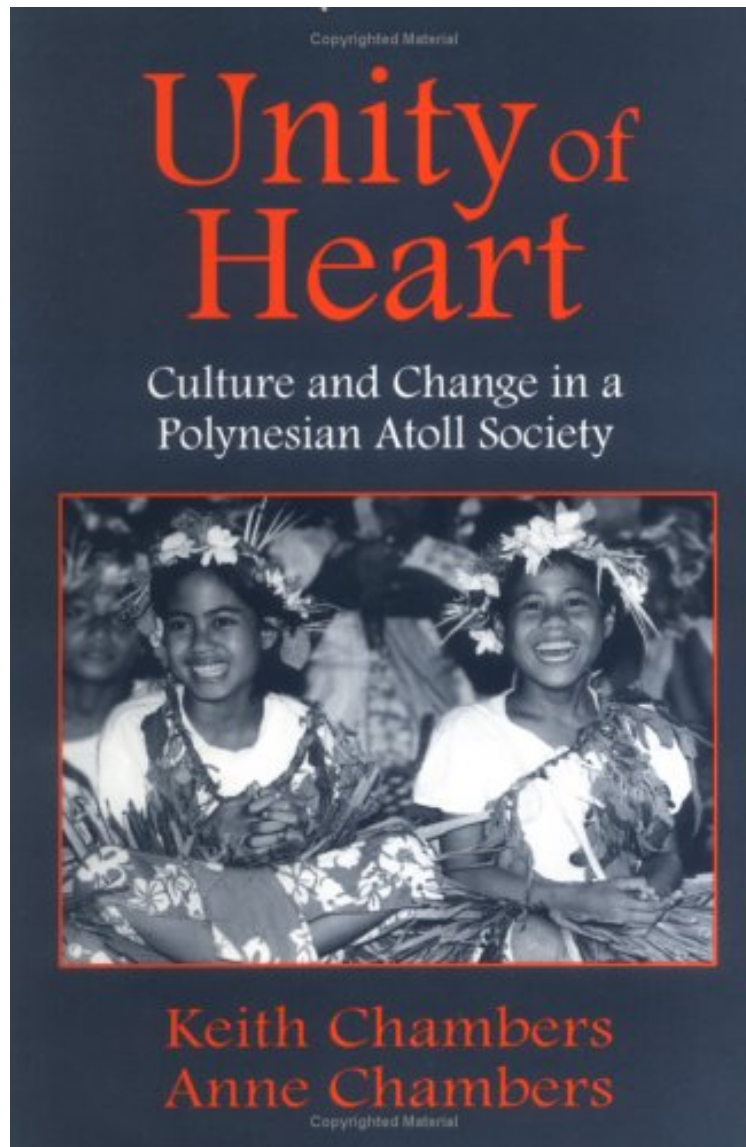


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Unity of Heart: Culture and Change in a Polynesian Atoll Society

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. For Those Who Enjoy Cultural AnthropologyBy J HannaI wish I had taken more cultural anthropology classes in college, but reading a book like Unity of the Heart is like taking a course you would pay thousands of dollars for today with rising tuition costs. It is a shame the authors have not

published more, because I really enjoyed their research on the people of Tuvalu. A must read for anyone who is interested in Pacific cultures.

A compelling portrait of a Polynesian island community caught up in a world of change Thousands of years ago, Polynesian voyagers discovered and settled Nanumea atoll, a tiny cluster of coral islets in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The community prospered, first evolving into a traditional culture finely tuned to the atoll's limited environment and then weathering new changes imposed by missionaries, colonial officials, and Westernization itself. Now one of eight separate island communities comprising the modern Pacific nation of Tuvalu, Nanumea faces new challenges: rising sea levels, globalization, and massive social and economic changes. Using personal stories that evoke the difficulties and excitement of fieldwork, Keith and Anne Chambers draw on more than twenty-five years of ethnographic research in Nanumea to craft an engaging account of Nanumean culture and social organization. Readers will come to appreciate how the community's intense sharing obligations, service-oriented chieftainship, and a flexible system of extensive kinship reckoning define a lifestyle that differs fundamentally from modern Western society. Caught up in the Internet revolution and the many forces for change sweeping the Pacific, Nanumeans look ahead to the twenty-first century with mixed feelings. Will the community's cultural treasure, its "unity of heart," be able to sustain them in the twenty-first century?

From the Inside Flap". . . an interesting blend of the old and the new in anthropology: in part it is classical ethnography and in part a reflexive account of fieldwork and the positioning of the ethnographers. As an undergraduate textbook this study would work well: the reflections on fieldwork make the densely packed ethnographic information accessible and engaging." *The Journal of The Royal Anthropological Institute* (Vol. 8, No. 2, June 2002)