THE SOUTH PACIFIC
RON CROCOMBE
University of the South Pacific 2001

Copyright © Ron Crocombe, 2001

Cover Design and picture work: Tony Murrow
Proofreading: Mary Leano
CONTENTS

Preface 7
Acknowledgements 8
Chronology of main periods 9
Abbreviations 13
Spelling and naming 15
Where is the South Pacific? A note on geography, terms and meanings 16

PARAMETERS
1. Place: Environmental deterioration and enhancement 22
2. People: Moving and mixing 44
3. Health: More lives and longer, but problematic fitness 75

PATTERNS
4. Language: How many of today’s 1,200 will survive? 101
5. Society: Networks of commitment getting wider but shallower 116
6. Culture: An evolving synthesis of unity in diversity 146

PERCEPTIONS
7. Creativity: Reconciling the soul with the wallet 183
8. Belief: More choice and less certainty in religions, philosophies, values and ethics 205
9. Education: Guidelines from where and for what? 237
10. Information: Moulding and creating perceptions, power and wealth 269

PROPERTY
11. Tenures: Constraints and opportunities relating to land and water 295
12. Production: From village subsistence to global markets 322
13. Commerce: Selling services and sovereignty 344
14. Restructuring: Shrinking governments in stagnant economies 382

POWER
15. Government: Traditional and colonial politics 412
16. Independence: Leadership from within 438
18. Birth-right: The politics of accident of birth—first-born sons, first-arrived races and the rising status of women 483
19. Corruption: Stemming the rot 512
20. Governance: The nature and quality of national cohesion 542
21. Coercion: More military, police and other security forces 564
22. Regionalism: Cooperation, competition, conflict, and assimilation into bigger regions 591
23. Globalism: Being small in a big world 627

PROSPECTS
24. Futures: Widening choices in the 21st century 657

APPENDICES
1. Basic facts about Pacific Islands nations and territories 684
2. Pacific Islands regional organizations and services: A selection of names, functions, addresses and Internet sites 710
3. Journals from the Pacific Islands. 712
4. Films relevant to Pacific studies 713
Bibliography 714
Index. 755
PREFACE

This book outlines the main trends in the past, present and possible futures of the diverse and stimulating societies of the world's most scattered region. The main focus is on the Pacific Islands today, but much of what happens today is conditioned in varying degrees by what happened yesterday, both within the Pacific and beyond. Much of what happens tomorrow will be influenced by forces which are already in operation. The final section includes basic facts about each Pacific Islands nation or territory; a select list of Pacific Islands organizations and services; notes on journals and films relevant to Pacific studies; a bibliography and index. The chapters aim to be self-contained, so that readers interested in particular topics can go straight to them.

Ron Crocombe
Box 309 Rarotonga
COOK ISLANDS
rone @ oyster.net.ck