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# Perspectives of Print Media in Samoa: Considering Varying Viewpoints on its Role in Society

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*SIT Study Abroad*

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**Perspectives of Print Media in Samoa:**  
Considering Varying Viewpoints on its Role in Society

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SIT Samoa: Fall 2012

### **Abstract**

This research investigates the role of the print media in Samoa by identifying several elements that affect peoples' perception of the industry. The paper examines how the changes in Samoa's society have influenced the industry, evaluates the impact of culture and considers the issue of press freedom. It looks into the need for stronger investigative reporting and the lack of enthusiasm in young people to pursue journalism as a profession. It concludes by providing insight into the future of print media in Samoa. The research draws upon personal interviews as well as print and online secondary sources. Surveys were also distributed to gather the opinions and perspectives of everyday Samoans. It was found that while the industry has a significant impact on society, the people and their way of life greatly influence the newspaper as well. Print media has come a long way since its beginnings, but further education of both the journalists and the public is needed to ensure its survival.

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## Introduction

The written word has often been recognized as the agent of revolutionary change in human communication. Its introduction drastically modified the ways in which society functioned, for it provided oral cultures with a means of recording their traditions and legends. As societies grew and developed, the use for the written word changed alongside them. Originally playing a singular role, print today serves a wealth of purposes, and the newspaper has become one of the most widely used mediums to carry out these out.

The newspaper greatly accelerated the spread of information and has become responsible for increasing awareness and conveying personal messages. It has the power to bring about change, influence public opinion and draw out a range of emotions from its readers. The significance of this influence, however, depends on the society where the paper is printed. One cannot accurately sum up the role of newspaper on a global scale, for its role and impact vary greatly depending on the cultural values, political structure and many other varying factors of a specific society.

In studying the role of print media in Samoa, it is important to consider the viewpoints of both the journalists and the public and why people perceive the industry the way that they do. This can be done by examining the role that culture plays in the functioning of the industry, the history of the print media in Samoa, the industry's impact on society and how press freedom has played a part in this impact. The nature and criticisms of the reporting, the quality of the journalism education programs and the future of the industry in Samoa are also important considerations.

Before diving into these issues, the newspapers currently in print in Samoa need to be acknowledged. The independent newspapers include *The Samoa Observer*, *Newsline* and *Le Weekender*. *The Samoa Observer*, founded in 1978, is published in both English and Samoan. It is the only daily newspaper in Samoa, printing about 5,000 copies each day. *Newsline* is a smaller publication owned by Mataelina Pio Sioa. It is published Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays in English only. *Le Weekender* is

new to the newspaper scene, choosing to publish all stories in Samoan. It is owned by Merita Huch. The oldest periodical publication in Samoa is the government-owned *Savali* newspaper, which was founded in 1906 by the German government. The editor is Tupuola Terry Tavita.

The objectives of this research are to determine how people define the role and responsibility of the print media in Samoa, why people perceive the industry the way that they do and what factors impact these definitions and perceptions. The research begins by examining the impact of culture on the industry, followed by the way in which the role of the media has changed over time. It goes on to discuss media's impact on society, the issue of press freedom, the lack of investigative reporting and the possibilities of pursuing journalism as a career. The paper concludes with some insight into the future of print media in Samoa.

This study is relevant because of the ever-changing nature of print media and the ongoing fight for press freedom in Samoa. Although the industry has experienced significant progress, work remains to be done to improve the reporting and bring about greater appreciation for its role in society. Finally, the continuous influx of new technologies makes this research especially relevant, for these insights into the industry need to be understood to ensure its long-term survival.

### **Methodology**

As a student majoring in Print and Online Journalism, the topic of media has always been of interest to this writer. Having only ever studied the workings of the industry in America, pursuing this subject of research in Samoa has given her insight into the many elements that determine how the industry functions in different societies. Conducting this research in a least developed country (LDC) has also given the writer a chance to gain a new perspective on print media in America.

The process began with a look into the history of the newspaper, radio and television in Samoa and the presence of all three in today's society. This research involved a survey conducted in Lotofaga,

the results of which showed an underwhelming interest in the newspaper as the medium through which to receive the news. In addition, every respondent said they believe everything they read in the newspaper, sparking further interest into the traditional aspects of society that foster this no-questioning attitude. The topic was ultimately narrowed to the role of the print media, specifically newspapers, in Samoa.

Research for this project was conducted in Samoa from November 8 to November 30. Primary and secondary sources were both consulted, although in-person interviews provided the majority of the information referenced in the paper. Interviews conducted in newspaper and media offices, on university campuses and around the Apia area were done in person, for body-language, emphasis and extended conversations are necessary elements of an interview.

This paper does not attempt to speak for all journalists in Samoa or all readers of the newspaper. Due to time constraints and the vast scope of the public voice, not all opinions are represented in this research. Personal interest and passion for the subject inherently affects how the paper is written, although a conscious effort was made to display the research in an objective manner.

### **The Impact of Culture**

The print media industry in Samoa cannot be understood without taking the *fa'aSamoa*, the Samoan way of life, into consideration. Culture impacts how the industry operates in Samoa, both in terms of how it affects perceptions of the media but also the ways in which it impacts the role of the journalist.

The idea of the newspaper itself is not an easily accepted concept because of the criticism it puts forth. "In Samoan culture, there's very little acceptance that criticism is a good thing," said Penny Schoeffel, an anthropologist at the National University of Samoa (NUS). "It's a different worldview" (Interview 11/22/12). Despite the fact that newspapers are based on universal principles of freedom of



expression, respect for opinion and transfer of information, the cultural element limits these principles in the media and how opinions are articulated. “I guess one could say that the expressions that define newspapers are culturally provocative,” said Malama Meleisea, director of Samoa Studies program at NUS. “The language that is used necessarily evokes people’s animosity to something. Human beings hate or love everywhere, and the way they demonstrate those elements and principles are different” (Interview 11/22/12). Nora Tumua, head of the journalism department at NUS, agrees that the way journalism is implemented into society depends on the society’s cultural values. “How you present the news depends on what culture you are in” (Interview 11/21/12).

Newspapers are in many ways confrontational, another attribute not part of the Samoan culture. Samoan society is based on relations between family, extended family and titles, and maintaining this relation is of high importance, said parliamentarian and former editor of the *Samoa Observer* Afamasaga Toleafoa. Respect for authority is also valued, and many Samoans find it difficult to accept the questioning element of a newspaper. “On one level, (Samoans) want the news. And on the other level, they say it’s very un-Samoan, it’s very disrespectful. So you’ve got those mixed messages, those mixed views” (Interview 11/12/12).

In some cases, authority figures in the villages are altogether shocked by what is printed because they fail to understand that the papers don’t have to ask permission before printing something truthful. When people do get angered, the editor is often forced to apologize whether he has wronged or not because he risks losing his status in the village, and the villages can even ban reporters or editors from the village if they refuse to apologize. The editor has to be especially careful if the incident occurs in his/her own village. Often times, the whole village council will arrive at the newspaper office to demand an apology (Keresoma 11/16/12).

