

Lessons from Melanesia

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ABSTRACT Given increasing concerns about the future of "civilization," people wonder about how best to live. Cross cultural experience offer valuable insights into alternative modes of living. The author describes life on Tanna, Vanuatu in the South Pacific and points out several key concepts gained from field work, including self-subsistence, individualism balanced with collectivism, limited cooperation with the powers that be, distribution and exchange mechanisms, balance, conflict resolution, and environmental fit. These ideas and concepts may be useful in considerations about restructuring social patterns in other cultures.