mentality, mental fitness. When I went overseas, I think to myself that I can do it.

In this exchange, what is striking here is the judgment placed on people who cannot seem to move past those old values of sharing the house with extended family, even

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<sup>29</sup> Matt Tomlinson (2009) *In God's Image: The Metaculture of Fijian Christianity* should not be confused with John Tomlinson (1999) *Globalization and Culture*.

<sup>30</sup> In Tomlinson's (1999) book, the people he interviewed, lament the loss of their traditional, cultural way of life, before the Europeans came. For example, they believe men were "giants" and now they are not, having lost those qualities that made them powerful men.

though it is a common practice today. Aisea is articulating global values through ownership of material objects—in this case, a house. He has little sympathy for these people, despite the struggling economy. Aisea believes that if you work hard, then you will have a payoff and you will be able to attain whatever you apply yourself to. He views the ability to work hard as a positive quality and believes he reaps the benefits of this work ethic. In turn, this improves his living standards and quality of life in terms of his home and other material objects (see Figure 14). This is not to say Aisea completely rejects Fijian traditions, because he does not, but in areas regarding the idea of work and values surrounding it, he accepts these values specifically on Western terms. When I asked if it was “tradition” to stay with family, he replied:

*Aisea:* Yes yes, some can afford to buy a house, but they feel obligated to go to their parents, but that’s the wrong mentality!

*SH:* Why?

*Aisea:* Because the parents in Fiji, they feel that ‘Hey I look after you and you look after me!’ That’s the wrong mentality of the parents. Their duty is to raise their children so they can afford things. They stay by themselves, let them have their freedom.

*SH:* But who looks after the parents when they don’t work anymore?

*Aisea:* See, that goes back to how educated the parents are, because some, when they get older and retire they are still getting money from their provident fund a month.

In this conversation, several themes are verbalized. Aisea appears to reject the idea of taking care of retiring parents because it is the “wrong mentality.” He seems to favour the individualistic, nuclear family model, where the immediate family is provided for. When the children grow of age, they become independent and move out, giving the parents “freedom.” He also alludes to the idea of retirement funds and believes they are a solution because he assumes this will support couples in their retirement. This idea resonates with the idea of working hard and putting aside savings for future use.

Of all the men I spoke to, however, Pita had the most to say with regards to discussions surrounding Western values. When I asked him if he thought the changes happening in society were a positive outcome, he replied with mixed feelings:

I see some of this as very positive like looking after kids and having a role with them, where a typical Fijian male would come home, finish work and before dinner, go drink grog with friends or family, and the kids suffer in that. In some families, men would rather buy beer and grog instead of pay for school fees because they're not putting time into their families. But I think now we have more educated men see that times are changing. Before we didn't have enough people putting emphasis on education and now parents in Fiji are putting a lot of emphasis and the government is putting a lot of emphasis on school because they're our future of Fiji. So a lot of people are getting more educated, women are getting more educated. A lot of women too are changing Fiji right now.

Here, Pita compares traditional habits of men to what he sees more men doing, including himself. He is in favour of the changes taking place, and critical of so-called “traditional” male behaviour. This is a way of asserting his transforming masculinity in contrast to the hegemonic standard that highlights his own awareness of pride in what men can do and be in this context. Even though he knows education is associated with Western ways of achieving progress and social improvement, he believes it is the only way to get ahead. In many ways, Pita seems to have embraced many global values while rejecting many of the values he has been surrounded by his whole life—particularly ones surrounding the improvement of his quality of life, access to education and more recently through his marriage, blurring gender roles so that children can have a better family experiences. Says Pita,

I mean everyone wants a better life. Parents are putting their kids in good schools because they want them to have a better life. I sometimes freak out when I see a lot of Fijian kids at the International School because it's very expensive. And their curriculum is very different. But more Fijian kids are going through because Fijian parents want them to get the best. But most of it has to change. A lot of parents still don't give it enough time for their kids education. They don't put in enough time. You've got to put in the time for the kids... Like when I was brought up, mom and dad really struggled, so you want better things in life... You might say it's getting westernized, but I think humans want better things for yourself. It might be western, but there's no other way—the Western way.

Pita accepts global values with regards to international development schemes, the challenges of growing up in poverty and allusions to the colonial experience. He provides a background narrative of growing up in “the Projects,” but because he worked hard and stayed out of trouble, he was able to succeed whereas many of his neighbours did not. He explains it as a moral, that working hard brings benefits, and he is living proof of that motto. In referring to the Western way as the “right” way of improving life (e.g. through access to education), Pita appears to reject many neo-traditional values in favour of what he believes is better. This is reinforced when he says:

I’m saying that traditionally, you do things this way, but people are getting educated, they say this is the RIGHT way to do things. But some people say ‘oh that’s how they do it over there.’ [SH So some people look down on it?] Yeah...but it’s not. People want better in life. Education is one thing. I think it’s a very good thing because Fijian people are getting out there now...now Fijian men are getting out there and getting businesses so a lot of things are changing for the better.

Pita sums up his belief that ‘everyone wants a better life’ than their parents had, though for him he believes the only way to achieve this is by conforming to dominant western frameworks. Since this has worked for him, it is understandable that he sees this as an answer to many social challenges including the status of women. Says Pita, “...women are getting more educated. A lot of women, too, are changing Fiji right now.”

As Pita and Aisea both mention, a key factor that was raised by all participants involved the idea of education as a means of combating what is interpreted as ignorance. Kitone compared both his parents saying:

My mother’s family practically raised me, but that’s OK because they’re very open-minded people, very educated...my dad’s family was...like if there’s a man in the house, and you’re a lady, you can’t walk across the room, the woman walks around outside.

He equates open mindedness with education and a lack thereof, with customary practices that appear to marginalize women. Aisea says, “You’ll find it has to do with education. The more educated people are, the easier it is for them to accept.” This supports existing literature surrounding masculinities and development (Clever 2002). They all claim that education and travel opened their eyes to other ways of being a man,

and they took pride in their relative “open mindedness.”<sup>31</sup> Exposure to Western ways of behaving like a man and working appears to have trumped some of the neo-traditional Fijian ways of being a man. But the participants perceive this as an improvement on their previous lifestyle, which suggests they have internalized many of these values. In turn, this acceptance of specific global values including blurred gender roles, work and individualism, allows men to potentially redefine their masculine identity.

