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Hawaiian Performance Cartography of Kaua‘i
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The Task of an Educator is Supporting “Communities of Learners” as Transformative Practice
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Ke Ha‘a La Puna i ka Makani: (Puna Dances in the Breeze): Pele and Hi‘iaka Mo‘olelo and the Possibilities for Hawaiian Literary Analysis
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Hookulaiwi

A high-ranking ali`i of Kauai, Kaweleoleimakua (Kawelo) fell into disfavor with his family, particularly his cousins who were of senior genealogical lines. Kawelo’s oldest brother, who was named Kahueloku and who was stillborn in the form of a rat, provided Kawelo with advice and admonitions throughout his life. One day, Kahueloku overheard Kawelo’s cousins and their council planning to banish Kawelo, his older brother Kamalama, and his two uncles to Oahu. In order to avoid confrontation, Kahueloku advised Kawelo to leave Kauai before dawn of the next day. So the small group, accompanied by Kahueloku, boarded their canoe and headed for Oahu.

Within a few hours, the voyagers reached Po-kai on the Waianae coast of Oahu where they came upon a group of fishermen. The fishermen, recognizing that the group was from Kauai asked Kawelo and his companions when they had set out on their journey. Kawelo informed them that his party had left Kauai at the crowing of the second cock. Being that it was still mid-morning, the fishermen were incredulous to hear that anyone could have paddled across the channel in such a short period of time. Infuriated by their disbelief, Kawelo prepared to strike them with his paddle. However, Kahueloku advised him not to waste time. He reminded Kawelo to push on toward shore where he had more important business to attend to. The fishermen agreed, telling Kawelo that he should save his strength for the champions of Waianae who were waiting on the beach. So with a couple of strokes of his paddle, Kawelo’s canoe flew past the fishermen and quickly arrived on the shore.

Upon reaching the Waianae Coast, Kawelo and his party saw two large men standing on the beach. After a few initial words were exchanged, the two men suddenly and without provocation became confrontational. They told Kawelo and his party that they could not land at Waianae unless they were able to uproot the two coconut trees of Po-kai. Kawelo responded by asking them where he might find these two trees. The two men replied that the trees were standing right in front of him. When Kawelo heard this, he realized that they were baiting him, so he retaliated by telling them that coconut trees are recognizable by their nuts, something he failed to see on the two of them. He then asked how they preferred to be uprooted, one by one or both at once. The two men from Waianae were incensed by this response and one of them retaliated calling Kawelo a big head with no beard—not even peach fuzz. Enraged by this insult, Kawelo leapt from his canoe and struck one of the men in the head sending him sprawling on the beach with his feet shuddering and his body quivering. Upon witnessing this, the second man accused Kawelo of false cracking his brother. After an exchange of some fighting words, the second man tried to strike Kawelo, but Kawelo was too quick and beat his opponent to the punch. With a single blow to the head, the man was dispatched rather unceremoniously rolling onto the sand and into the water. At this point, a large mob had gathered at the scene and, as mobs tend to do, it moved in to attack Kawelo, the outsider. Just at that moment, the kahuna of Kaihikapu-a-Kakuhihewa (Kaihikapu, the ruling chief of Oahu) arrived carrying a black piglet. When they saw the black pig, those crowded around realized that the kahuna was there to find out whether Kawelo was of royal stature. Recognizing this, the mob quickly parted creating a clear path between the kahuna and Kawelo. After chanting a name chant for Kawelo’s family, the kahuna released the pig. Without hesitation, it ran directly to Kawelo’s feet and lay down. Everyone who witnessed this recognized it as a sign of Kawelo’s status as a high-ranking chief. The kahuna then approached Kawelo and knelt before him in recognition of his stature. As he rose, he issued an invitation for Kawelo to visit Kaihikapu in Lualualei.

After a relatively short stay on Oahu, Kawelo made a name for himself as an accomplished fighter. He also
helped the farmers of the area become more productive. His helpfulness made him a valuable person in the mind of Kahihikapu. Because of this, Kahihikapu offered him land at Kolekole to “hookulaui” or to create a new homeland for himself and his family. So Kawelo set about building his kauhale there. He chose to thatch the roofs with yellow mamo feathers and red oo feathers. When it was completed, his kauhale was truly a magnificent sight to behold.

The Lived Experiences of Indigenous Research

The story of Kawelo illustrates the idea of indigenous research as akin to the building of a homeland. For Kawelo, his journey involved dislocation, obstacles, perseverance, strength of character, acuity, revelations, industriousness, and, finally, location. Indigenous researchers have similar experiences as we strive to improve the world and make it a better place for our peoples. And, over time, the line between activist and researcher has become blurred. In her second edition of Decolonizing Research Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, Smith (2012, p. 218) discusses the relationship between activist and researcher;

In the last two decades the issues for indigenous activists and indigenous researchers have changed dramatically; the world has been and is in the process of being reconfigured in ways that simultaneously impact on indigenous peoples. These changes require further conversations about how research assists or hinders indigenous activism, how indigenous activism can undertake and employ more research in activist arguments, how the two activities of research and activism connect with the visions, aspirations and needs of indigenous communities, and how these two activities assist communities to live as indigenous communities that experience cultural sustainability as well as social, economic and political well-being.

Each article in this journal describes not only a unique journey, it also describes an effort to build a homeland of some form or another. We refer to these journeys as the “lived experiences” of indigenous peoples. The idea, then, that research is a lived experience that reflects the macrocosms and microcosms of indigenous well-being is encapsulated in each article. Eruera Stirling, a noted elder of Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou in Aotearoa, best describes lived experience as follows;

_The old men told us, study your descent lines, as numerous as the hairs upon your head. When you have gathered them together as a treasure for your mind, you may wear the three plumes, “te iho makauerau,” “te pareraukura,” and “te raukura” on your head. The men of learning said, understand the learning of your ancestors, so you can talk in the gatherings of the people. Hold fast to the knowledge of your kinship, and unite in the knot of mankind._ (Eruera Stirling as cited in A. Salmond, 1997, p. 513)

The lived experiences of Māori and Native Hawaiians in our own lands are similarly etched—Māori displacement through a breached treaty by the British government and Hawaiian displacement through an illegal overthrow of its constitutional monarchy by a group of treasonous citizens supported by the United States government. Indigenous stories, then, document our experiences of dislocation in many contexts, particularly in the area of research. Yet, amidst this dislocation, comes our perception of the reality of oppression, not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but rather as a challenging situation that can be transformed (Freire, 1970). We believe in the possibilities that research holds for everyone—but we also believe that we need to understand the teachings of our ancestors so that we can talk in the gatherings, not only of our peoples, but also of all peoples. Our lived experiences lie at the heart of our unabashed and unapologetic single-minded commitment to the elevation of our indigenous peoples through research, especially research that is both rigorous and responsive to the needs of our communities. Research, that is, for and by our peoples! But why are lived experiences important?

Lived experiences exist on the macrocosmic and microcosmic levels of humanity. The belief that the universe and the individual human being are inextricably linked anatomically and psychically is foundational to both the Māori and Hawaiian cultures. Boas (1973, p. 126) explains that “the macrocosm is the universe as a whole, whose parts are thought of as parts of a human body and mind” and that the microcosm is “an individual human being whose parts are thought of as analogous to the parts of the larger universe.” We
believe that, on a much less grandiose scale, the conceptualization, conduct, and dissemination of research operate in a similar manner. Moral (or immoral) causality as an additive—simplistically defined as cause, effect, and result—relates to the power differentials that arise as a result of the decisions that are made at any given time.