The negative perceptions many people have of the print media today stem from this clash between the newspaper’s values of questioning and criticizing and Samoa’s values of respect and

relationships. Journalism is also not seen as an honorable profession because of the state of the press in the 1980s, when the standard of the industry was *fagogo*, or folklores. During this time, there was a lack of education for journalists, and papers closed due to low quality and unethical reporting. Many journalists were threatened by villages if their stories were thought to be degrading, and the draconian leadership was very close-minded to the local media (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 36). “The practice of journalism back in the days was even worse than in the last 20 years,” said Misa Vicky Lepou, journalism lecturer at the National University of Samoa. “The knowledge then was too low about the real value of journalism” (Interview 11/14/12).

Meleisea finds the gossip-y element of the news still present in today’s society, and many people continue to think of the newspaper as cheap work and refer to journalists as “*faikakala*,” or gossip-mongers. “I think the whole industry of creating stories, “*faikakala*,” is pretty strong. I think a lot of stories are based on that. And that’s where the journalists are at fault” (Interview 11/22/12). But Mataafa Keni Lesa, editor of the *Samoa Observer*, says he is no longer affected by being called a *faikakala*, and Lagi Keresoma, an experienced reporter, simply retorts with a smart remark. “They call me *faikakala* and I say, maybe I am a *faikakala*, but you’re a worse *faikakala* because you’re reading everything I’m putting in the paper” (Interview 11/16/12).<sup>1</sup>

The inability for Samoans to accept criticism as part of the newspaper’s role leads many to believe that the reporting and questioning done by journalists inevitably results in negative reviews. Zaskiya Lesa, who recently started working for the *Samoa Observer* and plans to study journalism in New Zealand next year, consistently finds herself exasperated because her requests for interviews are often turned down. “If they say no, you have to respect that. The most important thing here is respect” (Interview 11/10/12). Wood Salele, parliamentarian and member of the Tautua party, argues that being suspicious of media needs to be eliminated in order for transparency to be achieved. “Sometimes, you

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<sup>1</sup>*Faikakala* is the term used in the spoken Samoan language. The word *faitatala* is used in writing.

can be treated as a friend, but in most cases the media doesn't get that. They seem to be looking at you like you are a spy" (Interview 11/19/12).

The problems that culture poses go beyond finding someone who will speak to the newspaper. After entering a village and conducting an interview, journalists will often be offered a *sua*, or traditional gift. This gift can take the form of food, money or even a fine mat. Although the *sua* is a cultural formality, not a bribe, journalists hesitate to accept these gifts because they believe it will affect the write up of their story, as it is unethical to receive gifts of such magnitude. If they turn the gift down, however, it is a sign of disrespect. "There are times that we have to reject them, and that's when whoever is the orator calls us names and says that is very disrespectful, this is the Samoan culture and when you're given something you take it" (Keresoma 11/10/12). Some media organizations, including the *Samoa Observer*, have instituted a rule that these gifts are not to be accepted. "How can (you) write a story independently when you were given a gift?" (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 38).

Even though many village council leaders feel disrespected when their *sua* is not accepted, the negative perceptions of journalists are disintegrating, allowing journalists to overcome cultural barriers and collect information by following the correct protocol. If the journalists are respectful, they can do more than just get the story and run. "You go sit down with the chiefs, orators, and then you discuss and make sure they understand. And when you report, you make sure you give a balanced report" (Salele 11/19/12).

Journalists must also be careful not to use culture as an excuse for poor reporting, because in many conversations the term is abused. "I never liked bringing the idea of culture into the media," said Tupuola Terry Tavita, editor of *Savali*. "Once you bring culture into it, you could come up with all sorts of excuses" (Interview 11/22/12). Apulu Lance Polu, founder of Talamua Media, believes that both the journalists and authority figures use culture as smokescreen. "(The journalists) bring that issue up so if

they make a mistake, then they say oh no, we were barred. And then vice versa, it has been used by those in power in traditional society to hide behind” (Interview 11/21/12).

Although journalists continue to make mistakes and use culture to justify their reporting or lack thereof, the level of journalism is a lot higher now than it was in the past. The media changes as society changes, and the society has changed significantly over the last 50 years. At the time of independence, the role of the media was to disseminate information. But now, with huge leaps in education, people can get their information from other sources and have come to reconsider media’s role in society (Meleisea 11/22/12).

### **The Role of the Media**

The newspaper’s role in Samoan society has changed overtime as the population has become more educated, democracy has been adopted and technology has been introduced. At its beginnings, the role of the media was to inform people of Lands and Titles court cases, new *matai* (chiefly) titles and government news. These topics filled the first public newspaper, which was printed by the German Government shortly after the London Missionary Society set up local printing presses at Malua in the 1850s (Dunlop 1985: 43). The church produced their own newspapers, which focused on conversion and retention. Individual *aiga* (family) papers were also printed to record family, community and national events.

People writing were a ‘town group,’ -- an elite group made up of the educated, the pastors and pastors wives and those who held good jobs. In the 1960s, however, overseas students began urging people to stop accepting what they were taught unquestioningly. In the same decade, *The South Seas Star* began printing stories for its readers, becoming the first ‘magazine’ section in a Samoan paper. This addition altered the role of the media, for people began lining up to buy the paper to follow the story, not to read the news (Dunlop 1985: 46). At independence in 1962, two newspapers existed. These

included the *Samoa Times*, an independent newspaper, and *Savali*, established by the German administration in 1906. When examining the role of media, it is necessary to recognize the difference between the role of the *Savali* newspaper and independent newspapers.

The *Savali* consists of both *Savali Samoa*, a monthly paper with a circulation of about 6,000, and *Savali Weekly*, a smaller weekly paper. The monthly paper contains Lands and Titles information as well as development stories and articles on social issues. "I have my own role to play, which is disseminating government information and promoting government policy. We try our best to balance, we just have a different interpretation of balance" (Tavita 11/22/12).

Meleisea disagrees and maintains that *Savali* pushes the positive things about what the government has done, not very much in terms of what the problems are. "*Savali* is a government mouthpiece. It was always the case when it was first set up and still is. And the people working there are public servants and they appear to report what the government tells them to report" (Interview 11/22/12).

Although *Savali's* role has stayed the same, the role of the independent media has changed significantly in the past 30 years and will continue to change for years to come. In the years following independence, the newspaper was viewed by many as a means of getting information, and people bought the newspaper simply because they were attracted to the written word. "I grew up here in Samoa in the context of the field of media which was quite basic or rudimentary," said Tili Afamasaga, an independent consultant currently working with the Ministry of Education. "There wasn't much of a consciousness of what's the media, what's media's role should be and what it was doing" (Interview 11/12/12).

The role of the print media also varies within the independent newspaper industry -- *Le Weekender's* role, for example, is very different from the *Samoa Observer's* role. *Le Weekender* targets the local Samoan and prints in the native language, while the *Observer* prints primarily in English and has

its principal readership in Apia and overseas. Merita Huch, founder and editor of *Le Weekender*, explained that part of her responsibility is coming up with new angles and stories that have not been printed during the week. “Because we come out in the weekend, we have to make sure that we come up with stories that have not been considered or are already overexposed. We cannot avoid the fact that there are a lot of political issues that we need to cover, so we have to make sure that the angles are different” (Interview 10/08/12).

Uncovering and reporting on these political issues is a role taken very seriously by the *Samoa Observer*. From its beginnings, it has strived to perform its role as a watchdog to the best of its ability, according to Zaskiya. “The reason why the paper started was to end corruption. I feel like the job of the journalists is to bring out the truth, be the voice of the people that are too afraid to speak up and force their opinion on things” (Interview 11/10/12).