### **Embodying Global Values in the Local Context**

This section explores the significance of the intersection of embracing global values and adjusting to globalization processes and what it can mean for the reproduction of certain masculine values. Connell (2004) argues that as societies engage with the globalizing process, there are pressures to reconfigure the local gender order. This results in men at least partially reconstructing local masculinities, which is an uneven process. The neoliberal condition and current globalization trends tend to reinforce certain hegemonic ideals as well as the ongoing repression of women in specific gender orders. Specifically, Connell argues that the, “European/American gender arrangements are hegemonic” (1995:200) and as the, “...identification of men with the world of work is established, the global capitalist economy becomes the key arena for the making of masculinities” (2004:76). She implies that as Euro-American values define the gender order through economic globalization processes, it sets the standard for developing countries, and continues to be reinforced through this process. This is similar to Knauff’s earlier argument, where he suggests that the West sets the standard for everyone else.

She also suggests that women have an influential role in this reconstruction. Citing a Japanese study, Connell says, “Under cultural pressure from women to move away from ‘traditional’ Japanese patriarchal masculinity, four contrasting patterns of response emerge, ranging from rejection of change to transformation of identity” (2004:77). The men in my study fall somewhere near the transformation end of the masculinities continuum.

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<sup>31</sup> The idea of education also supports the work of various NGO’s in the area, including the UN and the Fiji Women’s Crisis Center and work to educate the public on gender issues, which several of the men also mentioned in passing.

The couple in the case study discussed below appear to be the most ‘global’ of all the couples I interviewed in terms of their values and how they see themselves living their lives. Tensions and challenges surrounding gender, culture and masculinity were noticeably minimized on the man’s part and did not appear to be so much of an issue as it was for other couples.<sup>32</sup> Instead, their concerns included planning for their wedding and staying fit and healthy on a daily basis. Their long term concerns included being able to work enough to live an upper middle class lifestyle that allows them to travel, and live comfortably.

### **Marc and Kim: Young and Hip in Suva**

From the clothes they wear, to the music they listen to (rock—not typical in Fiji), to the contemporary home décor, Marc and Kim appear to live a global lifestyle. They both have high-paying jobs, which allow them to live a comfortable standard of living, or as Marc describes it— “the basics plus a little bit more.” Marc was born and raised in Fiji, but is of Rotuman descent. His fiancée Kim, is from England.<sup>33</sup> They met through outrigger paddling (see Figure 12). They continue to race, paddle and stay physically active together, which makes them unique in terms of exercise. Among all the other couples, any sporting activity was done separately, away from their partners. As I learned when I joined them on separate occasions for a Sunday family gathering and another time for a party with their friends, they enjoy spending time with friends and family. They often get together to party and drink both alcohol and kava in their home. Their friends come from various backgrounds and are of various ethnicities, and when they are sitting around together, there is much singing, laughter and camaraderie. In fact, one of the things Marc says he loves about Kim, is how comfortable she is around his family and friends, and how she is willing to drink what they drink and do what they do. Says Marc, “For me, it means a lot that my family accepts and that my friends accept. Ask the boys individually. ‘She rocks’ because she drinks grog with them and that means a lot to them. She wants to hang out with them. And she talks to them, respectable and it doesn’t matter

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<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, Marc did not appear to express much concern with cultural differences between himself and his fiancée. Kim, his fiancée, however, was experiencing considerable anxiety because her family was not in favour of their impending nuptials.

<sup>33</sup> They married on New Year’s Eve, 2008.

who you are. She's very open-minded." This is not always the case with the other women, who sometimes find themselves at odds with both their husbands' families and friends.

When talking about the future Marc and Kim say that once Kim is done her current contract in Fiji, they will probably move to Greece because the climate is similar to Fiji (but drier). They are not entirely clear on future directions. They see themselves as free to do whatever they want. Says Kim,

Crete is an island in Greece and it's similar to here. Very peaceful. More similarities than England, so we thought a few years in Crete and we'll see how we adapt to it. I've been there on holiday, but I've never lived there, so we'll see how it goes... After that we'll have lived together here in Fiji and in Crete and then we can make an informed decision about where we want to go next.

*Marc:* And maybe then, 6 years time you might want to move to some crazy place like Hawaii.

*Kim:* How about South America?

*Marc:* South America? It depends... Venezuela. I'll talk to some of my contacts down there. Mexico!

*Kim:* Buenos Aires!

*Marc:* ok...

*Kim:* Just kidding!

In this exchange, not only are they talking about their future, the belief in their freedom to move around as they please and where they plan to live, but the joking nature of their relationship also emerges as they start to think of more and more places to live. At one point though, Marc starts to become a little more hesitant and when I asked if they really planned to move around that much, he replied:

No, no, not really. We're going to find somewhere, maybe two or three places we can call home. I'm thinking Fiji and Greece. I'm hoping Fiji man. It's super here man! We'll have a look at it and see what is best. Few years here, few years there, maybe find a place we can have a holiday destination.

Marc had explained to me that while he was born and raised on Viti Levu, he is still influenced by Rotuman culture. He also did not seem as keen to leave his home for a long period of time. However, when talking about his future plans, he and Kim appear to

be looking outward. They are not ignoring his culture, but they are looking towards other locations globally to live their lives. Their work gives them more mobility than any of the other couples I interviewed. I would suggest that Kim's privilege as a European woman influences Marc in that while he does not seem as eager to leave Fiji, he is willing to go along with her. They are an example of a couple enmeshed within global processes where they are free to move around as they please.

In observing these two interact with each other, it was interesting to note how Marc presented himself. He sat on the couch, leaning back with his legs apart, periodically drinking huge bowls of grog, and when he spoke, much of it was in a joking kind of way. It was difficult to tell what was serious and what was not and it seemed like he was trying to convey himself as the 'cool' guy in control. In fact, he appeared to be presenting himself in conventional hegemonic terms and admitted at one point that it was difficult to express himself saying, "I don't confide in people that easily about how I feel..." He appears confident with himself and his masculinity, takes pride in his ability to cook better than Kim (see Figure 13) and of all the men I talked to, he appeared to experience the least amount of tension where his masculinity was concerned. This suggests that while there are transformations in masculinity occurring, it is not a clearly defined process (Connell 2004). Indeed, it is complex, and whereas some men may experience major transformations involving drastic changes in worldviews and practice, others may only negotiate a little while largely maintaining the status quo. When it comes to his wife, however, Marc believes his wife is influential to his personal growth and some of the opportunities in his life. All the men I interviewed alluded to their wives as being important to them in their personal growth and transformation in many facets of their lives. While many men globally may believe their wives are responsible for improving their lives, this particular context has noteworthy theoretical implications for how we understand colonialism's lasting impact within contemporary marriages.