On the macrocosmic or universal level, Māori and Hawaiian views of creation converge in an understanding that all nature is a great kinship tracing its origins back to a single pair, the Sky Father and the Earth Mother. In this world, man and nature are inextricably linked. Such linking means that our peoples depend on an acute understanding of how our worlds work. This understanding has come from thousands of years of keen and sensitive observations of all living things in their environments and of similarly acute observations of the land, of the sea, and of the sky. Māori and Hawaiian ways of knowing and doing have evolved in such a way that our present and our future are firmly rooted in the past. In essence, we look back to our future. It stands to reason, then, that research that dislocates us from our past and, therefore, our future, is tantamount to cultural annihilation. We have the capacity, through our research, to make decisions that reverse this process, relocating us in our own ways of knowing and doing.

....study your descent lines, as numerous as the hairs upon your head.

The cover of this journal, designed by Kaleinani Tim Sing, captures the idea of a sense of guidance (or even protection) obtained from our ancestors through the ways of knowing and doing that they have passed on to us. As such, our ability to enhance the well-being of our peoples through our research rests, in part, on our ability to carefully utilize our precious legacies. Tim Sing’s stylized and vibrantly colored graphic of tightly thatched mamo and ‘ō‘ō feathers in a sweeping representation of both protective roof and soaring bird wing extends our view from the past to the future and back again.

On the microcosmic level, mana (or spiritual energy) permeates Māori and Hawaiian worlds—everything is imbued with mana acquired either through birth or through pono actions. Pono actions, in particular, reflect the need to ensure that a harmonious or balanced world is maintained through transparency, honesty, integrity, honor, and commitment to both self and others. Therefore, to have mana is to have authority, influence, and the power to perform efficaciously in multiple contexts.

....understand the learning of your ancestors, so you can talk in the gatherings of the people.

Efficacy, or the right to influence, comes with the powerful knowledge that every morally-related (or immorally-related) action bears a consequence, which bears another, which bears another—a chain reaction of cause, effect, and result. For every “problem” there is a multitude of choices, each with its own unique chain reaction.

Hold fast to the knowledge of your kinship, and unite in the knot of mankind.

Indigenous research, then, must be a process of moral causality. The solution to each “problem” should be one that will offer up the best outcome—helping indigenous researchers to develop the expertise to make the best choices is the nature of the indigenous movement. In order to accomplish this, we believe that there exists an imperative for our indigenous researchers to understand the ways in which systems, especially education systems, function in harmony and in conflict with our efforts to build strong and healthy indigenous peoples and nations. By grounding our beliefs about the phenomena we refer to as indigenous ways of knowing and doing in political activism, we are most likely to acquire the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to develop a pedagogy of hope (Freire, 1970) that emerges from and affirms the cultural experiences of our indigenous peoples. This pedagogy of hope exists not only on a broader plane of profound conscientization, which we might call knowledge discovery or recovery, it also exists on a focused plane of transformative action (Smith, 2007).

The authors in this peer-reviewed journal—Kekailoa Perry; Kalani Akana; C. Mamo Kim; ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawanui; Kimo Cashman; Huia
Tomlins-Jahnke; Rawiri Tinirau and Annemarie Gillies; and Antoinette Freitas, Erin Kahunawai Wright, Brandi Jean Nalani Balutski, and Pearl Wu—could each assume the mantle of indigenous activist researcher. Each article, while documenting a unique focus, has at its core the critical responsibility to work with our communities to prepare our peoples with the knowledge, skills, strategies, and values necessary to facilitate the optimal functioning of all our endeavors.

REFERENCES


ENDNOTES

1 This story is retold from Wong’s reading of *Ka Moolelo Hiwahiwa O Kawelo* published in Kuokoa Home Rula: Ka Hiwahiwa o ka Lahui, 1909–1910. In keeping with the original publication, Wong adopts the same printer’s marks.

2 A high priest.

3 The mountains above Wai'anae.

4 A set of houses.

5 The lived experiences of many other indigenous peoples also include subjugation in their own lands through colonization, breached treaties, illegal overthrow of constitutional governments and other such hostile actions.

6 The Māori worldview refers to Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūānuku (Earth Mother); the Hawaiian worldview refers to Wākea (Sky Father) and Papahānaumoku (Earth Mother).
Kicking the Bucket: It’s All About Living

Kekailoa Perry

Beware so that your complicity doesn’t create capitulation within the system…we need to be discerning of our complicity in the [educational] system.


What exactly does Graham Smith mean when he warns us to not be complicit? When I hear the word “complicit” I think about criminals working together to rob a bank or commit some other kind of crime. When the felons are caught, the driver of the getaway car might say that he was not part of the robbery because he never actually entered the bank. The driver’s defense is that he did not hold the gun and had no part in the robbery. That defense almost never works because the law says that even the getaway car driver is guilty or “complicit” in the crime. Essentially, the driver’s involvement is part of the doing.

The legal principle relating to criminal liability is known as accomplice liability, accessory, or, in more colloquial terms, “aiding and abetting.” The legal encyclopedia Corpus Juris Secundum, section 132, states that, “depending on the circumstances, an accused may be charged as a principal, or under an aiding and abetting theory as an accomplice or accessory after the fact. To be convicted as a principal under the Bank Robbery Act, it is not necessary that the defendant actually hold the gun.” The American Jurisprudence legal encyclopedia, section 59, further notes that, “Liability for aiding and abetting the commission of a bank robbery extends to all parts of the robbery, including the escape phase. Thus, a person who aids the escape may be found guilty of aiding and abetting the armed robbery, rather than just an accessory after the fact” (citations omitted). In Hawai‘i a person can be held criminally liable for a crime even if they are not the actual perpetrators so long as a person knows the crime will occur, helps in some way with the commission of the crime, or does not attempt to prevent the crime from occurring.¹

Criminal complicity means that everyone involved in the crime has some level of responsibility. And, if we are close enough to the criminal activity, such as a getaway driver or supporter, we can be held just as responsible as the principal or person actually carrying out the crime.² Complicity, then, is a serious offense and a very serious accusation to make.

Is Smith suggesting that educated natives (in my case educated Hawaiians) are party to some kind of illegal activity? Is he calling me a crook, fiend, or criminal? Am I being lumped into some category of criminals because of who I am or where I live? Well, this would not be the first time a native was profiled as some kind of lawbreaker. For me, that was a long time ago. Back then I had no college degree and looked like a getaway driver or supporter, we can be held just as responsible as the principal or person actually carrying out the crime.² Complicity, then, is a serious offense and a very serious accusation to make.

Is Smith suggesting that educated natives (in my case educated Hawaiians) are party to some kind of illegal activity? Is he calling me a crook, fiend, or criminal? Am I being lumped into some category of criminals because of who I am or where I live? Well, this would not be the first time a native was profiled as some kind of lawbreaker. For me, that was a long time ago. Back then I had no college degree and looked like a criminal”—you know, brown skin, long hair, lots of time on my hands, and always smiling. But times have changed and I am wondering how Graham Smith can dare call me a criminal now? I have a law degree and two bachelor degrees, have a professional job, and wear shoes (well at least some of the time). I no longer fit the stereotypical Hawaiian criminal profile, right? Maybe, or maybe not. In many ways, I still look like the same brown-skinned, long-haired dude who smiles for no reason (just can’t trust those happy natives). Still, I doubt that this is the gist of Smith’s comment.

What exactly is this new liability or complicity that gives us cause for worry and concern? Is it our education? I was told years ago that to lift up our people we needed to further our education, get college degrees and take over key positions of power. Education is the “equalizer” in a world where the colonizer/occupier maintains their dominance over the less powerful in
society. Education, higher education in particular, is the tool that we can snatch from the master to lift us up from oppression. I invested hook, line and sinker in the nationalist message made popular in the 1980s and celebrated in music by local reggae artist Butch Helemano, who chanted that “higher education is the healing of the [Hawaiian] nation” (Helemano, 2003). So, I went to school. I borrowed a lot of money to educate myself and knowingly participated in the educational industrial complex that has a history of maintaining U.S. hegemony over native peoples (A. Smith, 2009, pp. 38–43, 46, 51; L. Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, pp. 63–66). I followed many Hawaiians who made the college trip before me. I got a job, first in politics, and later in education so that I could better the condition of native Hawaiians.3

As I write this paper I wonder how far we’ve come since my parents and grandparents’ generations. There is a little more disposable income and some of us can now afford some form of health insurance. But beyond the illusions of middle class ascension, the station of the native person and Hawaiians in Hawai‘i do not appear to be drastically different from the past. Perhaps this is what Smith meant when he told us to beware that our “complicity does not create capitulation”? This makes sense. Perhaps I am getting closer to understanding Smith’s prophetic warning.