The presence of corruption makes it necessary for the media organizations to be strong and fulfill their responsibilities to society. “We’re responsible to the community, and it’s our role to try and educate about what’s happening. You talk to the average Samoan on the street about corruption, they probably don’t care. (But) corruption really does hurt the most vulnerable members of the community” (Lesa 11/13/12). The watchdog role hasn’t always been a very popular role, however, and although many people now understand its importance, newspapers continue to be criticized by the government and the public. “The government always sees us unfair. But of course it’s our job to question what they do, so it always comes out as if we’re picking on them” (Huch 10/08/12).

Many journalists and educators would like to educate the public about the role of the media and rid its negative stigma. Lesa believes education is needed for people to understand why the *Samoa Observer* prints the stories it does. “This is a country that doesn’t know a lot about the media. That is why we here at the *Observer* are regarded as anti-government all the time, when we’re really trying to do what the media is supposed to do” (Interview 11/13/12). In addition to being seen as anti-

government, Lepou finds many view it as simply a service providing pictures and entertainment to the community. “Of course everyone sees (the media), but you need to bring attention of the people, the Samoan people, (that) this is more than taking your picture or having you talk on the radio for paid programs. This is a tool you can use. And to really sink into that *fa’asamoa*” (Interview 11/14/12).

As this understanding infiltrates the Samoan society, current perceptions of the print media industry vary greatly. One on hand, a certain reader base values the paper deeply and respects the journalism profession. Cedric Schuster, parliamentarian and member of the Tautua party, sees the media as “the ear of the country,” (Interview 11/09/12). Toleafoa, on the other hand, has noticed less interest in papers. “A lot of people will tell you, ‘I don’t read the newspaper.’ Quite proudly. But then again, they don’t read anything. They think it’s a virtue” (Interview 11/12/12).

Zaskiya experienced these negative perceptions when she told her family she was interested in pursuing journalism as a career, and Huch shared similar sentiments. “It is not a highly respected job. Not many people like it. But they can’t live without it, can they?” (Huch 10/08/12). And some people believe journalism is a female-only occupation. “They don’t see it as a job for both sexes, they see it as a job for girls to go into.” (Moore 11/22/12).

In some instances, this negativity is well-deserved. “I think there are lots of people who get harmed by unfair reporting. And the paper seems to be contented with just, okay, we’ve done wrong, we’ll send an apology. And seem to think that was all that was needed” (Meleisea 11/22/12). Those in the industry are all too familiar with receiving criticism, but argue that often it is unwarranted.

Lesa says the *Observer* is honest and upfront about how it operates and feels that apologizing for a misquote is an appropriate way of undoing any harm. Anyone looking to get into the industry must develop a thick skin, because it isn’t possible to please everybody. “You give your opinion and expect people to fire back, and that’s how it works” (Interview 11/13/12). Afamasaga recognizes Lesa’s commitment to upholding the role of the journalist despite the possibility of being victimized. “I think

the editor has tried to set an example for the news and journalists. To say, you should go all the way out to look for the truth and nothing but the truth and don't be scared about saying it" (Interview 11/12/12).

Despite being editor of what many refer to as propaganda, Tavita recognizes that the media needs to let the public make up their own mind, not to tell them what to think. "I don't think journalism should be motivated to pander to public opinion and public sympathy. I don't want people to get all their information from the government. I don't think that's good for democracy and free thinking and all of that" (Interview 11/22/12).

In saying this, Tavita recognizes the power of the media. Print media has become a highly influential machine in society with the ability to impact public opinion. The media can now not only inform people, but it can change people's perceptions and minds. "Knowledge is power. The accumulation of knowledge can be used as a great tool for humanity to progress the civilization. Unfortunately, you can also use these tools for the disadvantage of everybody. And I think some in the media around the world misuse this responsibility" (Salele 11/19/12). The print media must be careful, therefore, to take its role and responsibilities seriously.

### **Impact on Society**

In studying the impact of newspapers on society, it is important to recognize who is being impacted and how this impact varies in different sections of society. Many feel that getting the independent newspapers to the villages is crucial, because the villagers' main source of news comes from the government. "Whatever they get in *Savali* is the Bible to them" (Schuster 11/09/12). Because of this, greater responsibility is put on the independent media to fact-check their stories and provide accurate information. "In a small society like Samoa, opinions tend to polarize very quickly. I think the



media does sway opinions. A lot of people here, apart from TV and radio, the newspaper is still the only source of information that's available" (Meleisea 11/22/12).

Not everyone finds the independent media to have a great effect on the village population, however. Schoeffel argues that lack of readership in the villages has allowed the media to gain its freedom. "I think the reason why successive parliaments have not tried to stifle the print media is because they know their constituency is in the villages. And the village people are not influenced by what newspapers say" (Interview 11/22/12).

One aspect of the print media that limits accessibility is the dominance of the English language and the difficulty in translating it to Samoan. Whereas English "has an usually small gap between its written and spoken forms," Samoa has always been an oral society without a written language (Tunstall, 1977: 127). "Dialogue is always face to face. Whereas the media, except for TV, it's not face to face. So there's a loss of directness, meaning, things that can make the media the power it is. As a political tool, a social tool, however you use it" (Toleafoa 11/12/12).

Despite this, newspapers have played a key role in the development of Samoan society. "The media has done a great service to Samoa's political development. Over the years in Samoa, it has really done a great service to humanity, to our civilization as a whole" (Salele 11/19/12). Meleisea agrees. "I think media has certainly played their part in the development of freedom of expression and democratic processes in the country" (Interview 11/22/12).

When compared to other forms of media, such as the television, radio and Internet, print media's responsibility to the public is emphasized even more. While the television scratches the surface by reporting the immediate news, the newspapers are able to go in depth with the reporting and answer the who, what, when, where and why. And in addition to going in depth, the newspaper reporters spend more time with their interviewees. "We sit down with people, we get their background

information. We want to know not only about their story, but also about he/she as a person” (Zaskiya 11/10/12).

The independent newspapers are least influenced by the government and provide an outlet for balanced opinions, Schuster said. But Toleafoa finds that not all papers are immune to government influence. “There are definitely those who are pro-government because the papers depend on government advertising, news, even in some cases direct government support. They give them the news. That’s reflected in it. It’s quite clear.” Toleafoa is confident, however, that change is happening. “I think (young people) will be starting to make some noises. Exercising some rights. Questioning government, questioning authority. Having opinions” (Interview 11/12/12).

People have started making these noises by going to the newspaper with their opinions. Lesa sees this increased interaction with the public as a direct result of the culture of fear present in Samoa. People who are afraid to speak out turn to the newspaper to get their views out, but then ask to remain anonymous. Although Lesa is typically opposed to publishing anonymous pieces, he understands why people are hesitant to publish their names. “They’re so terrified to have their real names because some of them work for the government. And a lot of them, they actually have people whose bread and butter depends on the government.” Lesa admits that name or no name, the newspaper depends on this relationship with the readers. “To be quite honest, we wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for those kind of people” (Interview 11/10/12).