### **Influencing Men with "Colonizing" Values?**

In reference to persistent beliefs regarding life in developing countries, Heron argues that, "this globalized world view is shaped by spatial representations that have remained intact over time; namely that the countries of the North...are places of greater

civilization, of order, cleanliness and a truly good quality of life...while those of the South—the former colonies—languish in anachronistic space, where chaos reigns, disorder and disease are rampant...” (2007:34). This belief has formed the justification for aid workers going overseas to “help.” There has been little research regarding the impact and influence of white women in developing countries, though the historical impact has been well explored (Stoler 2002; Knapman 1986; Jolly 1998, 2001; Lukere 2002; McClintock 1995).

Canadian academic Barbara Heron (2007) has provided some insight into the experiences of middle class white women who participate in overseas development. She notes that women currently form the majority of international overseas aid workers. She also situates these women within the idea of ‘colonial continuities,’ arguing that there is a bundle of interrelated constructs that have persisted since the era of empire and remain important today to the “discursive production of bourgeois identity” (Heron 2007:7). This is important to her overall exploration of bourgeois women and their desire to help the “others” in developing countries improve their lives. Specifically, she is interested in colonial continuities and the idea of being a “good woman” by “helping” others. Heron notes that as women try to liberate developing countries from their colonial bonds, it is ironic that “...whiteness exerts a force that is both global and colonizing in its effects” (2007:9). She suggests the privileges of white women in these countries extends beyond the borders of those countries, and reinforces particular Western ideas regarding development and improving quality of life. In the case of my participants, their wives offer them the means to travel outside of their own country and experience Western ways of practicing contemporary manhood, where the hegemonic ideals can be challenged. Therefore, the wives privilege extends beyond the borders of their own countries to Fiji, where they can improve the lives of their husbands.

Earlier, many of the men spoke of their travels abroad as life-altering. Aisea mentions a visit to Australia where he saw what bathrooms were like there, and this motivated him to work harder so he could have a tiled bathroom with hot water. He says, “...like when I got home, I really don’t like my bathroom. It’s so low compared to there and that really motivated me to go get something better.” For Pita, though he has travelled with his wife, Beth, in the past, they are planning a move to Malawi where she

is planning to teach. He explains it as, “it’s just getting the better things in life because it’s for your family and they will benefit from it.” Here, he is referring to his immediate family, and not necessarily his extended family network.

While Heron’s work is focused on white, middle class Canadian women who volunteered overseas, it is significant to note that more than half of my respondents in this study initially came over to Fiji as overseas volunteers and appear to be part of a global trend (Heron 2007). I suggest that these wives have what I call an “unintentionally colonizing effect.” That is, while the wives do not believe they are somehow superior to their husbands, their very difference (i.e. whiteness, middle class status and citizenship) affords them privileges and considerable influence in Fiji. For example, several participants commented that since their wives work so hard (I would suggest influenced by the Christian work ethic), they too, feel the obligation to work hard and contribute. Emosi claims that, “before I married her [Anna], I never knew where I was going and now I’m going to be this really successful career guy.” When asked if she gives him the support he needs, he replied, “Yeah, she drives me.” In this quote he attributes his wife with taking him from an aimless direction to career success, from unfocused to focused goals. Earlier, he had mentioned that now, not only did he feel as though he needed to contribute, but that he needed to contribute *more*. Emosi does not interpret this as negative at all, and appears grateful to his wife for inspiring him to improve himself. Through her privilege, work ethic and the values she embodies, Anna has influenced her husband’s acceptance of values to the point where he has internalized them.

Additionally, many of the participants say they had the opportunity to travel to other countries because of their wives, which introduced new ideas to them, including ways of behaving as a man. The cultural clashes that take place could also be understood in terms of specific global values, with ideas of the nuclear family unit conflicting with traditional extended kin networks. I would suggest that, in this context, the values the women embody and the way they practice them (through work, through family expectations etc.) influence their husbands’ values. And since the men benefit from the privileges of their non-Fijian wives, their quality of life appears to improve by Western standards. This puts them into an elite group that has access to more knowledge, work, travel and educational opportunities. Simultaneously, the women are performing “good

work” and pulling their husbands into their more affluent lifestyle, saving them from a “chaotic and disordered” lifestyle. This privileged space also appears to allow them flexibility in defining their masculinity in a space, where their wives support them, both emotionally and financially. It is important to note that the men do not appear to think this is a negative outcome either, as they appear to be benefitting, hence the term “unintentional colonization.”

As Heron (2007) notes, colonial continuities are evident on a global level, but I added to this analysis by showing how the legacy of colonialism persists at an intimate level within individual marriages. The family was and seems to continue to be a space in which particular values surrounding progress and improvement are played out, though the men articulate their experiences in terms of geographical and economic mobility. While this was an explicit endeavour during the colonial period in Fiji (see Jolly 1998, 2001), this latest manifestation appears to be more of an unintentional result of this specific marriage formation. In the contestation between neo-traditional and global values within these intermarriages, the global values embodied by the wives appear to prevail.

### **Bargaining with Global Values and Hegemonic Masculinity**

By examining Fijian transformations in masculinity in relation to intersections of both global and local forces, the complexities of what is taking place emerges. Values established and promoted by both the missionaries and colonial authorities may have taken place 170 years ago, however, many of those ideas remain embedded in Fijian society today. With the dominance of neoliberal capitalism and western defined global values, the old values mix with newer ones. This is played out in various ways. Marc and his wife Kim appear to embody many contemporary global values in terms of their mobility, work ethic and preferences for the nicer material things in life. Even though Marc pays tribute to his “traditional” roots, his life is heavily influenced by Western values.

Foster (2002) alludes to the idea of ‘bargaining’ with modernity, which is a useful analogy for my own analysis. I suggest respondents all transform accepted versions of masculinity into something new and meaningful for them as individuals. That is, they have bargained with themselves, global values and Fijian hegemonic masculinity to take

what they need to create a different way of being a man. This is a complex and multi-layered process, and different men experience personal transformations to different degrees. The messiness of the situation also means that very few things are immune to change, including gender ideals.

Additionally, Brison (2007) and others have commented, the modernization theories that were dominant in the 1950's and 1960's still have influence in Fiji today when it comes to explaining how or why people should be trying to improve their lives. This also appears to be true among my research participants, who all expressed some desire to improve upon their lives and living situations and endorsed Western methods as the best way to achieve this goal. In the case of these men, and based on preliminary data, I suggest that the wives also help to reinforce dominant global values by enacting them out and placing their expectations on their husbands. While this is not necessarily perceived as a negative outcome by either partner, it is worth noting. It appears to influence that values of the men and could be understood as a type of colonial continuity that takes place within the context of these intermarriages and it is not well explored.