Still, I resist accepting the fact that education can affect us negatively. How is it possible that we can gain a good education and yet submit to more oppression by the West? How does our effort to uplift our community with higher education make us complicit and liable for some unknown crime against the native society? Damned if you do, damned if you don’t, right? Maybe.

Maybe Smith was talking to the really smart Hawaiians. I told myself, “Heck, he couldn’t be talking to me, I just made it through college. I don’t even know how I did it.” Of course, as soon as I say that, my family and friends slap my head and say, “If you think you are not good enough, you don’t need a brain; you are wasting it on stupid thoughts.” They are right; we are good enough even though we don’t always think it’s true. Such thinking may actually be the result of some post traumatic stress disorder brought on by our indoctrination through U.S. occupation. But that is a discussion for another day. O.K., Smith is talking to all of us natives. But what, then, makes any of us complicit?

Smith’s comments put us all, young and old, students and educators, administrators and politicians and grassroots activists on notice. He is not accusing us of a crime. Indeed, while the legal definitions discussed above reference forms of criminal activity, the concepts relating to the “liability of others” is very relevant to Smith’s discussion especially when applied to the native scholar’s responsibility to the liberation of their people. Smith is warning us that our achievement in the Western world is a perilous journey that is fraught with danger. Even though education can be our salvation, it also makes us dangerous if we are not purposeful and careful with our knowledge. The threat of complicity creates the need to take our education beyond the redundant use of those tools that Audre Lorde cautioned would never dismantle the hegemony of the current educational system that is the “Master’s house” (Lorde, 2007, pp. 100–113).

Smith is telling us to be conscious. His words speak to the “politics of truth.” The masses of educated natives become the hosts for those new transformative ideas, meaning, of course, that knowledge without consciousness, or lacking a goal to free the oppressed, will likely recreate and regenerate the dominant power structure into a new, more virulent strain of oppression. Smith recognizes the subtle “new formations” of oppression that are nurtured, unbeknownst to us, in the ivory walls of the academy. The new oppression is remade and recreated to keep up with the times and if we are not careful it will find its way into new, budding Western-trained leaders of the native communities. All of us who aspire to learn and do good things are forewarned to hold tightly to the truths and realities in our communities and to do so consciously.

Alas, I think I get it. We are the agents of our own change but may also become agents of our own repression.4 As agents, we have the ability to lift up our lāhui. We also have the choice to submit to the pressure of Western hegemony. Knowledge is power and can influence great change. However, unbridled power is corrupting and can cause damaging consequences. As educators, we walk a very fine line, the edge of Lili‘u’s
pili grass blade if you will (Liliuokalani, 1917). Smith knows this firsthand and in his quest for conscientization (Freire, 2005), for a “kaupapa Maori” (G. H. Smith, 2004, pp. 8–15), or even a kaupapa for native peoples, he tells us to be the voice of positive advancement. As we gain our education and fill the seats of power it is our voice, not our silence, that will raise our issues to the next level. Complicity is not just a crime, it’s a path that waits for those who carelessly traverse the contested spaces of the academy alone, without community or the la`hui in mind.

To illustrate the point further, I recall a story, a myth, of the Hawaiian people that was introduced in the op-ed section of the Honolulu Advertiser in 2002. The story is new, not from the days of old. The myth is sinister and convincing to those who are searching for answers with no goal in mind. And, it may contribute to the caution that Smith prophesized. The story is part of a larger system of political myths that play a role in the indoctrination and assimilation of Hawaiians in this present U.S. political and social system. Graham Smith’s discussion at the Hui conference pushed me to revisit the story and it is offered now as a response to the growing need for our communities to find healthier, more productive ways of lifting each other up from obscurity.

**The Myth of Crabs in a Bucket**

In Hawai‘i there’s a myth known as the alamihi crab syndrome. The myth is a creation of foreign origin used to explain a Western worldview of Hawaiians. The myth is deployed to explain everything from the 1893 overthrow of the monarchy to the reason why Hawaiians can never better their lives. We are taught in schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces that the Native Hawaiian people behave like alamihi crabs trying to climb out of a bucket. Each time one is able to get to the top, another crab reaches up and pulls it down. Crabs in a bucket have a tendency to struggle and fight to escape early in their captivity. As time passes, the crabs in the bucket capitulate or give in to their depressing state of affairs. Many are observed as docile, lifeless, and almost dead. Life in the bucket can actually become common, regular, and the same old routine. Life in the bucket also has the potential to be dangerously comfortable. In the bucket, crabs learn to be content with their captivity. They will even go as far as crawling over others who show signs of anxiety or restlessness to assure a more subdued environment. The bucket myth tells of a foreign worldview that sees the native as a directionless people unable to escape their lot because of their own undoing. In essence, the Hawaiian failure is the result of their cultural inability to adapt to the modern expectations of society.

This is the dominant or oppressive part of the alamihi crab story. Hawaiians are the crabs. The bucket, we are told, is the benefit of Western civilization. To the U.S. occupier, life in the bucket is most desirable and therefore the native should appreciate and enjoy that freedom. In short, assimilate and submit to U.S. dominance and life can be comfortable. Do it not, and you will struggle. Over the years people have accepted this fiction as truth.

There is another lesson to this myth. There are times when new crabs are thrown into the old bucket. Those new crabs don’t know, nor do they desire, the life in the bucket. They resist, fight back, search for a way out. The older more comfortable crabs are greater in number and labor to bring the bucket to order. It is not that the older crabs hate the young ones. Instead, the older crabs seem to fear the knowledge of the new crabs because it suggests change and points directly to the fiction of the bucket’s oddly comfortable life. In short, the younger crabs’ actions raise doubt and threaten the safety of those already established in the bucket. The older crabs have one advantage. In time, if there is no escape, the bucket theory will prove overwhelming and bring the new crabs down. That is, if there is no escape.

Though Native Hawaiians struggle daily to overcome the effects of the alamihi crab syndrome, the subtle attack on their identity undermines their souls’ aloha. When the alamihi story becomes part of the unspoken fabric of the school systems, economics, and government, attempts to overcome the negative stereotype become a momentous task requiring a lifetime of educating and soul-searching. In fact, Native Hawaiian people have gone so far as to live out the life prescribed for them via this fictitious story.
Today, there is no lack of alamihi examples when we look at OHA, Pūnana Leo, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Kamehameha Schools, the University of Hawai‘i Center for Hawaiian Studies, Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and other Hawaiian institutions: Hawaiians, knowingly or unknowingly, pulling other Hawaiians down just as we’ve been conditioned to do. Life in the proverbial bucket becomes a mainstay for many who can no longer see the rocks and seashore on the other side. In fact, many Hawaiians have become rather comfortable in the bucket system and learn to do extremely well there.

One example is evidenced here at the University of Hawai‘i (UH) where a new school of Hawaiian knowledge was recently established. Twenty years ago, there was widespread debate in the university questioning the viability and academic rigor of instituting a Hawaiian studies program. Ten years prior to that, students protested to save a small ethnic studies program from extermination by the UH administration. Now, even the political science department at UH has developed a new academic strand on indigenous political studies, demonstrating the shift in some pockets of the academic community to acknowledge (if not respect) native ways of knowing.