The reasons why people turn to the media range from a desire to change public opinion to a petty personal complaint. Because of this, varying viewpoints exist regarding the value of a “community” paper. Afamasaga finds that the struggles the industry has faced over the years have brought about a realization of the importance of a good, solid and honest media, and this in turn has inspired everyday people to use the media. Salele similarly finds the media to be a “friendly tool” for everyone, and people that aren’t happy with decision making can use the media to express their view

(Interview 11/19/12). Polu agrees that the practice of the public using the media is a good thing, but that the media needs to teach the public how to speak responsibly. “It’s one thing to air your views openly, (it’s another) to say something in a responsible manner without offending somebody or without causing a riot between two families back at the village” (Interview 11/21/12).

Many who aren’t as enthusiastic about the presence of the public’s contributions hope that this education comes quickly. Toleafoa finds that most of what is written is a complaint or criticism of little importance, but gets published in the paper to boost sales. “A lot of people will use the media to push personal agendas,” (Interview 11/12/12). Schoeffel agreed. “When the media looks like it’s being controversial, it’s actually just being very Samoan. It’s waving around stuff that somebody wants to have said” (Interview 11/22/12).

Marj Moore, former editor of the *Observer* and founder of the national short story competitions in Samoa, says many foreigners who read the paper are shocked by what the paper can get away with printing, for defamation and libel aren’t understood in Samoa the way they are in other countries. “My father was a (New Zealand) journalist and when he came back to Samoa, he’d read the paper and say my God, they’d be in court every day in New Zealand” (Interview 11/22/12).

Not too long ago, however, Samoan newspaper editors were facing charges in court. Although the newspapers in modern-day society are relatively free to print what they like, the print media industry in Samoa has not always experienced this amount of freedom. The journey from a society with a highly controlled and censored press to a relatively free and unrestricted one is important to examine when studying the role of the media in Samoa’s society.

### **The Issue of Press Freedom**

Press freedom is an issue relevant to all countries in the Pacific region and is one that has plagued these islands since the introduction of the written word. Samoa is no exception.

Since its founding in 1978, the *Samoa Observer* has had five lawsuits brought against it and won only half. These lawsuits cost the paper somewhere between \$200,000 and 400,000 Samoa Tala (WST). In the 17 years following its establishment, the Observer entered its “darkest period,” during which it faced pressure from the government for reporting on corruption and abuses of power (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 34). In a speech in 2007, Savea Sano Malifa, the editor in chief of the *Samoa Observer*, speculated why the government felt the need to censor.

In developing countries that are politically young, their leaders tend to become unprincipled at times, and want to forge ahead sooner and quicker than they should. In doing so, they cut corners, hack away at well-meaning but frustrating obstacles, and thereby create problems they don’t want the public to know about (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 34).

Major breakthroughs came with the induction of Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi as Prime Minister. He created a more open media environment and was given a Press Freedom Award from JAWS in 2004, although some say this was a strategy by JAWS to encourage him to continue being media-friendly (Jackson 11/21/12). The industry did experience more freedom following his induction, but Keresoma felt the award was premature. “The feedback from the public was positive. But within our own industry, we had a big argument over that. There’s no need to give him that. We still have to get rid of the Printers and Publishers Act. (When) that act is out, then we can give him the awards. But not now” (Interview 11/10/12).

The Printers and Publishers Act 1992 is just one of the several laws that impose restrictions on the print media industry in Samoa. The Act requires journalists to reveal their sources of information to the government and anyone suing the media organization, thereby frightening sources from speaking with the media on topics such as political corruption. The government also decided public funds would pay for any legal costs incurred by government ministers or senior officials who sue the news media. Savea is firmly opposed to this policy. “The government should...discontinue its policy that allows taxpayers to pay for the legal fees incurred by government leaders, who claim they’ve been defamed. As

this policy frustrates efforts by the press to inquire into alleged misconduct by public officials, it must be removed.” The Defamation Act is another law still in place, and includes provisions for civil and criminal libel including the offense of Criminal Libel, which “is widely regarded as a relic from the colonial past” (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 36).

The political status of Samoa overtime also effects press freedom. Before Samoa gained its independence in 1962, *matai* made all the decisions and rules by which his family abided by, and everyone obeyed without question. The custodians of knowledge were not newspaper editors but rather the *tulafale*, or orators, and the recipients of this knowledge were specially selected people referred to as the *o e nainai* (Tupua 2005: 63). The introduction of modern democracy changed many of these traditional aspects of the Samoan society. “We are now driven by foreign-influenced constitutions that emphasize alien concepts such as human rights, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and so on,” wrote Savea Sano Malifa in an article in the Pacific Journalism Review. “While these are inalienable human values, they also diminish the *matai*’s culturally-inherited authority, since under this new form of governance, the non-*matai* is just as human and important as the *matai* himself (Malifa 2010: 39).”

Malifa has been seen by many as the face of the fight for press freedom, and his newspaper, the *Samoa Observer*, has gained a reputation for being a watchdog of the government and giving a voice to the public. “For the media in Samoa, it has gone through ups and downs and at some stages the government really coming down hard. But I’m really thankful for Savea, the editor of the *Observer*. He stood up for what he believed. And I think he has benefitted the whole of the information-sharing in Samoa, the media services” (Salele 11/19/12). Toleafoa also recognizes the important role that the *Observer* has played in society, especially during a time when people were hesitant to voice their opinions due to a lack of opportunities in Samoa. “As Samoa’s political system became more dominated by one party, (the *Samoa Observer*) really became a voice which could actually speak up against

government policy. It's been able to be a real media in the sense of journalists being free, maybe not always fair, but free" (Interview 11/12/12). But this freedom won't be long lived if journalists stray from their role in society. "As journalists, we should never neglect our role as watchdogs of our governments, since the moment we do, the little freedom we're enjoying today is likely to be taken away from us" (Savea 2010: 46).

Many people who have lived through the fight for press freedom recognize that progress and change have occurred. "When we first joined the media here, there was hardly anything about the opposition because the pressure was always there" (Huch 10/08/12). But although a more open relationship exists between the media and the government than 20 years ago, the process is slow-going due to negative perceptions of many people, especially villagers who had unfortunate experiences with the media. They feel betrayed and are stubborn to forgive. But there is hope. "I think the culture, the church, it's becoming more and more open now to good information and allowing the media to access those" (Salele 11/19/12).

In fact, journalists in Samoa experience more press freedom than in many other places in the world and can publish many stories here "that you wouldn't even with the freedom that you get in America and the freedom that you get in Australia or New Zealand" (Huch 10/08/12). Journalists can no longer use press freedom as an excuse for poor reporting. In some instances, journalists shy away from stories they should report. "It's like, we'd really love to write about that, but I can't," Moore said, referring to an excuse she often hears journalists make. "I think it's rubbish" (Interview 11/22/12). Meleisea finds it similarly distasteful, but for the opposite reason. He thinks the poor reporting stems from reporters thinking they can say whatever they want, and subsequently are not doing enough fact-checking. "My own opinion is that lofty goal of freedom of expression is being abused to some extent. Bad reporting and non-investigative reporting and non-analytical reporting, people are saying well, it's

freedom of expression, I can say whatever I want to say. And that certainly needs to be addressed”

(Interview 11/22/12).

