

# Samoa (american samoa: paradise lost)

Business, Management



American Samoa: A Paradise Lost Discuss the dilemmas posed by implementing tourism in a traditional community. The film American Samoa: A Paradise Lost was released in 1969 in hue color. It revolves around the traditional life of the Polynesians of American Samoa. The Polynesians of that region are being challenged by the US who has the governing authority. The movie doesn't completely revolve around the ill will of the Americans, it extends beyond that, and touches those delicate areas where the distinction between evil intentions and collateral damage merge under the haze. For instance, the educational programs on television might be helpful for children in learning English rapidly however; there is a downside to this. The problem starts when values clash. The differences of values between the two cultures can't be undone with a snap of the figure, it takes time, while some values are never replaced as they are deeply rooted, and this is the dilemma shown in this sociological documentary when tourism is implemented in a traditional community.

Western philosophy revolves around independent thinking, to look at something without relevance, to observe and analyze something in the absence of a reference frame. This type of thinking and approach towards life cannot be imposed on the people that have been following another culture. Norms don't change overnight, and an attempt to do so can damage the social fabric. Samoa's culture lives and breathes by obeying authority, giving respect to elders and amending one's ways by considering family values. The Americans introduced to the Samoa's a different way of thinking. Their proposed way of life replaced values with money. They instilled the seed in their heads that they ' need' money and they need to think about

their own selves first instead of sacrificing things and ambitions for their families. Thus mutual interests remain no more and get replaced by personal gains (Allen, 1968).

Plastic people are replacing real people. Children of Samoa might be learning English language on the television but they are also told to keep their bright smiling face up for the tourists as they take their pictures (Allen, 1968).

Faking something for the onlookers is a new experience for the children, not something which is part of their culture.

The dynamics of Samoa island are little strange too, strange but very peaceful. The idyllic island has outlandish norms. The people here ignore family planning advice however they are completely into modern facilities like plumbing. The reason to highlight such traits is to only show that tourism in theory is completely harmless for the people and places. In fact it has helped deliver education in remote areas of the world. However, when something natural is twisted and tweaked without judging its pros and cons, a destructive path is taken. Allowing good plumbing is good but ignoring family planning is bad and tourism is expected to do just the right thing, not make matters worse.

As the documentary shows that Samoans are getting used to the Western culture. Children have finally learnt that they can grow up and do as they please, quite the opposite of their childhood instructions of obeying the authority and do as they are told to. The dilemma becomes much complicated when finances and economics come into play. The hut houses in Samoan had been destroyed in the storm but now they are replaced with all-weather houses that increase the protection of its inhabitants many folds.

However the people fail to understand that their houses have been provided by institutions (banks) that want the money back. Not only that, those institutions want the money back with interest.

The dilemma though complicated is not an impossible one. Taking the benefits of Western civilization and throwing away the anti-value termites that annihilate the core of people's beliefs, should be the solution. Tourism itself is not a dilemma, the intentions can be.

#### Work Cited

Allen, G. (1968, July 29). Paradise lost in Samoa? The Sydney Morning Herald, pp. 1-2.