However, the caution Smith raises is not in the minimal, token improvements to the system, but in the degree and exercise of the native academic’s “knowing.” As we produce more educated natives and hand them the tools of the master we know that there is a very strong likelihood that their education will pull them physically and mentally further from the native center. Fanon (1963) calls it the development of the comprador class or the reinforcement of the bourgeoisie where the native is, by virtue of education and a newly acquired social status, “deified” in and by the oppressor and native communities (pp. 46–49; 2008, p. 3). Tuhuiwa Smith elaborates by noting that, “attempts to ‘indigenize’ colonial academic institutions and/or individual disciplines within them have been fraught with major struggles over what counts as knowledge, as language, as literature, as curriculum and as the role of intellectuals, and over the critical function of the concept of academic freedom” (1999, p. 65).

Malcolm X (1989, pp. 28–30) makes this point more bluntly. He takes into account the native who may raise his/her social stock through the power of education but lose their moral and cultural value by ignoring their contribution to the maintenance of the occupying government’s power structure. Malcolm X distinguishes these roles as the difference between the house slave and the field slave. The house slave is one who emulates the identity of the master, the native bourgeoisie. The field slave is the educated native who resists the trappings of the master’s world, employing his knowledge to overthrow their system of oppression.

At the plenary session of the 2009 International Hui on Indigenous Research and Systemic Change, Graham Smith described this dangerous reformation of education as the “ratification of the possessive individual.” He notes that native academic research and teaching is critical for native advancement. Alternatively, Smith adds that academia in the context of the possessive individual contributes to the social and cultural reproduction of our own underdevelopment thereby reinforcing only the intellectual knowingness of a particular academic’s discipline (ibid). As a result, the academy teaches the academic to develop a yearning to “deify” or elevate their positions of status creating a need to accumulate “points” around native knowledge that results in a system of “profiteering from community knowing” (2004, pp. 2–4, 11).

Smith and others offer important methods of identifying aspects of oppression that filter into many segments of our native communities. They also suggest ways of weeding out the unproductive or dangerous forms of oppression that make our community subject to social and political internal combustion. But for Hawaiians the question remains, what critique do we need to accumulate “points” around native knowledge that results in a system of “profiteering from community knowing” without alienating our people or segregating our families? What forms of knowing will help in our growth and which ones will drown us?

Hawaiians were slowly convinced that success in the Western education system, which was initially understood as a way out of the U.S.’s social and political dominance, required them to separate their native self from the more important, academic self. The “rigor”
and “scholarly” way is actually code for racial subordination and assimilation. (A. Smith, 2009, p. 43). In the academic world this means that a native scholar must prove their worth by adopting the methods, theories, and thinking of their oppressor. (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, pp. 5, 14). From that perspective, a native’s higher education may be doomed before they even enter the academy. Of course, that is not everyone’s experience and many native academics do return to their communities and awaken others from their bucket-induced comas. But the alamihi myth is didactic and manages the “benign bigotry” (Anderson, 2010) of the educational system quite effectively.

As a result, the bucket of higher education is a potential breeding ground for selfish gain and political manipulation. Some educators use their newfound economic power to leverage political influence and elevate themselves to higher social office. Other educated Hawaiians use their positions to gain greater political exaltedness. The result is that Hawaiian people and the programs that serve them fall straight to the bottom of the bucket.

The conclusion drawn here often incites anger because it calls into question the use of a master’s tool (higher education) that many Hawaiians (and other marginalized peoples) consider a necessary element toward salvation and freedom from U.S. oppression. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) said as much when she called for the goal of creating 500 Maori PhDs. The goal is lofty but achievable yet we must be sure to remember Tuhiwai Smith’s context. Five hundred PhDs whether Maori or Pakeha, Hawaiian or Haole, is just a bunch of degrees. Without the intent to liberate and work toward the abolishment of Western hegemony (a.k.a. U.S. occupation and oppression) the native will occupy a strangely unique place in the academy where their “presence in the Western imagination” makes the educated native a modern day novelty—evidence that you can “kill the Indian and save the man” (Churchill, 2004; compare Adams, 1995) and make him/her civilized—to the dominant, watchful gaze of Western education.

Graham Smith’s comment proves instructive here and should help address any ire this analysis instigates. He is not questioning the value of education. Nor is he saying that a Western education through a Western worldview is evil. He argues that a conscious native who has higher education (or any form of education for that matter) at their disposal is dangerous because they have the power to liberate the state of their oppression. Yet, Smith also knows that the higher education process challenges our ways of knowing and scrutinizes our ability to speak to truth. The language of higher education is not always our own. It asks us to “prove” our notions of knowing by supplying “evidence” that will demonstrate the truth and reliability of that knowledge. Indeed, Tuhiwai Smith (1999) comments that, “One of the many criticisms that gets leveled at indigenous intellectuals or activists is that our Western education precludes us from writing or speaking from a ‘real’ and authentic position. Of course, those who do speak from a more ‘traditional’ indigenous point of view are criticized because they do not make sense” (pp. 13–14).

Lawrence (1992) notes that conscious, minority educators seek a much deeper and fulfilling academic experience through the “Word.” The “Word”—the spoken, preached, whispered, written, and published word—is a “vocation of struggle against dehumanization, a practice of raising questions about reasons for oppression, an inheritance of passion and hope” (p. 2238). The minority scholar experiences alienation in the academy because of its apparent opposition to the Word of emancipation and liberation (ibid). At one level is the conscientization of the native scholar. On another level is the Western academic or objective scholar. Lawrence asserts that academia’s development of the objective scholar canonized the myth of the “true academic” as having a value-free inquiry process and ability to clarify the world rather than change it through unnecessary bias. The Western or objective scholar is, therefore, “guided by an orthodoxy that equates objectively with emotional disengagement, cognitive distance, and moral indifference” (ibid.). The native scholar whose role is identified as subjective carries the stigma of being too close to the issues and therefore unable to clearly and objectively produce a level of scholarship equal to the standards of the academy. In short, the work we do may be too native. Or, put another way, the work we do is not “American”
or “smart” enough. Therefore, higher education is a struggle to remain real for native and minority people making the potential for manipulation and the redeployment of oppression a strong possibility; in other words, “the alamihi crab syndrome.”

For example, a few months ago, there was a discussion by several university educated Hawaiians about the viability or worthiness of a taro cultivation class in a University of Hawai‘i Hawaiian Studies curriculum. The taro class taught the complexities of culture, law, and politics through hands-on methods centered on the traditional forms of growing wetland taro. To the unknowing eye, the class looks like a native gardening project with no apparent signs of serious academic rigor. The educated Hawaiians critiquing the course were in the midst of their advanced degrees as PhD’s and MA’s. Their major criticism was that the taro class could not meet the standards and academic rigor necessary for a “Research 1” institution like the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Instead, they argued, the course is better suited for a trade school or community college type of learning environment suggesting that somehow these schools were less rigorous or advanced than a university course in Mānoa. Obviously there are many levels of discussion here that go beyond the focus of this vignette and will be the subject of a later, forthcoming essay on the arrogance of law, education, and social policy. For the moment, it is important to see how this story speaks to the debilitating powers of education and status, and the potential the academy has to reinforce dominant systems of knowing while erasing potentially powerful new ideas from finding a place in the structure.

The alamihi story relies on our continued belief that our survival is dependent on life in the bucket. Should anyone dare consider that there is life outside the bucket, the assimilated masses (even those who have achieved the highest level of education in the academy) are conditioned to pull the others down for their own good or for their own safety. Is this truly a Hawaiian point of view? Of course not. Yet, the pressure to assimilate and conform is constant. Those who dare to see the world outside the bucket are likened to a person yelling “fire!” in front of a firing squad. Very few have the courage to do so and accept the eventual freedom (however painful) that comes with such an act. Against our better judgment, we doom ourselves to live the life of crabs in a bucket.

