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Book Review: B. Vila and C. Morris : Micronesian Blues: The Adventures of an American Cop in Paradise Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 2009. 298 pp. \$24.9. ISBN 978-1-581-60716-1

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International Criminal Justice Review 2011 21: 75
DOI: 10.1177/1057567710387893

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stalking is, the laws and procedures in place specifically in the Netherlands, and then easily walks through each of the studies analyzed through the straightforward structure of the book.

I would highly recommend Van der Aa's *Stalking in the Netherlands* for graduate level students and research professionals who are interested in the areas of domestic violence, intimate partner victimization, and stalking in general. Aspects of law, policy, and practice in regards to stalking are also explored and could prove to be useful to scholars in the social sciences.

B. Vila and C. Morris

Micronesian Blues: The Adventures of an American Cop in Paradise Boulder,
CO: Paladin Press, 2009. 298 pp. \$24.9. ISBN 978-1-581-60716-1

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From the fictional crimes of Hill Street to the crisis in Haiti, American policing has had an extensive and often high-profile presence around the globe over the past several decades. While law enforcement leaders have undoubtedly learned a great deal from international police missions, subsequent outcomes often remain disappointing. In recent months, persistent unrest and alleged police brutality in East Timor have served as an unfortunate example of this continuing trend. After years of international policing aid, the gap between domestic policing ideals and everyday policing practices in East Timor persists. By most accounts, current law enforcement efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan have proven equally problematic. A systematic design for democratic policing in developing nations remains elusive.

Bryan Vila and Cynthia Morris explore these challenges in their ethnographic chronicle *Micronesian Blues: The Adventures of an American Cop in Paradise*. Their writing is simultaneously instructive and entertaining as they recount Vila's work developing law enforcement capacity in the former U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Vila and Morris have done for community and multicultural policing what Klinger (2004) did for deadly force. That is to say they have provided a rich description of its application coupled with compelling and important lessons for training and policy. Anyone aiming to apply American policing in another nation should take this work seriously. Vila and Morris show that while western policing models have much to offer, systematic design cannot replace cultural respect, trust-building efforts, and effective and locally relevant management practices. They advocate the use of guiding principles and values rather than the adoption of prescriptive and internationally standardized policies and procedures.

The book is prefaced with a brief political history of Micronesia and American involvement in the South Pacific. The next 15 chapters chronologically highlight vignettes from Vila's 6 years in the Trust Territory. These chapters read with the rich detail and gentle wit of a travel novel. Vila's adventures are vivid—from amusing tales of island navigation and gastronomically challenging dinner parties to harrowing accounts of shoot-outs and standoffs. The book covers the full range of Vila's life in the islands. Underlying many of these narrative accounts are difficult and sometimes surprising reminders about the complexity of the relationship between policing, democracy, and local culture. Vila and Morris illustrate the importance of implementing policing changes as a collaborative and socially reflective process. For example, a seemingly simple question about arrest and punishment in the small, physically isolated island community of Kosrae raises difficult questions about how to integrate western legal practices with enduring island rituals and expectations.

Policing lessons emerge from each chapter as Vila's successes and missteps are recounted, and the text's narrative approach remains accessible for a broad audience. It is in the final chapter, presented as a postscript, that Vila and Morris present the training and policy takeaways from Vila's experience. These are crafted into 10 lessons and a concluding summation that link Vila's work in the South Pacific to current criminal justice scholarship and international policing challenges. In keeping with the rest of the text, these lessons are practical and accessible for both scholars and practitioners. For example, the first lesson "halfway measures don't work" (p. 257) connects Vila's experience in the South Pacific to literature on Iraq, to show how poorly funded and understaffed assistance efforts create frustration and impotency for fledgling forces. In some cases, their lessons herald critical conversations without delving into complex philosophical terrain. The seventh lesson states, "respect local customs without compromising core values or human rights" (p. 268). Although this potentially paradoxical challenge demands deeper analysis, the lesson serves to initiate an important and much needed discussion in law enforcement communities. Vila and Morris do a superb job of showing why policing should not—and ultimately cannot—ignore the socially constructed nature of law enforcement and justice.

As recently as the June 2010 National Institute of Justice Conference, scholars have debated the efficacy of contemporary policing models—information-led, community-oriented, and predictive among others—as somehow distinct from the social construction of professionalism, standards, and ethics in the law enforcement community. While this is a debate unto itself, Vila and Morris' review of the development of policing in Micronesia exemplifies the culturally embedded, interdependent, and geotemporal nature of policing. Their documentation of dramatic differences among expectations, norms, and standards across the South Pacific islands of Truk, Yap, Ponape, Saipan, Kosrae, Palau, and Kwajalein clearly explicates the need for a more socially constitutive approach to policing. One cannot look at a moment out of time, a model out of space, or a police agency outside of its community context and hope to discern some truth from that assessment. This is the bottom-line takeaway from Vila and Morris's book, and it may be why the former Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, endorsed it and articulated its relevance to current policing challenges in the Middle East. Ultimately, *Micronesian Blues* is most notable for its ability to move readers away from abstract democratic ideals and toward the concrete activities and consequences that real people face when they struggle with the everyday problems of democracy. For this reason alone, we are glad to see that the U.S. Army has recently added *Micronesian Blues* to its leadership reading list. We have also built this text into required reading for an upcoming course on Police in Contemporary Society, and we hope to see it emerge as standard reading in many criminal justice and police training programs throughout the United States.

Reference

Klinger, D. (2004). *Into the kill zone: A cop's eye view of deadly force*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

W. E. Vaughn

Murder Trials in Ireland, 1836–1914 Portland, Oregon: Four Courts Press, 2009.
x, 450 pp. \$70.00. ISBN 978-1846821585

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DOI: 10.1177/1057567710384801

In this unique historical work, W. E. Vaughn systematically examines the criminal justice process in 19th-century Ireland. To do this, Vaughn specifically analyzes murder trials that occurred during this time period. In the opening of the book, the author explains that he chose to focus on murder