**Figure 12.** Marc and Kim met through outrigger paddling and continue to participate in the sport together today. This is unusual compared to the other couples because any exercise was usually done apart from their partners. Photo: Participants



**Figure 13.** In this photo, Marc is preparing dinner, which is not unusual for him. However, this image is significant because we can see he is cooking in a nice, clean kitchen. We can visualize his definition of “the basics plus a little bit more.” We can see that he is fit, whereas many affluent men in Fiji lean towards more body mass, which is a reflection of his active lifestyle. Photo: Participants



**Figure 14.** In this photovoice result, Aisea is at home with his computer. This was important to him. He is proud of the fact that he has the means to own a computer, and identified it specifically as a something that makes him unusual compared to most men because he is able to afford one. He also has internet access in his home, connecting him to the rest of the world whenever he wants. Photo: Participant

## **Chapter 7: Navigating Fijian Masculinity in the Traditional and the Global Contexts**

This thesis has explored the idea of Fijian masculinities being in a state of rapid transformation as a result of marrying non-Fijian women. Specifically, by using the lived experiences of Fijian men married to European wives, I have attempted to show the complexities, intricacies and negotiations that take place on a daily basis in terms of masculinity and gendered ideals. These are further complicated by the intersections of Fijian culture, a powerful colonial legacy and the encompassing global processes that are currently taking place. While in some contexts, this has proved to be an opportunity to reinforce hegemonic ideals, I would argue this is also an opportunity to challenge and negotiate with these ideals to create something new. The men who participated in this study are all in the process of reworking and reconfiguring their masculinity. On one hand, they must pay respect to customary ways to keep their culture alive and to command respect from those in rural areas. At the same time, they must make an adequate amount of income to support their new lifestyle that embraces material comfort and a life that is perceived as better than what they grew up with. There is some overlap in these expectations, but these men are also taking on new roles and acting in unconventional ways.

The tension and contradictions they experience daily forces these men to define their masculinity in an alternative way in light of their experiences. They are not, and cannot ignore the masculine ideal, but because their lives are so seemingly different compared to their peers, they are articulating their manhood in conjunction with that ideal, taking what elements they can from it and adding their own twist to it by incorporating their experiences. In this way, they are contributing to the ongoing transformation of Fijian masculinity and pushing the boundaries of what masculinity can be. As Connell (2002) argues, gender relations and identities have a global dimension, that have grown out of the history of imperialism and are reflected in the contemporary process of globalization. The Fijian experience is a particular form of the general process. Change in gender relations occurs on a world scale, though not always in the same direction or at the same pace.

## Summary of Findings

In completing this project, many findings emerged. In Chapter 3, I show how the colonial experience reshaped gender roles within the family and laid the foundation for the general acceptance of global values. In Chapter 4, the experiences of both Kitone and Emosi illustrate how the contradiction between what the ideal Fijian should be and the reality of what most men are is a source of great tension. There are very specific qualities Fijian men are expected to embody, but the most important quality that emerged was that of man as provider. I argue that this ideal can be linked to the Christian missionaries establishing their work ethic and explicitly linking manhood with work. It has adapted to global values and processes, but the outcome remains the same in that men are still expected to provide and work hard for their families. In the end, while noting that there is considerable pressure placed on them to behave in particular ways, they appear to pick and choose what characteristics they want to embody on their own terms, redefining their masculinity inside and outside of marriage.

In Chapter 5, the married experiences of both Pita and Aisea show how cultural values can clash and restrict their success and happiness. They also show, however, that if they are willing to talk with their partners and both sides are able to compromise, they are able to experience a sense of freedom that they never felt before. I suggest their marriages allow them to achieve those things they previously thought unattainable with particular regards to work and the ability to travel, while also transforming their personal definitions of masculinity.

In Chapter 6, Marc and Kim highlight the fact that transformations in masculinity are individual experiences with some individuals experiencing more profound change than others. Chapter 6 also explores how these men tend to accept many of the global values their wives embody and look critically towards their own culture with regards to gender issues. I suggest that the women influence their husbands values, which demonstrates the idea of colonial continuities persisting even within intermarriages. I attempt to show how the intersection of colonial history, culture and global values results in a chaotic and messy space where some values can be reinforced, but where some can also be redefined. In the case of this project, hegemonic masculinities are being challenged with new definitions of masculinity emerging.

Together, these chapters support my overall argument that in the case of these men, their masculinity is currently undergoing a rapid transformation as a direct result of their marriages. Their wives embody many of the global values they embrace and there is struggle and conflict at times within their marriage, as different expectations compete, forcing the men to step back and redefine their own masculinity. These men also experience a sense of freedom and opportunities, however, which they attribute to their marriages. That is, these men benefit from their wives' privilege, which is reflected in their geographical and economic mobility. It is important to stress that this is only an exploratory project, and more participants are needed in order to make more definitive statements regarding the nature of these transformations. I believe, however, that I have established a foundation on which to move forward with many possibilities for future research.

### **Contribution of Knowledge**

Though this is an exploratory project, it is the first study to explore men and masculinities in cross-cultural marriages, as most focus on women in such marriages (Constable 2009, 2005, 2003; Thai 2005; Suzuki 2005). Additionally, this study offers a glimpse into the nature of intermarriages in a post-colonial society, which has not been done before to the best of my knowledge. Intermarriages are an increasing global trend and this social phenomenon needs to be examined, as there are new contexts to be explored. This includes the impact of colonialism within intermarriages, expectations surrounding work and gender roles and ideas surrounding global values. Through close interviews with participants, I have also shown that these men appear to have a high level of self-awareness and articulate themselves very well. By asking these men to share their experience, their voices highlight the conflict and tensions they feel, but also the transformation in their manhood taking place. I have added a new dimension to the study of masculinities at a general level and contributed to studies on Fiji at a more specific level. This is a timely topic in Fiji, as Fijians are engaging with the global community and are being forced to address issues surrounding tradition and gender, globalization and associated value systems and the lingering colonial history.

## Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. One of the difficulties in asking participants to discuss their experiences of masculinity was the very idea of masculinity itself. They would discuss their daily activities, their challenges and their opinions enthusiastically enough, but when asked to specify Fijian masculinity, the very idea of it appeared to confuse them and answers tended to be vague. Perhaps because masculinity is an abstract idea that is often assumed but rarely unpacked. I found that while I was investigating a phenomenon at an abstract level, respondents spoke in practical terms. When it came to asking for clarifications, this was often frustrating for both myself and the participant as I struggled to make the abstract more tangible.