What many do not realize is that life in the bucket can also produce a “resistance” state of mind, a counter narrative. In this view, the crabs are not pulling each other down, they are testing the structure to see if there is a way out. They are learning, experimenting, compiling data, and developing knowledge from their perspective as being now in and once outside the bucket. Their capture makes them both insiders and outsiders at the same moment (Lawrence, 1992, p. 2239; Collins, 2009, p. 8). Thus, natives or minorities in the academy possess two distinct ways of knowing, a “double consciousness” or “dual subjectivity.” (DuBois, 1922, as quoted in Collins (2009) and Lawrence (1992).

The power of this double understanding cannot be understated. Collins (2010) provides a modern review to this well-established approach:

Disempowered people can develop, in the words of W.E.B. DuBois, a “double consciousness” concerning their placement in power relations. On the one hand, for reasons of survival, they must understand (but not necessarily believe) how the powerful see them, usually as less intelligent, less morally capable, less hardworking, less beautiful, or all of the above. Disempowered groups armed with this knowledge often mold their ideas and behavior to the expectations of more powerful groups…

“On the other hand, disempowered people can develop a distinctive consciousness or “way of knowing” about their oppression that stems from having to adjust their behavior in response to the whims or the demands of more powerful groups…

“Applying the notion of double consciousness to the realm of education identifies some challenges for students and educators, especially those who have been marginalized in the U.S. society…

“Stated differently, disempowered learners must find a way simultaneously to survive within institutions that were not set up with them in mind and to synthesize the best of what the school teaches and what they know from their life experiences. (pp. 9–10)

Lawrence (1992) provides a more sobering reveal of the burden/gift of dual consciousness. He maintains
that dual consciousness will “allow those who bear it to recognize and articulate social realities that are unseen by those who live more fully within the world of privilege. But our duality can also be experienced as disabling when the seduction of privileged status or internalization of insider values threatens to subvert the Word’s liberating insight.” (p. 2239)

Again, Smith is instructive here. Conscientization provides the catalyst for our greater awareness and understanding as we occupy the spaces of the academy. Cognizant of our world and the analysis of the world that defines us, the native should find the bucket existence unproductive at best thereby creating a more persistent need to agitate the comfort zones of those who desire to maintain oppression. Life in the bucket is not static but constant. The role of the captured native changes over time as our understanding of that place of oppression becomes more acute. Higher education should, therefore, serve as a heightened experience for our cultural critique that would “disrupt and even deconstruct those cultural productions that were designed to promote and reinforce domination” (hooks, 1990, p. 2, 15–18) against the native.

In traditional times, Native Hawaiians never kept crabs in buckets. In fact, there were no buckets until Captain James Cook and his diseased crew fell upon our shores. Whenever Hawaiians needed crabs, they collected them from the environment, where they thrived in coexistence with other creatures. The natural habitat for the crab is atop the rocks, a solid foundation. In their natural environment, the alamihi crabs do not tear each other down. There’s no need, because there is a place for all of them on the stable foundation of the ʻāina.

When we realize this simple truth, we understand that the Hawaiian life in the bucket is alien, unbalanced, and insecure. In the bucket, humanity gives way to violence, and integrity is replaced with unethical behavior. This should not be surprising, considering the intent and purpose of the story: to keep everyone in Hawaiʻi believing that the native people should fare no better than the lowest in society, thus keeping Hawaiians trapped in a soul-strangling lifestyle.

In the end, the alamihi crab syndrome is just a story. It lives because we allow it. Our education and efforts to strengthen our lāhui are powerful tools but alone they do nothing except reinforce the old regimes of knowing. Smith’s cautionary note that we should beware so that our “complicity doesn’t create capitulation within the system” is very prophetic in this day where so many Hawaiians (and marginalized peoples) are increasing our numbers in higher education (500 PhDs and counting). Collins, Lawrence, hooks, and others urge us to use that knowledge to promote critical resistance and produce a cultural critique that will generate stronger movements toward liberation. Therefore, the knowledge we acquire is not our own, it belongs to our people. And, we have a duty to use it in practice for the betterment of the lāhui by extinguishing the apparatus that enables hegemony to exist.

So how does higher education free us from the bucket life? Angela Davis (2010) espouses an answer in her famous speech on liberation via her Frederick Douglass slave narrative lectures. She says, “The collective consciousness of an oppressed people entails an understanding of the conditions of oppression and the possibilities of abolishing these conditions” (p. 66). Davis continues her analysis by attacking the structures of higher education accusing the academy of compartmentalizing and formulating generalizations of history and facts that maintain myths—such as the alamihi crab syndrome. Though she focuses on the discipline of philosophy, Davis’ response is critical for our role as members of the academy:

My idea of philosophy is that if it is not relevant to human problems, if it does not tell us how we can go about eradicating some of the misery in this world, then it is not worth the name of philosophy. I think that Socrates made a very profound statement when he asserted that the raison d’etre of philosophy is to teach us proper living. In this day and age “proper living” means liberation from the urgent problems of poverty, economic necessity and indoctrination, mental oppression. (p. 66)

Smith’s comment on complicity tells us that knowingly participating in the bucket game means we cannot blame the Westerner or Haole for all of its vagaries and ills. We are less victim and more agents of this system. We, the higher educated, share the role of the getaway car driver at the robbery. We may not
have created the bucket or put the native in it, but our knowledge and lack of action may very well make us “complicit” and “aiders and abetters” in the doing. The alamihi crab syndrome lives, but no longer is it a story of the native Hawaiian demise. Instead, it survives as a burden and gift for all.

A Conclusion

Each step forward gains us better insight to our world as an oppressed people struggling to manage the reestablishment and governance of the nation. Education is a key factor in advancing a movement for greater self-governance but it is also so dangerously close to the under-tow currents of the status quo. Malcolm and Fanon reinforce Smith’s argument that the imperial system of oppression that has been present here for over 200 years is in no hurry to leave. In fact, in its sophistication, hegemony adapts to change quickly and uses the arrogance of our newfound knowingness to feed its appetite for domination. The current of that system is so strong and constant that even the best of our intellectuals or advocates can be pulled into its depths. This does not mean, however, that we should give up higher education or stop fighting. Instead, Smith tells us that there is much work to do and it will not be done if we relax our minds in the comfort zone of academic bliss and privilege. Like crabs on the rock of native knowingness, the room to move and thrive is vast and the nourishment found in our mind’s ocean is bountiful.

The Hawaiian, like the crab, was never meant to live in a bucket. Hawaiians must flourish on the solid foundation rooted in their spirituality, intellect, and culture. That foundation is not located in institutions or ideas that have no conscience to overcome oppression. In such cases, the people will continue to exist in the proverbial U.S. bucket. The foundation must be an independent one, and the people should always be encouraged to be consciously aware of their colonial-like situation.

Will such a thing occur? Not overnight, but it will happen. Of course, we need to be courageous enough to live beyond the bucket. In fact, this is one bucket we should all be willing to kick.

REFERENCES


CASES AND STATUTES CITED
Hawai’i Revised Statutes, § 10 (1985).
Hawai’i Revised Statutes, § 702-221 (1972).

ENDNOTES
1 Hawaii Revised Statutes, §702-222, entitled, “Liability for Conduct of Another, Complicity.”

