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THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JEFFREY T. CLARK TO SĀMOAN ARCHAEOLOGY

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The archaeology of Sāmoa, especially American Samoa, has seen significant gains in the past two decades. The foundation for these were laid by a number of individuals, but the contributions of Jeffrey Clark are of particular importance given his long-term focus on the region. He has conducted research on every island of American Samoa, one of few individuals to have done so. He also has been instrumental in maintaining a focus on settlement systems, based on the pioneering work of Roger Green and Janet Davidson on ‘Upolu and Savai‘i, fundamentally shaping the practice of archaeology in the archipelago. Through this research, he has provided the baseline for the cultural sequence of American Samoa and highlighted the importance of landscape evolution to understanding human settlement patterns.

While perhaps best known for his work in the Sāmoan Archipelago, Jeff has also made contributions beyond the archipelago, conducting field research in Hawai‘i (Clark 1986) and Fiji (Clark and Cole 1997), while publishing on such topics as digital applications in archaeology, the settlement of Oceania (Clark 1991; Clark and Kelly 1993), and the practice of archaeology in the region (Clark and Terrell 1978). It is through the latter topic that Jeff entered the academic community of Pacific archaeology. The article “Archaeology in Oceania” provided a springboard for much of his later work, though it was initially met with much controversy. In fact, it was through the critique of this article that Jeff met Roger Green and then developed a friendship stemming from shared interests in Sāmoan landscapes.

Shortly after this article’s appearance, Jeff’s career in Sāmoa began while he was employed at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum. His first project contributed to the development of the American Samoa Preservation Office by recording and providing site inventory numbers for known archaeological sites in the territory (Clark 1980). In fact, among his most notable legacies is the creation of the American Samoa site-numbering system, which is an adaptation of the Smithsonian trinomial. While the number of sites now known for American Samoa has ballooned since the beginning of cultural-resource management in the territory, the initial ones identified by Jeff have certainly structured research, especially in Manu‘a. As a side note, during

his initial survey Jeff did not record the Va'oto site, inferring that it would be too disturbed to provide reliable information. Subsequently, however, Jeff has gone on to excavate at the site for six field seasons and continues to publish on the material found during these excavations (Clark *et al.* 2016)

In the mid- to late 1980s, three large archaeological projects were undertaken in American Samoa at the behest of the budding Historic Preservation Office. William Ayers was tasked with investigating western Tutuila, Patrick Kirch and Terry Hunt with Manu'a, and Jeff and David Herdrich with eastern Tutuila. The use of a settlement-system approach during the Eastern Tutuila Project has provided a model for subsequent landscape-based investigations of Sāmoan Islands (Clark and Herdrich 1993). The machete scar that Jeff now proudly displays on his knee, which



Jeff Clark (second from the left, standing), in the early days of his career, with other Bishop Museum Anthropology staff in Konia Hall, 1980. Photo courtesy of Patrick Kirch.

is without fail always blamed on one of the co-authors (DH), speaks to the physicality of those surveys on the ridges of eastern Tutuila, a topic of much amusement.¹ Herdrich's (1991) research on Sāmoan star mounds was a direct result of this project, as were subsequent follow-on studies (Herdrich and Clark 1993). It was also from this project that subsequent research originated in 'Aoa Valley, which has contributed to our understanding of landscape change, sea-level fluctuations and human settlement patterns. Indeed, the coring program initiated at 'Aoa remains one of the best-documented cases of landscape evolution in the region (Clark and Michlovic 1996). This research figured prominently in Jeff's 1996 synthesis of Sāmoan prehistory, which was the first to be completed for the archipelago as a whole (Clark 1996).