By far, the most difficult hurdle, however, is the fact that I am a privileged woman exploring men's issues in a developing country with a colonial history. This was alluded to in several interviews with participants, where I was informed that other men would be "afraid" or "shy" to talk to me because I am perceived as European (despite all outward appearances) and therefore intimidating. With such an existing power/powerless dynamic existing, the data needs to be supported by follow-up studies that provide more depth. In recognition of my privileged position, I understand I cannot fully understand their experiences. However, I can situate these men within existing literature and begin the process of exposing the underlying processes of these marriages.

This limitation also brings my attempts to conduct a post-colonial study to the forefront. This was something important to myself as a researcher, though ultimately, I do not believe I was entirely successful on this front. While I tried to pay respect to respondents in this study by including many of their thoughts, including their photovoice and asking how they would like to see the final product used, their experiences are still being analyzed by an outsider (myself). The subtleties of their experiences cannot be entirely unpacked by myself and the data collected through the interview process may have been different if a Fijian male had conducted the interviews instead of myself. Recent anthropological studies in Oceania have focused on indigenous members of communities performing their own research in a post-colonial setting. Both Tengan (2008) and Nabobo-Baba (2006) stress their own indigenous status and membership in the respective communities they studied, which allowed them a different kind of access to

participants as well as a deeper contextual understanding. Both academics go out of their way to stress indigenous ways of knowing and performing. In the case of Tengan, he highlights the impact of colonial constructions of Hawaiian masculinities, which resulted in an emasculation of men in general and his own study explores contemporary Hawaiian men remaking their masculinity outside of the colonial standards. Part of his success in his own research is his active participation in this movement. Tengan writes:

As an ‘Ōiwi, I have a special kuleana (right and responsibility) to nurture and maintain the genealogical connections between place, people and gods. I also seek to tell new mo’olelo (using both English and Hawaiian) that shed light upon our ability to traverse the borders of insider/outsider, indigenous/foreign, colonized/decolonized, global/local and modern traditional...yet this very diversity of experience and positionality is a strength when understood as enlarging the spaces of indigeneity and the possibilities of transformation (2008:25).

Tengan’s own research is far more post-colonial in nature than my own and his work is largely successful in this respect. However, I have still tried to keep the influence of post-colonialism alive throughout this study. This is an exploratory study which needs to also be challenged and unpacked by other Fijian men in order to truly understand the dynamics of intermarriage on Fijian masculinity.

### **Future Research**

When examining the role of their wives, a new dynamic is introduced. Though the wives do not express it themselves, the men say they feel a need to work harder to provide for their wives, to live up to some expectation they imagine their wives have. This is worthy of attention because there are several complex layers of ideas at work, including the colonially established values that intersect with customary values and contemporary global values. It is important to note that none of the men view the idea of working harder for their wives as negative. Indeed, they take pride in it. What I find significant is how the wives represent a living embodiment of abstract global values that appears to reinforce certain beliefs among the men about what they ought to be doing and how they ought to achieve it. That is, on an abstract level, these women represent the

global on a very intimate level for these men forcing these men to negotiate certain facets of masculinity, and reinforcing other facets—specifically by harnessing their ability to work. I argue that this allows them to behave as the hegemonic male ought to while simultaneously allowing them to explore other possibilities of what a man can be.

This could be viewed as an unintentional colonization of the man's ability to work and is certainly worthy of exploration as this issue is at the intersection of race, gender, colonialism and globalization. That is, how do the values and expectations of the wives drive the men to work harder. None of the wives ever spoke of it, but it was interesting to note that all the men said they felt driven to work harder because of their wives. This is significant because as women imbued and in large part, defined by these global values, they force men to rethink what it means to be a man. This is a constant negotiation, but of particular concern to me, is how they manage to balance work and home obligations. As this idea was not the intended purpose of my original research and only emerged in the analysis of my data, it would require more research to explore this fascinating dynamic and the social implications it has. Barbara Heron (2007) has started to explore some of the issues raised here with regards to middle class white women who travel to developing countries with the “helping imperative,” but there is still much to be explored in this area. I would also like to continue to explore the idea of masculinity and what it means, as it remains contested within academia and is often unclear among men themselves (Connell 1995; Howson 2006; Hearn 1996; Messerschmidt 2005).

### **Final Thoughts: Actions Speak Louder than...abstract theories**

In retrospect, it may be that for these men, Fijian manhood and masculinity was never really the question or the problem. Masculinity for them is imbued in all of them—a given—because they are men through simple biological fact. The problem for them is in their behaviours, activities and social interactions. They are behaving in atypical ways, participating in atypical activities and modifying their social interactions to accommodate expectations from all sides. Indeed, with regards to rural African masculinities, “...manhood, as a concept, is not questioned. Rather it is the content of manhood and the way men exercise their powers that have become critical issues” (Morrell and Swart 2005:104). A similar phenomenon is also taking place in Fiji where people re-define the

content of Fijian manhood through everyday actions and relationships, including marriage. Together, these Fijian men and their non-Fijian wives challenge the definition of both Fijian marriage and manhood in response to persistent colonial ideals and the emerging global values.

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## Appendix 1

### Interview Questionnaire

#### Background

Name? Age? Years Married? Religion?

Where are your families from? What do they do for livings? Are you the oldest?

How much education do you have? Do you both work outside the home? Job titles

How did you meet?

Tell me about how you met and how you decided to get married. Tell me about your wedding.

Tell me about how made decisions about your marriage and where you lived after you were married.

How 'traditional' was your wedding?

How did friends and family react to your relationship?

#### Marriage and Gender Roles

What were your expectations of marriage before you were married? How, if at all, has your view of marriage changed since?

How would you define a successful marriage?

Do you believe in specific marriage roles?

If so, what kind of roles? How are men and women supposed to behave?

Do men have certain role they are expected to conform to? What are they? To what extent do you think you conform to them? Who does what in this relationship? Can you give me examples of how you do/do not, conform? Do you feel stress living up those expectations?

Where does the pressure to conform come from? (e.g. family, self, friends etc.)

What happens if you do not conform to conventional gender roles? (if you do not behave the way you're expected to behave?)

In your opinion, where do notions of male responsibility come from?

How do Christian notions of male responsibility affect men?

In today's society, what factors might make it hard for men to fulfill these responsibilities?

How does it make you feel? How do you or other men react to it?

What makes factors make it easier to fulfill your responsibilities?

What kinds of expectations or obligations do you experience in your lives? In what ways has your life changed since marriage? Tell me how YOU have changed since marriage, if at all?

Would you ever live in the village? Why or why not?

How 'traditional' is your life? How 'traditional' are you roles within marriage? Describe a typical day in your life for me.

In reference to the Ravuvu quote regarding *vakaturaga*, do you agree with this statement? Is it

still true today? How have expectations changed since?