2 For more examples of the Hawaii Supreme Court’s handling of cases relating to criminal complicity and aiding and abetting, see, State v. Carvelo, 45 Haw. 16, 361 P.2d 45 (March 24, 1961) (holding that a person who acts as a watchman while his friends commit a burglary is an accomplice guilty of the offense of the principal); State v. Yabusaki, 58 Haw. 404, 570 P.2d 844 (October 26, 1977) (holding that a person sitting in the car at the scene of a burglary with the conscious object of promoting or facilitating the crime can be convicted of first degree burglary on theory that he is an accomplice to the crime); State v. Ebarra, 39 Haw. 488, 1952 WL 7373 (Haw Terr. 1952) (A defendant jointly indicted for the crime who renders encouragement, and who stands ready to assist in its perpetration, may be charged as a principal); and, State v. Hernandez, 61 Haw. 475, 605 P2d 75 (Jan. 23, 1980) (A person is guilty of an offense if it is committed by the conduct of another person for which he is legally accountable when he is an accomplice in the commission of the offense and where the accomplice simply aids the perpetrator in committing the offense).

3 See generally, MacKenzie, M. K. (Ed.). (1991). The Native Hawaiian Rights Handbook. Honolulu, HI: Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, pp. 43–76; Hawai’i Revised Statutes, Chapter 10. The term “to better the conditions of native Hawaiians” was first codified in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920. In that law, Congress intended to better the conditions of those natives who were no less than 50% blood quantum. Later, in 1978, the State Legislature enacted HRS §10 which became the enabling legislation for the State Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). Chapter 10 also used the phrase “to better the conditions of native Hawaiians” but in this case, it did not restrict the betterment language to a specific blood quantum. The term has been further refined in activist circles to mean the liberation of Hawaiians. That last, refined understanding was the vision at the time I made my journey into higher education.

4 See generally, Churchill, W. & Vander Wall, J. (2002). Agents of Repression. Cambridge, MA: South End Press. While some controversy surrounds the work of Churchill, his book offers a very important insight in the use of members or “insiders” to infiltrate and undermine group leadership and positive advancement. The agents are not just the “authorities” who maintain police control of society. Agents are also members of the revolutionary elements who align themselves with the center.

5 Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa, is said to have read the poem “our deepest fear” by Marianne Williamson (1992) at his Presidential inauguration address in Cape Town in 1994. The impact that his speech has made regarding the content of the poem is beyond measure.


8 This article is a self-reflective attempt to find clarity through the critical responses that it may attract. In many ways, this particular comment may, in fact, be self-incriminating since I either work or have some indirect association with these specific organizations. The point here is not to accuse the many great people who hold up these organizations of being unproductive in the plight to uplift the lāhui. The point is that no place, no “Hawaiian” institution, should consider itself sacred and immune from the subtle application of the ala‘ihi crab syndrome. We all experience some form of it, but the question is do we learn from it? Thus, the hope is that this piece will add to bell hooks’ (1990) call for a strong “cultural critique.”

9 See generally, Williams, P. (1987). Alchemical Notes: Reconstructing Ideals From Deconstructed Rights. Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review, 22, 401; and, Davis, A. Y. (2010). Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Publishing. Both Williams and Davis suggest, at different times in U.S. political history, that the power of higher education can be intoxicating and misleading. Overcoming such influences requires a constant, vigilant drive to use the basis of that knowledge to liberate the oppressed.
Many scholars assert, and rightly so, that higher education is essential for the positive advancement of the native Hawaiian or indigenous lāhui. The commentary here questions not the intent but the presumption of some who might argue that higher education, in and of itself, will raise the nation. See e.g., ho’omanawanui (2008) demonstrating the importance of ‘ike ‘āina based literacy to inspire and educate Hawaiian learners; Kana’iaupuni and Kawai’ai’a (2008) advocating for a cultural based education approach to develop successful Hawaiian learners; Goodyear-Ka’opua, et al. (2008) arguing that a curriculum centered on vigorous political engagement, informed community participation, and commitment to aloha ‘āina will nurture a healthy lāhui; Benham and Stein (2003) showing the importance of the higher education model of the tribal college to uplift the wellbeing of the native communities; Barnhardt and Kawagley (2010) identifying the limitations of higher education and the importance of incorporating a blend of old and new ways of knowing.

This quote refers to a very racist policy that is all too familiar to many, if not all, native peoples occupied by the U.S. Recalling Richard Pratt’s “kill the Indian, save the man” rhetoric in this way, my premise attempts to redefine meanings for our peoples. I hope to balance the discourse and in a small way dispel the hegemony that has overstayed its time on this earth. As we forge new meanings with traditional knowledge let’s also remember that Richard H. Pratt’s version of the world is a lesson that should not be repeated. It’s part of his-story and how we deal with it now, in our liberation, is our story. See, Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction (1892), 46–59. Reprinted in Richard H. Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites,” Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the “Friends of the Indian” 1880–1900 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 260–271.

Taro, incidentally, is the genealogical ancestor of the Hawaiian people.

The class is entitled “Hawaiian Studies 351–Mahia Kalo”. I taught the course for two years as a service learning assistant and later assistant professor at the Kamakakuokala Center for Hawaiian Studies.
Hawaiian Performance Cartography of Kauaʻi
Kalani Akana

The first western-made maps of Hawaiʻi were created by Captain James Cook and from his time until the mid-nineteenth century maps and mapmaking in Hawaiʻi existed to satisfy foreign needs—maritime commerce, missionary endeavors and scientific investigations. Late visitors to Hawaiʻi produced charts and maps depicting the shores, harbors, towns, natural resources and important geological phenomenon, and from the mid-nineteenth century on, maps and mapmaking became increasingly important to satisfy alien needs for metes and bounds and land ownership.

A map, however, is just one kind of graphic representation of the world. Woodward and Lewis (1998) described maps as “graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes, or events in the human world” (p. xvi). For example, the designs on the brilliant feather cloaks of Hawaiian warrior chiefs might have been graphic representations of battle formations. Mitchell (1982) described three battle formations that were represented in the patterns on 'ahu'ula (feather cloaks)—kahului (crescent), kākulu (straight lines), and makawalu (clusters) (p. 282). In his extensive work with petroglyphs, E. Stasack believed that the numerous kōnane (checker) boards found on pāhoehoe fields assisted in mapping out battle strategy (personal communication, December 13, 2010).

While representations in feather cloaks or kōnane are easily recognizable, other forms may not be. These other forms may fall into a form described by Woodward and Lewis as performance cartography (1998, pp. 1–5). They wrote that

a performance may take the form of a nonmaterial oral, visual, or kinesthetic social act, such as a gesture, ritual, chant, procession, dance, poem, story, or other means of expression or communication whose primary purpose is to define or explain spatial knowledge or practice. Or the performance may include a more material, but still ephemeral, demonstration such as a drawing or model in the sand. (p.4)

Oliveira (2006) described Hawaiian performance cartography in this way:

Traditionally, Kanaka Maoli [Native Hawaiian] utilized ‘performance cartography’ to reference their constructed places, legitimate their existence, and reinforce their legacies. Such cartographic representations were expressed in many ways including: inoā 'āina (place names), mele (songs), hula (dance), ʻōlelo noʻeau (proverbs), mahele ʻāina (land divisions), moʻolelo (historical accounts), and moʻokāʻauhau (genealogies). The modes of expression and/or communication utilized in Hawaiian performance cartography function like a map in that it references spatial understandings and features. (p.212)

The following discussion examines Hawaiian performance cartography as described by Oliveira but only as it relates to the island of Kauaʻi. Section I begins with a chant asking permission to “enter” into the cultural landscape described in mele (songs) and hula (dance). Section II looks briefly at moʻokāʻauhau (genealogies), inoā ʻāina (place names), mahele ʻāina (land divisions), ʻōlelo noʻeau (proverbs) and moʻolelo (historical accounts). Section III looks at hei (string figures) as performance cartography. The discussion in each section will provide examples and explanations of Hawaiian performance cartography, which includes a first-time look at the cartographic representations of hei.
Section I: Hawaiian Performance Cartography in Mele (songs) and Hula (dance)

Mele as Performance Cartography

Mele Kāhea
(admittance chant)

Kūnīhi ka mauna i ka la'i e
The mountain is steep in calm

'O Wai'ale'ale lā i Wailua
Wai'ale'ale to Wailua

Huki a'e la i ka lani
Pulled into the heavens

Ka papa 'auwai o Kawaikini
Rivuleted plain of Kawaikini

'Ālaiia e a'e la e Nounou
Obstructed by Nounou Hill

Nalo 'o Kaipuha'a
Kaipuha'a is lost

Ka laulā ma uka o Kapa'a e
And the vast upland of Kapa'a

Mai pa'a i ka leo
Don't hold back the voice

He 'ole kāhea mai è
This is just a call.