### **Examining Investigative Reporting**

One of the biggest criticisms of the print media industry in Samoa is the lack of strong investigative pieces. Although journalists place the blame on the lack of newsworthy happenings, many feel that the journalists are at fault for not uncovering and exposing significant news items. “All they are doing is regurgitation, writing down what people say. Their questioning, their interviewing is just pathetic” (Schuster 11/09/12). Salele has also recognized a need for investigative reporting, especially in terms of government matters. “The government has been in power for many many years, and there’s a lot of secrecy that’s still happening, particularly in the Cabinet. And us leaders, politicians, parliamentarians, I think we need to encourage it, because it keeps us honest” (Interview 11/19/12).

Angela Jowitt, senior librarian at USP Alafua, finds herself frustrated by the overall lack of reporting and effort put into the stories. She’s noticed that the problem arises both when journalists go out to report a story but also when stories are sent into the paper from the public. “They might go in there...and make it sound like they interviewed you, and put quote marks around certain sentences, but pretty much what you send to them they publish. And if a reporter comes to an event that you’re having, they don’t actually write (the story) themselves, they just take the speech and publish that” (Interview 11/15/12). Editor Lesa acknowledges this issue and hopes to improve it. He constantly emphasizes to his reporters the need for “more” (Interview 11/13/12).

A concern is who will do the investigative reporting. Sometimes NUS graduates have difficulty accessing the jobs in the industry, so potentially qualified journalists pursue career paths in public relations because it’s easier and pays better, Lesa said. Others who are untrained in the field drift into media because of a shortage of other employment opportunities. “My own experience is that many do not have that fire in their belly that makes the real journalist. A lot of them are very poorly trained,

minimal training, and that's reflected in their view of what the media does, its role, its responsibilities, its powers and also the way they do their work: impartiality, reporting the truth, certainly it's reflected in the quality of the reporting" (Toleafoa 11/12/12).

Schuster notes that capable journalists move into editor and senior management positions and no longer serve as reporters. "They are not out doing the beats, grinding out the information. It's the young ones that are going out there and writing quick stories to print in the paper" (Interview 11/09/12). And the "young ones" aren't just writing one story per day. Often they are expected to write upwards of three to have enough news to fill the paper. With this type of responsibility, even the skilled and capable reporters don't have time to develop an investigative piece. In addition, stories are sometimes hurried and not carefully researched. "Because of the small number of staff that we have, we get a very superficial side of the story. I've been trying to talk to the reporters about rounding out the stories and using opinions from both sides, but I also understand the constraints they're under to get three stories" (Moore 11/22/12). Newspaper readers have found balanced reporting to be a weakness as well.

One of the largest issues plaguing the industry is capacity. Papers are criticized for a lack of local news, which is often a direct result of limited staff. "If you look at the local news, it's always a small part. So you end up with mostly the news coming from around the town area where they can be reached by reporters" (Toleafoa 11/12/12). As Williams-Lahari notes in the Fragile Freedom report, "With the majority of Pacific Islanders classed as rural and away from the capital centers, this effectively leaves most audience distanced from the spheres of direct contact with mainstream media" (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 5). Afamasaga agrees that the large sections of international news results from a lack of reporters, because it takes less people and time to pick stories off the Internet.

Lepou also sees this as a concern. "If you go out (to the villages), there are lots and lots of stories. And people need attention. The opinions of how people think of Samoa, what they are doing in



everyday life, you can't imagine how much that would do for the people themselves" (Interview 11/14/12). But not everyone agrees that there are endless stories to tell. Schuster believes the lack of controversial news in Samoa is not the fault of the reporters. "I feel for the journalists when you are stretching your brains to find a story to write each day," (Interview 11/09/12).

Another criticism is the failure of journalists to pursue a story through to the end, opting instead for limited quotes and not pursuing the depths of an issue. Afamasaga says she often wonders about follow-up on issues raised by reporters. Moore admits that the *Samoa Observer* sometimes blasts sensational or exciting stories to the public and then forgets about them. "We need to try harder to bring things to some kind of conclusion, good or bad, whatever it is" (Interview 11/22/12).

In addition to capacity, poor pay and working conditions undermine the ability of the media and make it difficult to attract and retain experienced journalists (Fragile Freedom Report 2012:6). Schoeffel believes it is these elements, not the lack of interest, that's hurting the industry's numbers. "I think it's very poorly paid, but I think there are quite a lot of people here who are interested" (Interview 11/22/12).

Finally, some stories are never published due to journalists censoring the stories themselves. "There are still ...reporters that need to get over that insecurity, the fear of what will happen if they actually go the whole way" (Afamasaga 11/12/12). In many cases, it is the journalists, not the government, that stand in the way of their own freedom. "Often they are also the biggest obstacle to reporting the truth, reporting through a filter of internalized cultural, gendered and yes, economic values in conflict with one another" (Fragile Freedom Report 2012:5).

The journalists, who have been taught not to question authority, are wary of being too outspoken and asking questions. Because of the Samoan cultural "*va*," (respected space), students and reporters will not always ask pertinent questions. The courage to question decisions and think critically does not come naturally in a culture where children are brought up to be quiet and respectful. "Young

people here are not encouraged to question or think too much for themselves. It's the way the system is, the culture. Authority, respecting authority, respecting elders, those things, in the end, do provide (for) young people that are quite apathetic about issues" (Toleafoa 11/12/12). This respect is mirrored in many Pacific islands. "Cultural respect for leaders and the powerful in Pacific communities is a powerful deterrent for journalists out to expose corruption in their small communities" (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 5).

Afamasaga believes investigative reporting needs to be part of the journalism training program. "They have to be trained to be investigative reporters. To get some of the young people out of the constraints of the culture in which they are over-respectful of authority" (Interview, 11/12/12). The solution is more complex than improving the training program at NUS, however. The first step is getting young people enthusiastic about journalism as a career.

### **Pursuing Journalism as a Career**

Getting young people interested in journalism starts before they enter school. Journalism requires a passion for writing and reading, which many children never develop this because they don't enjoy these activities. Parents can ensure their children appreciate reading from an early age and teachers can encourage and develop reading skills and creative and critical thinking instead of memorizing and regurgitating material. "(The students) think of reading as a means to get where you want to go. Just do the textbook, muddle your way through that, spew it back to the teacher on your exam" (Moore 11/22/12).

Many students at the National University of Samoa may have reading ages of 12 or less (Moore 11/22/12). These are the students who often end up in the journalism program because they are ineligible for scholarships and cannot qualify for their first and second choice subjects. Because of their lack of interest in the field, many do not complete the program, which reflects poorly on the instructors.

“Every year we have a huge withdrawal rate, which is seen by the industry as a failure rate” (Lepou 11/14/12).

The department has worked to identify reasons for decreased enrollment and low success rate. The primary factors include failure to pay tuition fees, poor attendance, attitude and unpreparedness, non-submission of assignments and the quality of students. Many of these factors hold true for all of NUS. “The university tries from the beginning to bring awareness to the parents (of) the priorities. You would ask them to pay your fees, get your stationery, buy your textbook. But if there is a *fa'alavelave* (Samoan celebration) they can do that 24/7. They will go out of their way to look for money” (Lepou 11/14/12). The other factors can only be addressed by enrolling stronger and more interested students. “They have to identify good linguistic students, from both Samoan and English, because (journalism) is an art, I tell you,” Salele said.