#### Intersections

What does it mean to be a 'provider'?

What are your thoughts on changing roles in marriage? Do you see it as problematic?

Does this marriage give you the chance to move beyond expectations? If so, in what ways?

How are Western women perceived in Fijian society?

**Work and the pursuit of material things...**

Which is more important, job satisfaction or the amount of money you make?

How important is money to your sense of being a man? In what ways is it important/not important?

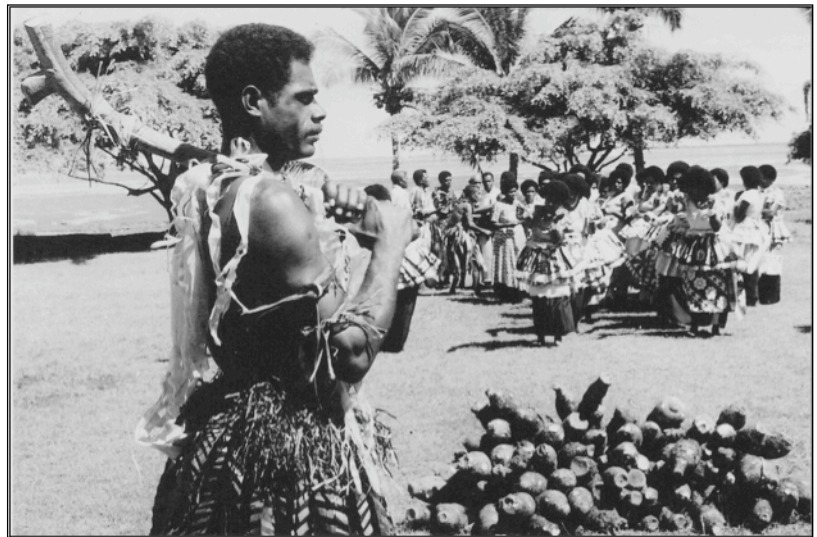
Financial challenges are frequently cited as a major reason why marriages fail in North America.

How do you feel about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Is there anything else you'd like to say? Do you have any questions for me?

## Appendix 2

Photo Ice Breaker Activity (all photos from the *Fiji Times* archive)



# No immunity for cop killers



A soldier puts on a smile for commuters traveling in to the city yesterday.

FRANK will be accountable for the killing of a policeman and an American priest.

Army commander Commodore Frank Frank announced an amnesty grant to troops leader George Speight and the rebels who captured Suva and would not extend to the killing of the policeman.

It was later said over the search on the two actions and the training of Fiji Troops.

Commodore Baramakia refused to comment on how this would affect discipline and bring an end to the curfew over the last 15 days.

He wanted to meet Mr Speight yesterday morning but was denied a meeting.

In the Speight's rejection of Baramakia's message, the army commander said they were their alternative prime minister.

"I don't know if he is a legitimate prime minister will have the courage to speak in front of Fijians who believe in him and his people," he said.

He added that the issue of George Speight had been raised about his future with the removal of the IMF Quasi-stabilization and State for Expenditure and the granting of immunity.

But he stressed that he had those steps to ensure that the 80,000 people of Fiji were safe and not for the IMF's benefit.

He wanted to have the support of the independent Fijian parliament secretary and the Public Service Commission to try to restore stability and not for removing the IMF Quasi-stabilization and State for Expenditure.

On discussion with Mr Speight's group, Commodore Baramakia said they were changing their demands each time the two groups met.

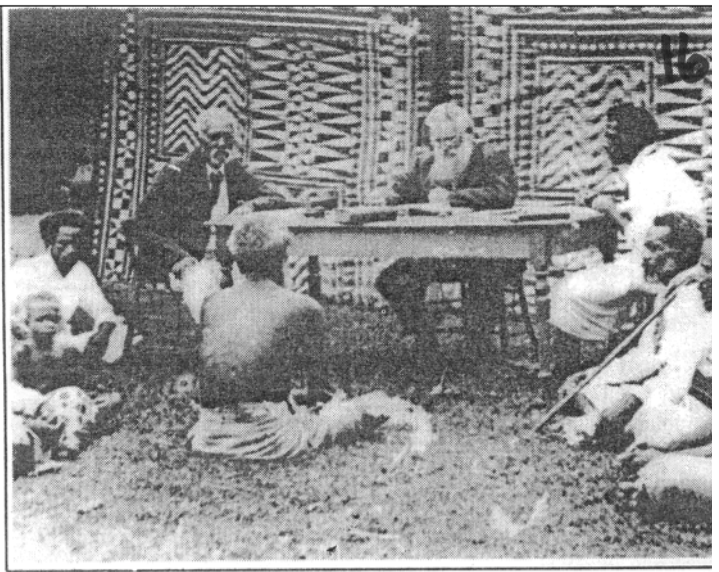
He pointed out that the immunity issue for Mr Speight and his army was not only be affected if the coup leader released the business and laid down their arms.



Police motorbikes were the checkpoint at Thabua Gardens.



A trooper on guard in the city. 'I don't know if he (Speight) will have the courage to speak in front of Fijians after holding guns and...'



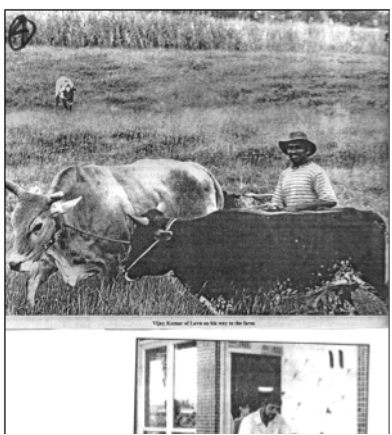
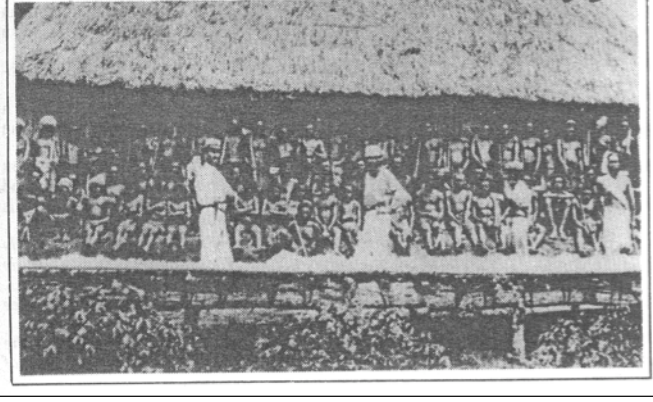
David Wilkinson (centre) helped interpret the Deed of Cession to the chiefs.

