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Rarotonga, Cook Islands  
fieldnotes

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I did not sleep well last night because the roosters around here kept crowing all night long. Whoever said roosters only crow at the crack of dawn never was here, because they started crowing about 2am and kept it up constantly.

This morning I went on a wonderful hike with T. up into the mountains. he expertly led me thru dense jungle, carefully avoiding thorned bushes and wasps nests. It was so steep at times that I could not believe I was doing this. This kind of adventure in the woods is what I used to do as a kid his age. We stopped off for a rest on the way up, and had a wonderful time. Then we got to the top and sat on a clearing of volcanic rock. It was a magnificent view of the coastline and the village far below. We ate lunch there, which I had brought along. Coming down, we met T.'s cousin M. age 14, who was feeding his pigs and caring for his baby brother. We picked mangos off the trees for the pigs, and ate some ourselves. They were delicious. Then M. scampered up a coconut tree, and threw down several for us to drink. He husked them by use of a double pointed stick which he stuck into the ground, then threw the coconut onto it to tear off the husk. Then when it was husked he took a bushknife and expertly cracked open the top so I could drink it. T. filled my knapsack up with mangoes, and I headed back home.

T. followed me for a ways, and we talked about his father who is a fisherman. He will take his motorboat out to sea everytime he can save up \$54 NZ (ca. \$27 US) to pay for the "petrol" (gas), and T. goes with him. I asked when he was going out again, and he did not know because his father does not have the cash now. I suggested that I would be able to pay half of the cost of gas if he and his father took me along on the trip. T. seemed very interested in this, and said he would speak to his father about it. If they can go out fishing, and get a good catch, they can make about \$350 NZ in fish sales from that one trip. T. wants to be a fisherman like his father when he grows up. I asked him if he has any other interests for another kind of job, and he did not seem to have any idea. He doesn't seem particularly interested in his school, despite my attempts to encourage him to study hard.

By early afternoon it was murderously hot, so I went home, took a cold shower and a nap. In the evening I went to Metua's cafe where a local dance group was sponsoring a feast and dance. A few tourists were present, but mostly it was local people. An excellent buffet dinner for \$10 NZ, plus the show. I smiled at a young man and remarked on his nice haircut. He later came over and started talking with me. almost the first question he asked me was "Are you a Christian?" I said no, I was a Buddhist, and asked him if he had ever heard of the Buddhist religion. He said yes, but then went on to talk about other things. I don't get the sense that he was particularly interested in my religious ideology. Instead, it was almost like he was asking if I was a good person. After more talking, he invited me to eat with his friends (boys age 11 - 17).

After answering alot of their questions about Los Angeles (they knew of gangs, rap singer Vanilla Ice, and that Hollywood is where movies are made). The fact that I had met moviestar Michael J. Fox seemed to impress them. I asked them if they knew any "le-le" (berdache), and they said they knew of some. I asked how can you tell if a person is le-le. They said, if they grow their hair long like a woman, paint their fingernails, wear earrings and lipstick, and act femininely (they demonstrated by doing limp-wristed shoulder-shaking effeminate movements that would be instantly recognizable to an American). Yet none of this was done in a negative way. I asked if the le-le liked sex with men or women, and they said "men and boys. Le-le know how to give boys a lot of pleasure." One of the boys (age 11), who was a dancer, asked me if I had a girlfriend. When I said no, he said, "Me either. I just like boys." I said, "I'm the same way." Privately, I asked him if he had ever had sex with a le-le. He said, "no, because I am still a children." I asked him how old he would be before he would start having sex. He said, "I don't know, probably a couple more years." Sex seems to be seen as something good and natural here; not the kind of condemnation seen among Americans.

As we ate, I noticed a rather queenie young man (ca. age 20) with an earring but otherwise dressed as a man. I asked my host if that person was a "le-le". He said, "I don't know him. I'd have to see the way he walks; that's the way you can tell." I said, "But he's not wearing lipstick or fingernail polish, and his hair is short." He said, "Well, he might be partly le-le." [ie: a person can be somewhat le-le, and does not have to take on the entire feminine dress. There are gradations of le-le, like "queenliness" or "effeminacy" in English. Everyone seems to recognize that these persons have sex with males, but they all seem to interact comfortably with them around, and don't seem to be bothered by them in any way. Later, I tried to meet this queenie man, but though he smiled at me he did not seem interested in getting to know me further. I've noticed here that the effeminate ones are not forthcoming at all; either they are shy, or they expect the more masculine males to cruise them. I really want to try to talk with one of them, but no luck so far.

When the dance began, two dance troupes performed. One was the junior group (age 11-14) and the other was the senior group (age ca. 15-20). Even in the junior group, the boys danced very seductively with the girls, with hip movements simulating intercourse and very close together. The fact that the kids were doing dance styles taught to them by adults, and under adult supervision, indicates that Rarotonga is a much more sex-positive culture.

Yet, after all this male-female sensual dancing, the four male senior dancers (all very attractive young men; none noticeably effeminate) came out and did a dance by themselves. They were wearing only small grass skirts, and their chests glistened with sweat. They paired up, held hands, and danced as couples, with the same suggestive sensual dancing with each other as they

had done earlier with the female dancers. This dance was unmistakably sexual, and the crowd (all ages of children and adults) loved it. The elderly lady announcer said over the microphone "Oooh, nasty boys!" Then she laughed. Her comment could have been taken in a condemnatory way, but I don't think so. Her laugh, and the fact that she had choreographed the dance, suggested rather a sublime acceptance -- and even fascination with -- male-male eroticism. It seems genuinely integrated as part of their culture.

After the dance was over, I walked over to the Banana Court, the most popular bar in town. I was wondering how I was going to get home, since I had missed the last bus at 10pm, when I saw a handsome young man (ca age 18) sitting on his motorcycle. As I smiled at him, he said friendly, "Where are you going?" I said I was looking for a way home. It turned out he lives only a couple of blocks away from me, so he offered to ride me home. On the way, he asked me if I was married or had a girlfriend. I said no, and asked if he did. He said no, and I said "good." As we rode along, with me behind him on the motorcycle and firmly holding him around the waist, I let my hand wander. I could feel he had a nice firm chest and stomach. When we got home I asked if he wanted to come in for a visit, and he said OK but he had only a short time because he had to get home. We came inside and I offered him something to drink but he said no. I started rubbing his legs, and he motioned to the bed. As we went over, he took off his shirt and shorts. It was clear what he wanted. As he stood there in his bikini underwear, with his very handsome body glistening in the moonlight shining in the window, he started getting a hardon. I pulled off his bikini to see this beautiful really huge cock. He lay down on the bed, and I started sucking him. Without a sound or a movement on his part, he almost immediately flooded my throat with an immense load of sweet-tasting cum. It was totally delicious. I sucked him a bit more, but he apologized and said he really had to leave. He asked if I could spare a couple dollars for petrol, and promised he would return Monday morning at 8 am. He did not do any reciprocation at all, but I felt complete enjoyment of this brief experience. I doubt that he defines himself as gay or homosexual in any way, and he does not seem effeminate at all. After he left, I fell asleep in total satisfaction for a wonderful day.