Plans are in place to improve the program and market it to qualified students with an interest in the profession. The entry level for the program will be raised, and a review team will identify students with the highest chances of succeeding and excelling in the program. Polu, a member of this team, insists that the team needs to look more deeply at the ability of the students and be able to identify raw talent. “I know of some very good journalists, award winning journalists that get rejected from everywhere, and then find their passion is writing. Some of them hardly went to school, but they have natural talent. So it’s a matter of identifying that, not just looking at the (test) results” (Interview 11/21/12). And Cherelle Jackson, editor of *Apia Financial Review*, believes the teachers must be reviewed as well. “This (improvement process) requires a major shift in...actual teaching, to ensure that what students are learning are valid to the industry” (Interview 11/21/12).

The Department of Media and Communication is also planning promotional activities to educate students and their parents about the benefits of pursuing a career in journalism. Zaskiya agrees that awareness programs in schools will encourage students to explore the field of journalism, which she

feels is underrated by her peers. "It feels like I'm the only one on this whole island that actually wants to do it. But I think it's the fact that it's not really advertised out there. The majority of my friends and classmates (want to) become doctors or lawyers. (Journalism) is not something people consider because it doesn't seem like a valuable option compared to those two majors" (Interview 11/10/12). Schoeffel finds the lack of interest to be an ongoing cycle. "The kids who are fluent in English have higher aspirations than to be a journalist. Or if they do degrees in journalism, then they become overqualified for the print media here" (Interview 11/22/12).

Moore hopes to encourage secondary schools to print their own newspapers, which she feels will encourage journalism as a potential career path and prompt students to start reading the newspaper at a younger age. A knowledge and interest in the field are prerequisites to developing the passion needed to be a successful journalist. "You've got to have the heart for it. If someone wants to do it because of a career-base type of instinct, I don't think you will be successful. You have to like it, you have to love it, you have to enjoy it. And then that will bring out the best in you" (Salele 11/19/12). Zaskiya hopes that her passion will rub off on her peers. "As a journalist, it feels like I'm not only working for the newspaper, but I'm working with every story that I'm writing. All the skills that you learn throughout your years, I learn every day (Interview 11/10/12)." Tavita views journalism as a craft rather than a profession. "You have to wake up in the morning and you want to get the story by the end of the day. You have to have that drive" (Interview 11/22/12).

Fostering this passion comes down to enrolling higher-quality students in the NUS program and improving the program itself. Currently, some editors, including Lesa, do not accept NUS graduates. "I just refuse to accept anybody because in the past, we've taken on some kids, but boy it's hard work" (Interview 11/13/12). Moore disapproves of this approach, arguing that both the program and the industry are at fault. "I think the media should help as well, instead of saying the students that come out of the School of Journalism, we never hire them. We haven't really contributed, we've maybe judged

from a distance. I'm sure we can work better together" (Interview 11/22/12). Lepou agrees that the relationship between the program and the industry is strained and needs to be improved.

In addition to sharing the responsibility of the training with industry professionals, the instructors need to re-consider the skills to emphasize. A Cultural Reporting course, which Lepou teaches in Samoan, has been highly regarded. "We can use the language to do journalism in Samoa (and) to really deliver the key message" (Lepou 11/14/12). Using the Samoan language in journalism will help eliminate the inconsistency between the English and Samoan stories in the newspaper. "In general, you look at the Samoan side of stories, there's practically no analysis. There's a little bit more analysis in the English language, there are certainly a lot more editorial and opinion pieces in the English language than you find in the Samoan language. So there is a discrepancy which needs to be addressed by the media" (Meleisea 11/22/12). Schoeffel makes a similar argument. "I remember when I was really young, getting punched in the face by Savea, because I said to him, you put all the hot news in English, but you never put it in Samoan" (Interview 11/22/12).

Journalists emphasize the need for students to consider journalism in a cultural context as well. Ame Sene-Tanielu, news editor of Radio Polynesia Limited, realized the need for such courses after being chased down a village road while investigating rape allegations. "With the series of threats she experienced, she recalled the importance of having journalists trained in the importance of cultural reporting, taking into account the sensitivity of these issues" (Fragile Freedom Report 2012: 36).

Other, more basic skills need to be taught as well, including constructing a sentence and identifying what information goes into the lead of the story. "Some students who come out after two years, they can't even tell a story. The way you tell the story is the way you should write it. But they can't seem to grasp that" (Polu 11/21/12).

Finally, one of the most crucial skills journalists need to graduate with is how to write investigative pieces. As mentioned earlier, many journalists find it difficult to challenge authority and

struggle to dig deep into the reporting process. But the investigative and hard-hitting pieces are what the public wants to read, and journalists need to find ways to get these into the newspaper if they want to maintain their readership in a digitalized world.

### **The Future of Print Media**

Finding ways to distinguish itself from other mediums is becoming increasingly necessary for the print media to ensure its long-term survival. Lesa thinks it will take emphasizing the importance of detail in order for his newspaper to provide something other mediums can't. "The only reason why people want to go into print media is details. If you don't have details, you're in trouble" (Interview 11/10/12). Because the newspaper is no longer the only source of information people have access to, the reporting must be improved and unique angles and perspectives need to be considered.

Lepou says more research and better communication with the public are needed. She also says the industry needs to aid rather than criticize the program, and she plans for the management at NUS to start being more open-minded towards journalism students as well (Interview 11/14/12). Schuster is hopeful that the print media will be able to find ways to become more accessible to everyone in Samoa. "A lot of people now are used to buying newspapers daily or every second day. That can be done in rural areas. Bring down the cost." (Interview 11/09/12).

There has also been conversation about the creation of a media council, which would be made up of members of the public and would address issues such as libel and slander. Professional journalists also continue to push for the removal of the aforementioned restrictive policies stifling media freedom. "(Tuilaepa) can start by repealing the Publishers and Printers Act 1992, declare defunct the policy allowing public funds to be used for the legal fees incurred by government leaders suing newspapers for defamation, and throw out the ancient British law of criminal libel from Samoa's law books. That would be a big improvement" (Savea 2010: 45).

In addition, journalists are pushing for the adoption of the Freedom of Information Act, which would give the public access to information relating to government decisions and ensure the protection of the rights of free speech. Not everyone is certain the outcomes of its implementation would be beneficial, however. Schuster worries journalists would abuse their access to this information. "When you look (at) paparazzi imposing on people's private places, that's not what I want to see here. If people are doing wrong, we need to get that information. But if people are not doing anything but media just wants to take it to create news because we don't have a lot of news, that's what I do not want to see," (Schuster 11/09/12). Jackson, who is supportive of FOI legislation, realizes the implications and says that implementation may not necessarily give media access to public information. "(An) Australian case clearly shows delaying tactics and obstructionist policies that ensures that any journalist who does seek information under the FOI legislation is not only delayed, but discouraged" (Interview 11/21/2012).

Lepou's concern stems from students' increased interest in other mediums through which to present this news and their infatuation with the multimedia aspects of journalism, such as filming, shooting and editing. "Most students, they prefer to do the practical side of the training rather than the writing. Which really is a risk to the print media, because writing in Samoa, it's not a passion" (Interview 11/14/12). Huch finds the public to be equally disinterested. "There's a tendency now where people prefer the radio and television because it's easier, and a lot of people are getting lazy reading" (Interview 10/08/12).