After undertaking two field seasons in the Manu'a Group, in 1997 and 1999, and writing a synthetic chapter on the archaeology of Fiji/West Polynesia in 2003 (Burley and Clark 2003), Jeff's interest shifted to digital applications in archaeology and even included co-authoring a paper for *Nature* on Neanderthal dexterity (Niewoehner *et al.* 2003). Much of this research engaged audiences outside of the Pacific, with a regional focus more closely aligned with his academic position at North Dakota State University, a position he held from 1983 to 2017. Highlights include the digital modelling of a Plains Indian village site for the North Dakota State Heritage Center and the development of a video game, *Native Dancer*, which capitalised on the popularity of the video game *Dance Dance Revolution*. This latter effort sought to combat Native American obesity while also promoting Native American cultural practices. However, even while focused on digital archaeology, Jeff maintained an active Oceanic materials laboratory. This allowed students to gain hands-on experience in lab research, which fostered another generation of students interested in Oceania, including one of the co-authors (SQ).

It was not until 2010 that Jeff returned to Polynesian field work, focusing on the islands of Ofu and Olosega. This research is ongoing and has benefitted from several recent technological developments in the discipline that bridge his interests in Oceanic prehistory and digital applications in archaeology. The Manu'a Islands project is among the first to make extensive use of LiDAR imagery for prospection and analysis (Quintus *et al.* 2015), and has also used the dating of branch coral for the construction of high-precision chronologies (Clark *et al.* 2016). While Jeff has now retired from teaching, he continues to be active in publication (Quintus and Clark 2016, forthcoming).

Research Contributions

The articles in this volume are organised around several of Jeff's research foci as well as the major research themes outlined by him for the archipelago (Clark 1996). While these interests were quite diverse, ranging from the semiotic components of monumental architecture to the construction of local Delta R (ΔR) values for the radiocarbon dating of shell, this volume is structured around changes in Sāmoan cultural sea- and landscapes. These include indigenous Sāmoan use of both during pre and post-European times.

Four articles in this volume deal explicitly with settlement patterns and settlement systems. Since Jeff's pioneering work in eastern Tutuila, several substantive, theoretical and methodological developments have modified our understanding of the Sāmoan past. Most notably, knowledge of the extent and chronology of coastal landscape evolution has progressed considerably since Jeff's original work in 'Aoa. This theme, along with many others, is discussed by Morrison and colleagues who have developed an archipelago-wide database to examine changing settlement patterns over time. Likewise, developments in large-scale surveying have led to an increased ability to document expansive human modification to the environment, a key concern of the Eastern Tutuila Project (Clark and Herdrich 1993). Day, Jackmond *et al.*, and Quintus all make use of LiDAR datasets to explore the distribution of archaeological remains across large landscapes. In each case, previously unknown archaeological landscapes are documented, the implications of which are both more extensive land-use patterns and higher population sizes in the past. Certainly, the construction of a chronology for the newly uncovered large-scale settlement zones will be an important research step in the coming decade. Within these landscapes star mounds play an important role. As one of the only forms of monumental architecture found in American Samoa, the star mound has been highlighted as a particularly useful part of the archaeological record for understanding political organisation and social inequality (Herdrich and Clark 1993). Since the early work on this feature class, the number of known star mounds has increased considerably, with large numbers in proximity being found on Manono and Olosega. In this issue, Sand and colleagues report in detail on examples from Manono Island and provide additional chronological and morphological data that grows our understanding. As Jackmond *et al.* document, these features are highly visible in imagery derived from LiDAR datasets, and the use of LiDAR will likely provide additional insights into the variation in form and function of these unique features. While these papers are geared toward the pre-European past in the archipelago, the cultural landscape of Sāmoa continues to change. In our final paper, Van Tilburg and colleagues (including Herdrich) describe the development and use of the *fautasi* (traditional Sāmoan longboats), one of the more unique innovations of contemporary Sāmoa.

This special issue recognises and builds on Jeff's many contributions to Sāmoan archaeology and Pacific studies at large. We are all appreciative of Jeff's enthusiasm for Sāmoan archaeology as well as his collegial nature, great sense of humour, exceptional mentorship and long-lasting friendship. From his attempts to blindly identify multiple single-malt scotches during field work, one of his most stinging failures, to his thought-provoking discussions during conference dinners, we have all enjoyed and benefited professionally and personally from Jeff's joyful personality and good company.

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NOTE

1. Jeff: Hey, Siapai, what are we going to do to that ridge? Siapai: We are going to *kill* it, Jeff! Jeff: That's right, Siapai, we are going to *kiilllll* it!!

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