# A (MUSCLE) POWER PLAY

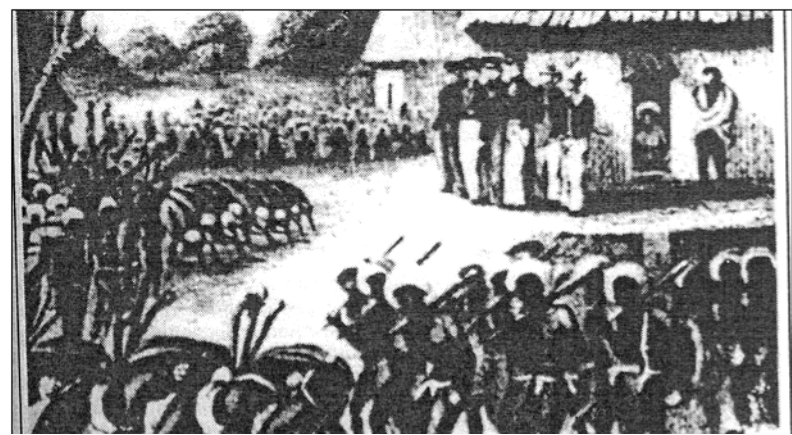


TWO big powers, Britain and America, flex their muscles at the opening of the newly improved Charman's All Races Club, in Kimberley Street, Suva. The United States Ambassador, Mr John Condon (left), and the British High Commissioner, Viscount Dunrossil (centre) got into the ring together, with Mr Charman testing their strength. Viscount Dunrossil gave \$700 worth of equipment to the club and the Australian High Commissioner, Mr Gordon Upton, gave \$300 worth.

# Melanesian workers on a Fiji cotton plantation.

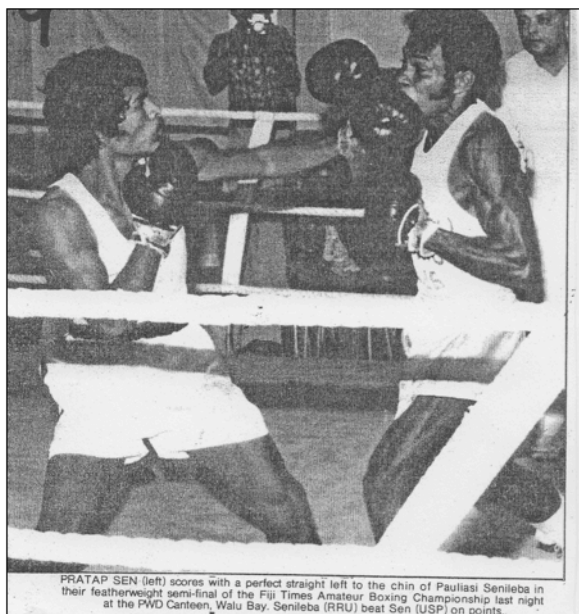
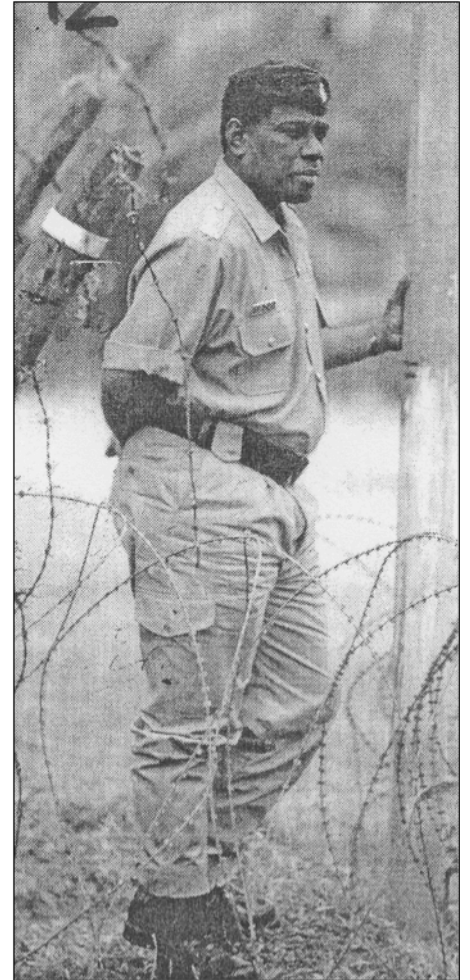


Man looking at cows on the way to the farm.



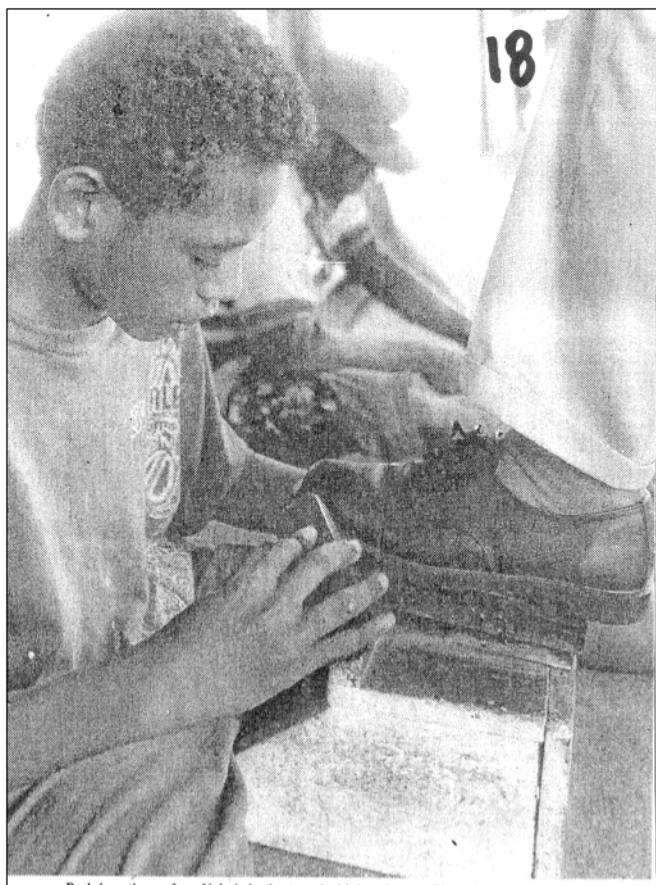


'Old Snuff'