Lesa is fully aware of the threats posed by the influx of online technology but has managed to view the Internet as an advantage. He has used the Internet to considerably expand his overseas readership and is hoping to continue to develop other ways through which to offer news. Polu also believes that presenting the news in a variety of ways will be the key to survival, but he isn't looking to simply stay in business – his aspirations go as far as promoting diversity in an increasingly unified world. The media, he says, is responsible for this type of promotion. "We need to accentuate our differences so

that the good things about our society and how it benefits a global society and humanity come out much more. Things that we do well, other people can learn from” (Interview 11/21/12).

Samoa is unique in that its print industry is growing in a time of Internet domination. Many believe that the Internet doesn’t pose a threat to the print media due to the geographic isolation of Samoa and limited access to Internet. “We’ve probably got another 5, 10 years here before we get to the state that the US and other developed countries where media is accessible (are at)” (Schuster 11/09/12). Huch argues that the survival of her newspaper is a prime example of the continuing interest in print. “We’re fairly new to the industry, but it’s another addition to the print media that most people thought was out with online services available” (Interview 10/08/12). And with new technologies for learning constantly being introduced, the written medium today “is critical to the preservation of indigenous languages” (Tupua 2005: 66).

Many have confidence that regardless of Internet’s impact, the need for print media will always exist due to its dedicated audiences. One of these audiences is the elderly. “In the village, the older people in particular read. They will look for the paper no matter how old the paper would be. So the paper is still very popular out there in the villages” (Huch 10/08/12). Twenty years ago, it would have been very rare to see anybody sitting down reading the paper in public. But now it’s happening more and more – people on their porch, reading the paper while they are waiting for the bus.

Another key audience is the Apia residents. “We have a newspaper culture here in Apia. People who get up in the morning, go out to the store and buy their milk and their bread and the newspaper,” (Tavita 11/22/12). Maintenance of these audiences, improvement in journalism education, better quality reporting and increased accessibility will no doubt move the print media in a positive direction. But what is most important is that the newspaper is continually perceived as a necessary part of the Samoan society. “I think there is change happening. And the media has now become an accepted part. People are understanding the role of the newspapers” (Toleafoa 11/12/12).



### Discussion of Findings

After conducting multiple interviews, consulting a variety of secondary sources and organizing the information into several themes, it has become clear to the writer that the factors discussed are interrelated and all contribute to defining the role of the print media.

The research shows that Samoans generate their definition based on their personal experience with the industry, ability to access to the newspaper, commitment to traditional Samoan values, views towards democracy, relevant education and recognition that the industry has undergone significant change and will continue to. Journalists have a different view of the role of the media from the public, and even within the industry this definition varies. Nonetheless, all journalists interviewed acknowledge their great responsibility to the public due to the newspaper's indisputable ability to affect change and influence opinion.

But there's still a long way to go. Talking to local Samoans from many villages confirms most Samoans respect journalism as a profession but do not believe everything they read in the paper. Some believe unquestioningly what they see on the TV or hear on the radio and therefore find the conflicting reports in the newspaper to be confusing. Others have noticed that the translation from English to Samoan misconstrues stories, and still others have picked up on the biases in many articles.

Journalists who hope to develop in these areas and gain a more enthusiastic readership must identify the root of the problem. This is not an easy task. The criticisms plaguing the industry run in an ongoing cycle: the lack of interest in young people leads to unqualified and disinterested students at NUS, which in turn results in poor reporters who lack the skill of investigative reporting. These reporters cannot fulfill their duty to the public of providing accurate information and being watchdogs of the government. Additionally, certain aspects of the Samoan culture that put up barriers for journalists will always be a part of society.

Considering the many factors that go into defining the role of the media enabled the journalist to draw conclusions about the media on a global scale has brought this research full circle. As mentioned at the beginning of this study, the newspaper is based on universal principles. However, how the newspaper functions, how it is perceived and how it has and will influence society depends on the people printing the stories, those reading them and their way of life in their part of the world.

### **Conclusion**

Print media in Samoa has come a long way since its beginnings. The industry today experiences greater press freedom, a more educated and involved audience and an increasingly significant role in society. Fifty years ago, at the time of independence, the role of the media was to disseminate information. With advances in education and increased technology, people no longer have to rely on the newspaper for information, forcing the newspaper to reconsider its responsibility to the public.

The print media consider themselves responsible for educating the Samoan people on the happenings of society: whether it be a local wedding or a government scandal. Tailoring to what the public wants to read is crucial, for like any business, newspapers are in the business of making money.

Moving forward, both the journalists and the public need better appreciation and understanding of the role of the media. Journalists need formal training: how to investigate, how to give a fair report, how to interview people in a cultural context. They must guide themselves on principles and ethics. But the public needs educating as well in order to benefit from the service of the newspaper. They must be able to pick up a paper and look past the pictures. They must learn something from it.

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### Glossary of Terms

*Fa'asamoa*– Samoan way or culture

*Faitatala*–Someone who spreads gossip (in spoken language it is *faikakala*)

*Tusitala*– Story-teller or journalist

*Fagogo* – Folklores or tales told orally, usually at night by the elderly

*Sua* – A specially prepared gift for an honored guest

*Tulafale* – Orator

*O e nainai* –Recipients of knowledge

*Matai* - Chief

*Aiga*- Family

*Va*- Respected space

## Appendix I

### Sample Survey

I am a student at the University of the South Pacific in Alafua. I am studying print media in Samoa. All of your answers will be anonymous. Thank you for your time. If you have questions, please ask.

Village/Nu'u: \_\_\_\_\_ Age/Tausaga: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender/Ituaiga: \_\_\_\_\_ Job/Faigaluega \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your primary source of news?/Afai o lo'o 'e fia maua ni fa'amatalaga i mea o lo'o tutupu i Samoa ma le lalolagi o fea 'e te saili muamua iai?
2. Do you read any form of print media?'E te faitauina fa'amatalaga tusitusia?
  - a. If newspapers, which one/s?/ Afai 'e te faitauina nusipepa, o le a le pepa 'e te faitau ai?
  - b. If magazines, which one/s?/ Afai 'e te faitauina se makasini, o le a le makasini e te faitauina?
3. How often do you read a magazine or newspaper? (Circle your response)
 

Daily      3-4 times a week      1-2 times a week      1-2 times a month      Rarely      Never

'E fa'afia ona e faitauina se nusipepa po'o se makasini? Maka fa'alapotopoto le tali talafeagai o lo'o i lalo.

Aso taitasi, Fa'a 3-4 ile vaiaso, Fa'a 1-2 ile vaiaso, Fa'a 1-2 ile masina, Seasea lava, Leai se faitau.
4. What section of the newspaper do you enjoy most/read most often? Why?/ O le a le vaega o le nusipepe e sili ona e fia faitau ai? Aisea?
5. What do you see as the primary responsibility/role of the print media? I lou manatu, o le a tonu lava le galuega po'o le matafaioi foi a nusipepa?
6. What do you see as the biggest challenge/s facing the print media industry?/I sou iloa, o a faafitauli po'o luitau sili ona ogaoga o lo'o feagai ma nusipepa?
7. Do you believe what you read in the newspaper?/ 'E te talitonu i tala e te faitau ai ile nusipepa?
8. Do you respect journalism as a worthy profession?/ 'E taua le galuega o le au tusi tala ma faasalalauina o tala o mea o tutupu i lalolagi? Aisea?