When the goddess Hi'iaka stood upon the banks of the Wailua River and chanted this mele kāhea (admittance song), she chanted to and of the pristine but not unfamiliar place and space surrounding her. Looming above her was majestic Mount Wai’ale’ale, former volcanic home of Pele, goddess of fire, and her family but now the wettest spot in the world. The imagery she used conveys a picture of a very watery and ethereal world:

Wai'ale'ale (Double Waters), Wailua (Double Waters), papā 'auwai (plain of water rivulets), and Kawaikini (Multitudinous Waters). From where she stood, much of the uplands of Wailua was obscured by a system of hills and ridges that ran parallel to the seashore. One of these hills was Nounou, which blocked the view of the vast upland of the Kapa’a basin. She named this obscured region Kaipuha’a (Low Hanging Gourd), and in doing so provided a vivid picture and metaphor of that basin much akin to the term “bread-basket,” a region of rich soil and agricultural surplus.

Hula practitioners continue to use Hi’iaka’s mele kāhea as an admittance chant to gain entry into the hālau hula, the academy proper of the art of Hawaiian dance. The topographical features and their place names form a metaphorical map for the physical layout of the hula school. Nounou Hill represents the doorway to the hālau hula at which the hula student stands requesting admittance. The door is a temporary hindrance but an obstacle nevertheless that can only be overcome by asking permission of the kumu hula (hula expert) to enter. The dance hall proper is represented by the Kapa’a Basin. Remember that Hi’iaka named this basin Kaipuha’a (Low Hanging Gourd), a name which does not appear on western charts and maps but is known only in mele and mo’olelo. Here, the ipu in Kaipuha’a refers to the gourd, one of the primary, percussive instruments in hula, and the word ha’a is a more ancient word for dance (see Kamakau, 1976, p. 143 for use; Kaeppler 1993, pp. 6–9). Kapa’a means “the solid and secure” and alludes to the physical demands of dance and the need to practice, study, and learn until knowledge as well as technical skill is pa’a or secure. The ethereal mountain region of Wai’ale’ale refers to and locates the kumu hula (hula teacher) with his wealth of knowledge. The wai (water) found in the place names of that region: Wai’a’ale’ale, Wailua, papā ‘auwai, and Kawaikini is also found in the Hawaiian word for wealth, waiai, thus emphasizing the status and essential role of the kumu hula as “source of water” and wellspring of knowledge in the learning process.

Kumu hula Māpuana de Silva wrote a beautiful interpretation of the mele and the meaning it has for her and her students:

The chant tells us that we are a long way from becoming experts at hula (Kawaikini is way up there and we are “stuck” (pa’a) way down in Kapa’a). The path to hula knowledge is steep (kūnīhi), and there are many obstacles and difficulties (nounou, to throw, pelt, beat) ahead of us. But we will still get there if we take the hidden path of humility (Kaipuha’a). So we call out politely, and ask to take the path. Basically, what we say is “Please allow us to enter, travel, and learn here.” (de Silva, 1999, community blog)
In this first example of Hawaiian performance cartography, “Kūnhi ka mauna” serves many functions. First, it is a map that facilitates our understanding of what Hi‘iaka saw and experienced and that we can still appreciate today. Second, it is a blueprint for the hula academy. Third, the chant serves as a moral template to follow.

**Hula as Performance Cartography**

Consider another Kaua‘i mele for Wailua—a hula ka‘i (entrance dance). In this dance, the feet movement of the dancers progress steadily forward on to the dance floor using the hela step. The forward progression of the hela serves to delineate the traveler’s sight path. The dancer’s hand motions indicate the location of place or human activity spoken of in the chant. Visualize for a moment the dancer’s left hand extending upwards to a virtual uplands and the right hand extending downwards towards a virtual seashore. The right hand sweeps upwards towards the left hand and this motif is repeated for the duration of the chant. Whenever the hands meet in the “uplands,” the chanter is singing about the “the sunlit cliffs of Wai‘oli,” the “top of Kama‘e” or other things related to the higher elevations. When the right hand sweeps seaward, the chanter sings of “the hala [pandanus] ripened by the sea” or “entrance of the home.” The synchrony of audio and visual representations assist the audience in creating their own mental map of Wailua and this map is remembered with each performance.

In this chant Hi‘iaka visited Kapō‘ulakīna‘u, a relative whom she called Wailua Iki or “Small Wailua,” but she is not at home. Hi‘iaka then called to the place she perceived Kapō to be—the uplands of Wailua Iki. The modifiers iki and nui (small and great) as in Wailua Iki, Wailua Nui, or uka and kai (upland and seaward) as in Wai‘anae Uka, Wai‘anae Kai, and, to a lesser extent wai and malo‘o (watery and dry) as in La‘ie Wai, La‘ie Malo‘o, are attached to place names to further delineate location, geographical, and socio-political significance. In the case of Wailua Iki, “iki” refers to the less populated portion of Wailua district as opposed to its geographical size as its area is actually much larger. Wailua Nui (Great Wailua) refers, then, to the cultural and political center and, hence, the more populated part of Wailua. Kapō‘ulakīna‘u is gathering flowers in the uplands and unpopulated portion of Wailua district and it is referred to as Wailua Iki by Hi‘iaka to recognize her geographical location.

**Hula Ka‘i**
*(entrance dance)*

'O ‘oe ia e Wailua Iki
You are Wailua Iki

E ka lā ulu pali o Wai‘oli
On the sunlit cliffs of Wai‘oli

I hele ‘ia mai e Li‘awahine
Traversed by Li‘awahine

Ka wahine kui pua o Hoakalei è
Flower-stringing-woman of Hoakalei

E lei ‘oe.
Adorn yourself.

E lei ‘oe i nā hala
Adorn yourself with

i pala ‘iloli i ke kai
the hala ripened by the sea

Ua hele wale a maka ‘ele’ele i ke anu
Blackened by the cold

Hina ‘ia e ke Kīna‘u
Tossed down by the Kīna‘u

Ola iā Mahamoku ka makani kū
Revived by the Mahamoku

Puni kāwalawala
Scattering here and there.

Kāhea i ka luna
Calling to the heights

o Kama‘e e ho‘i
of Kamae to return

He malihini puka ko ka hale nei
Visitors are at the entrance of your home.
Section II: Hawaiian Performance Cartography in Moʻokūʻauhau (genealogies), ʻŌlelo noʻeau (proverbs), Mahele ʻāina (land divisions), and Inoa ʻāina (place names)

Moʻokūʻauhau as Performance Cartography

A moʻokūʻauhau or genealogy is a history of our people. It is an “unbroken chain that links those alive today to the primeval life forces—to the mana (spiritual power) that first emerged with the beginning of the world” (Kameʻelehiwa, 1992, p. 20). Moʻokūʻauhau is contained in the Kumulipo, a mele koʻihonua (genealogical song) that establishes the sacred lineage of Kalaninuiʻamamao and traces his lineage back to the very beginning of the cosmos. The Kumulipo orders the creation of the universe from echinoderms to seaweed, proceeding to fish, birds, creepers of the land, animals, and finally to man. The twelfth wā (canto) is significant to Hawaiians because it establishes the genealogy of Hāloa, the progenitor of the Hawaiian people.