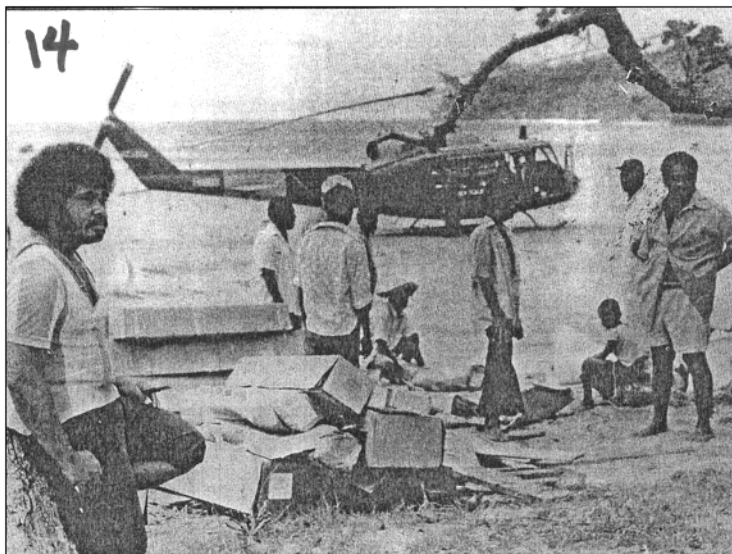


PRATAP SEN (left) scores with a perfect straight left to the chin of Pauliasi Senileba in their featherweight semi-final of the Fiji Times Amateur Boxing Championship last night at the PWD Canteen, Walu Bay. Senileba (RRU) beat Sen (USP) on points.






Back in action — Jone Vula is back at work, checking shoes at Elton Street in the port.





Surend Naidu of Raviravi takes a break.

Harvest must begin soon say sugar authorities

“If we don't start harvesting within the next two weeks, there will be real financial problems for growers and corporation,”  
- Barrack

**I Drink  Rewa Milk**

**You Need  Rewa Milk**

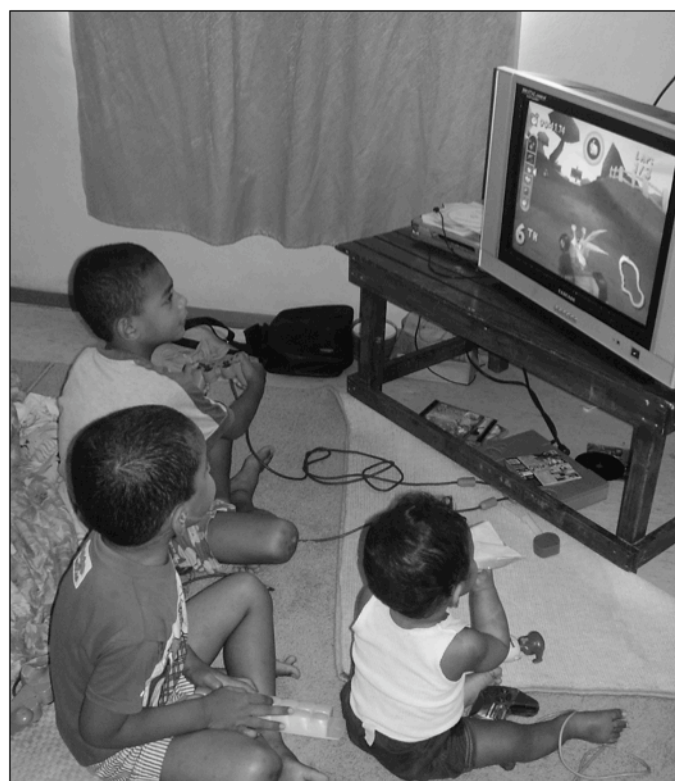
Drink more  Rewa Dairy Milk and become a Champion Sportsman



### Appendix 3

#### Selected Photos from Participants' Photovoice Projects

The following photos are Kitone's shots that he took over the space of 2 weeks.





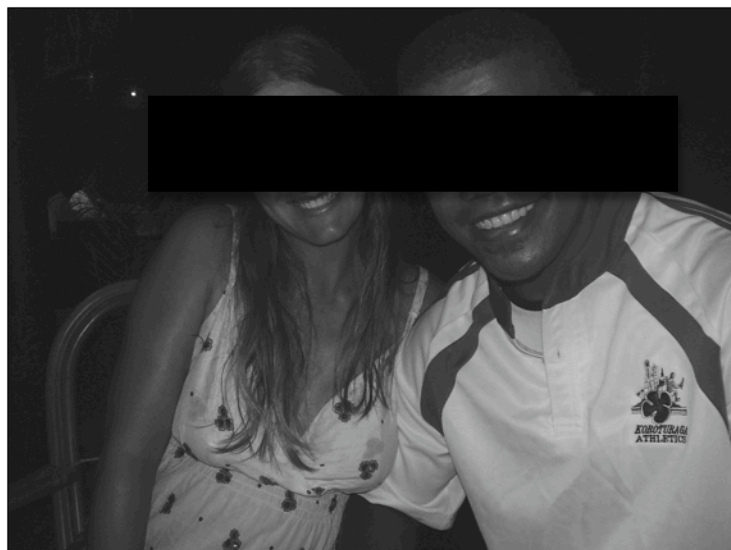
Kitione's pictures reflect a day in his life. Both he and his wife, Lena, share the chores, though he tends to take on more (see ironing photo). The photo of fruit represents his desire to keep him and his family eating healthy and well. His middle class material lifestyle is represented through the television and video games his children are playing. Though both he and Lena work, they do try and take their children out for fun days, like when they went on a company picnic to Pacific Harbor to swim. His oldest daughter is holding her inflatable water toy. The last photo in this set is a picture of him with one of his athletes that he coaches. This is one important aspect of his life that emerged through the photovoice project, as it never really came up before. Kitione identified it, however, as a part of his life that is very important to him, as it allows him to stay involved in athletics. Earlier in an interview, he attributed track and field and athletics as responsible for keeping him focused and in school.



**Selected Photos from Marc's Photovoice**

Marc and Kim's photos revolved around their love of outrigger paddling and their shared sense of humor. They enjoy being silly, which is reflected in their picture with the inflatable toy. They also took a photo of Marc in the kitchen, cutting up chicken. He is at home in the kitchen and takes pride in his ability to cook. You can also see he is upper middle class because the kitchen looks newer and more modern than most Fijian kitchens.

### Selected Photos from Aisea's Photovoice



In Aisea's photovoice, he identified the ways that he tries to make his wife feel special. For example, they go out on dates, spend Sundays out at the beach, walking the dog and so forth. He takes on many of the household chores, such as folding the laundry, which is unusual in most homes. He also hosts his church youth group at his home. It is also interesting to note that material belongings in some of these shots including his fancy headphones for listening to music on an MP3 Player as well as the laptops on the dining table that the youth group members are playing with.