## Appendix II

### Survey Results: American Samoa

25 people surveyed

<b>Age:</b>		<b>Gender:</b>		<b>Occupation:</b>	
18-29 (23)	92%	Female (14)	56%	Student (13)	52%
30-44 (1)	4%	Male (11)	44%	Unemployed (5)	20%
45-59 (1)	4%			No response (5)	20%
60+ (0)	0%			Teacher (1)	4%
				Freelance Writer (1)	4%

### Villages Represented:

Faleniū, Ilili (2), Leone, Pago Pago (5), Aunu'u, Malaeimi, Vaitogi, Tafuna (3), Faguitua, Masefau, Atu'u, Safala, Nuūulii, Fagaima, Matu'u, Fagaitua, Nasefau

### 1. What is your primary source of news?

- Newspaper (7) 28%
- No response (5) 20%
- Internet (4) 16%
- TV, Newspaper, Radio (2) 8%
- Internet, Newspaper, Radio (2) 8%
- TV (1) 4%
- TV, Newspaper (1) 4%
- Internet, Newspaper (1) 4%
- TV, Newspaper, Internet (1) 4%
- Internet and Oral (1) 4%

### 2. Do you read any form of print media?

- Yes, the newspaper (12) 48%
  - Yes, both newspapers and magazines (9) 36%
  - No (4) 16%
- a. If newspapers, which one?\*** (out of 21)
- Samoa News (21) 100%
  - Samoa Observer (3) 14%
  - Sports newspapers (2) 9.5%
  - Wallstreet Journal (1) 4.8%
- b. If magazines, which one?\*** (out of 9)
- Time magazine (4) 44%
  - Sports Illustrated (2) 22%

- People (2) 22%
- US Weekly (1) 11%
- Signs of Time (1) 11%
- US Weekly (1) 11%
- Popular Mechanics (1) 11%

### 3. How often do you read a magazine or newspaper?

- 3-4 times a week (9) 36%
- 1-2 times a week (7) 28%
- 1-2 times a month (4) 16%
- Daily (3) 12%
- Rarely (1) 4%
- Never (1) 4%

### 4. What section of the newspaper do you enjoy most/read most often?\*

- Sports (15) 60%
- Classifieds/Advertising (3) 12%
- Abby Lee/Dear Abby (2) 8%
- Political News (2) 8%
- Current Events (2) 8%
- Local news (2) 8%
- Court news (2) 8%
- Headlines/Front Page (2) 8%
- Letters to the Editor (1) 4%
- Job postings (1) 4%
- Birthday Star (1) 4%
- Horoscope (1) 4%
- Comics (1) 4%
- No response (1) 4%

### 5. What do you see as the primary responsibility/role of print media?

- To inform the public (13) 52%
- I don't know/no response (8) 32%
- To inform the public on international news (2) 8%
- One of the few main sources of the Samoan language (1) 4%
- To open lines of communication between government and public(1) 4%

### 6. What do you see as the biggest challenges facing the print media industry?\*

- I don't know/no response (9) 36%
- Giving out false/contradictory information (3) 12%
- They face no challenges (3) 12%
- Writing the news (2) 8%



- Criticism (2) 8%
- Censorship (2) 8%
- New technology (1) 4%
- Not enough information (1) 4%
- Cost of printing the paper (1) 4%
- Advertising (1) 4%
- People don't read (illiterate) (1) 4%
- Celebrities not being role models (too much skin shown) (1) 4%

**7. Do you believe what you read in the newspaper?**

- Sometimes/not all the time (12) 48%
- Yes (10) 40%
- No (3) 12%

**8. Do you respect journalism as a worthy profession?**

- Yes (21) 84%
- No (2) 8%
- Sometimes (1) 4%
- I don't know (1) 4%

\*Some respondents gave more than one answer, causing percentages to surpass 100.

### Appendix III

Survey Results: Samoa

25 people surveyed

<b>Age:</b>		<b>Gender:</b>		<b>Occupation:</b>	
30-44 (10)	40%	Female (15)	60%	Restaurant Employee (8)	32%
18-29 (8)	32%	Male (10)	40%	Handicraft Vendor (8)	32%
45-59 (5)	20%			Store Owner (3)	12%
60+ (2)	8%			Taxi Driver (2)	8%
				Security (2)	8%
				Tourism Sales (1)	4%
				Student (1)	4%

#### Villages Represented:

Alafua (3), Vaivase, Laulii (2), Nofoalii, Vaitele (5), Vailele (2), Fagalii, Lalovaea, Falefa, Fasito'o, Vailoa, Luatuanu'u, Apia, Letogo, Talimatau, Talimatau, Vaimea, Vai'ala

#### 1. What is your primary source of news?

- TV (10) 40%
- TV, Newspaper, Radio (6) 24%
- TV, Newspaper (3) 12%
- Radio (3) 12%
- Newspaper (2) 8%
- TV, Radio (1) 4%

#### 2. Do you read any form of print media?

- Yes, the newspaper (15) 60%
- Yes, both newspapers and magazines (8) 32%
- No (2) 8%

#### c. If newspapers, which one?\*(out of 23)

- Samoa Observer (22) 96%
- Sunday Observer (1) 4.3%
- Newslite (1) 4.3%

#### d. If magazines, which one? (out of 8)

- Women's Weekly (6) 75%
- Church publications (1) 12.5%
- Tourism publications (1) 12.5%

#### 3. How often do you read a magazine or newspaper?

• Daily (9)	36%
• 1-2 times a week (8)	32%
• Rarely (4)	16%
• 3-4 times a week (2)	8%
• 1-2 times a month (1)	4%
• Never (1)	4%

**4. What section of the newspaper do you enjoy most/read most often?\***

• Sports (7)	28%
• No response (6)	24%
• Horoscope (4)	16%
• Local news (3)	12%
• The whole newspaper (3)	12%
• Vacancy (2)	8%
• Editorial (2)	8%
• Business (1)	4%
• Puzzles (1)	4%
• Ad/Classifieds (1)	4%
• Front page (1)	4%
• War news (1)	4%
• Entertainment (1)	4%

**5. What do you see as the primary responsibility/role of print media?**

• To inform the public (12)	48%
• I don't know/no response (7)	28%
• To inform the public on international news (2)	8%
• To inform the public on happenings in the government (1)	4%
• To inform people about the economy (1)	4%
• To educate the public (1)	4%
• Gossip (1)	4%

**6. What do you see as the biggest challenges facing the print media industry?\***

• I don't know/no response (5)	20%
• Criticism (3)	12%
• Telling the truth (3)	12%
• Censorship (3)	12%
• Reporting on violence (2)	8%
• There are no challenges (2)	8%
• Lack of news in Samoan (1)	4%
• Lack of stories to tell (1)	4%
• Lack of interest (1)	4%
• Lack of advertisements (1)	4%

- Inconsistent with news on TV and radio (1) 4%
- People are now depending on Internet for news (1) 4%
- Design (1) 4%
- Lack of international news (1) 4%

**7. Do you believe what you read in the newspaper?**

- Sometimes/not all the time (11) 44%
- Yes (7) 28%
- No (7) 28%

**8. Do you respect journalism as a worthy profession?**

- Yes (19) 76%
- No (4) 16%
- Sometimes (2) 8%

\*Some respondents gave more than one answer, causing percentages to surpass 100.