The farther back we go in search of common ancestors, the more inclusive our genealogical identity becomes and “a ‘deeper’ sense of kinship inevitably entails a wider range of contemporaries we consider relatives” (Zeruvabel, 2003, pp. 66–67). As a kind of time map as described by Zeruvabel, genealogy or moʻokūʻauhau lays out relationships of man to each other and to his senior relatives in nature. It gives the lines and principles of descent and order. According to Kameʻelehiwa (1992), “genealogies are the Hawaiian concept of time, and they order the space around us” (p. 19). To the Māori, genealogical cousins to the Hawaiian people, “whakapapa [genealogies] provides the ‘metaphysical kaupapa’ (ground plan; first principles) whereby Maori order, locate, and ‘know’ the phenomenal world” (Roberts & Willis, 1998, p. 43).

Another genealogical map is Mele a Pakuʻi. In it, Kauaʻi is called Kamāwaelualani, an older inoa ʻāina (land name) found only in performance cartography. Ka Mele a Kahakuikamoana is yet another genealogical map. The performer, Kahakuikamoana, chanted this of Kauaʻi:

Hānau Kauaʻi he aliʻi
Kauaʻi was born a chief
He kama, he pua aliʻi,
A child, royal descent of
He huhui aliʻi a Hawaiʻi
the royal assembly of chiefs of Hawaiʻi
Na ke poʻo kelakela o nā moku.
Of the highest lineage

ʻŌlelo Noʻeau as Performance Cartography

Ka Mele a Kahakuikamoana as a genealogical map established the pedigree of Kauaʻi island as “pua aliʻi” and “huihui aliʻi a Hawaiʻi” and accounts for the chiefly ʻōlelo noʻeau (proverb) associated with Kauaʻi:

Hānau ke aliʻi i loko o Holoholoku, he aliʻi nui;
Hānau ke kanaka i loko o Holoholoku he aliʻi nō;
Hānau ke aliʻi ma waho aʻe o Holoholoku, ‘aʻohe aliʻi, he kanaka ia.
The child of a chief born in Holoholoku is a high chief;
The child of a commoner born in Holoholoku is a chief

The sacred and royal significance of Kauaʻi extends beyond Kauaʻi as the Naha Stone that Kamehameha lifted to demonstrate his eminent control over the island chiefdoms came from Holoholoku. Under this stone were the piko (umbilici) of the Naha chiefs of Hawaiʻi island. Thus, ʻōlelo noʻeau as performance cartography reaffirmed relationships, commemorated history, and located historic ancestors in both time and space.

Mahele ʻĀina as Performance Cartography

The mahele ʻāina of Kauaʻi are similar to those found on other Hawaiian islands that shared climate and geographic characteristics. For example, Koʻolau districts on Kauaʻi, Oʻahu, and Maui are on the windward side that receive tradewinds and more rain than other mahele ʻāina. Puna on Kauaʻi and Puna on Hawaiʻi are exposed to south easterlies and have lush vegetation. Kona districts are on the leeward side of the island and are drier. In the moʻolelo
of Kawelo, the mahele 'āina are apportioned (mahele) in the following manner:

- Ko'olau no Kalaumeki
  [Ko'olau is for Kalaumeki]
- Puna no Ka'elehā
  [Puna is for Ka'elehā]
- Kona no Kamalama
  [Kona is for Kamalama]
- Kaua'i a puni no Kawelooleimakua
  [All of Kaua'i is for Kawelooleimaku]

(ʻHoʻolumāhiehie, 1905–1906/2007, p. 357)

Readers of ʻHoʻolumāhiehie’s story may have never visited Kaua‘i but would have been informed, nevertheless, by familiar mahele 'āina—Ko'olau, Puna, and Kona. Louis (2008) wrote,

*Since place names are found in all forms of Hawaiian performance cartographies from mo'olelo [story] to hula, they can be characterized as a basic symbolic element. Hawaiian place names tell us a great deal about Hawaiian spatial understanding such as how environmental phenomena are organized and understood* (p. 172).

**Inoa 'Āina as Performance Cartography**

Kona, Puna, and Ko'olau are inoa 'āina found throughout Polynesia—Tonga, Puna, Tokelau. Other Kaua‘i names harken back to genealogical and physical roots in the cradle of Polynesia such as Oloheha on Kaua‘i and Olosega in Sāmoa or ʻUpolu on Hawai‘i and ʻUpolu in Sāmoa. Waimea and Hanalei in Kaua‘i and Waimea and Whangarei in Aotearoa are but some of the many inoa 'āina that serve as reminders of common ancestry, history, and identity as kānaka honua, kānaka holomoana, “people of the land, people of open ocean.” A study in itself, inoa 'āina as performance cartography encompasses the vast cultural region of Polynesia.

**Section III. Hawaiian Performance Cartography in Hei (string figure making)**

The following explains spatial and cultural knowledge presented in hei, Hawaiian string figure making. The construction and utilization of string figures as performance cartography have never been researched before so an analysis of them will help to define and appreciate Hawaiian cartographic practice.

In addition, the study of the texts accompanying hei will elucidate Hawaiian symbolic use and imagery of place names. By virtue of the travelogue quality of mele pana (place name chant), multiple string figures are required to locate the geographic locations described in the chant. Dickey (1928) noted

The Hawaiian is fond of motion or change in a string figure. There are 32 figures with a sequence of figures, the first stage usually being the most complex, the figure becoming simpler with each succeeding stage; and some of them relating the story. (p. 11)

**Mele Pana–Place Name Chants**

Mele pana are the chanted maps of wahi pana which has been translated as “celebrated places,” “storied places,” and “legendary places” with the latter being the least acceptable. The late scholar Edward Kanahele, wrote this beautiful description of wahi pana:

As a native Hawaiian, a place tells me who I am and who my extended family is. A place gives me my history, the history of my clan, and the history of my people. I am able to look at a place and tie in human events that affect me and my loved ones. The concept of wahi pana merges the importance of place with that of the spiritual. My culture accepts the spiritual as a dominant factor in life; this value links me to my past and to my future, and is physically located at my wahi pana. (James, 1991)

Oliveira (2006) referred to wahi pana as the “genealogy of places” (p. 263) saying that

Places, like people, have genealogies. Place names serve as historical genealogies, chronicling the changes that have occurred over time in a particular locale. With each passing generation, place names are either passed on to the succeeding generation, forgotten, or renamed. (p. 264)

Kanahele and Oliveira spoke as indigenous researchers to the spiritual nature of wahi pana and the deep affection and respect they, as Hawaiians, have for the land. Thus, aloha for the land is found in mele pana.
Mele Pana
(place name chant)

Wailua nui nanai
Great hunchbacked Wailua

Kū i ka maka o Ulu’ena
Standing in the face of Ulu’ena temple

‘O Hulu’ena lāua ‘o Manu’ena
With Hulu’ena and Manu’ena

‘O Makaki’i ka waena
With Makaki’i in the center

‘O Nounou a’o ‘A’ahoaka
Nounou and ‘A’ahoaka hills

‘O ke Kuamo’o Loa o Kāne.
As well as the mountain ridge called Long Back of Kāne

(Dickey, 1928, pp. 56, 58)

Wailua nui nanai. The mele pana above accompanied a succession of string figures. The geographical features described in the chant remain but the man-made structures of Ulu’ena, Hulu’ena, Manu’ena, and Makaki’i are no longer intact. Dickey, the author of Hawaiian String Figures, met a Kōloa woman named ‘Áinakē who chanted this mele pana and showed him the figures. He was a land surveyor by profession and this mele pana provided him an oral map to conduct a search for the places named. He later reported his findings to the Kaua’i Historical Society:

Uluena is far up the mountain at the sources of the Wailua River. Manuena is a cave on the makai side of Mopua Hill. Huluena I have not located but according to the catscradle it should be on Kapu Hill. Makakii is perhaps another name for the locality where the kings were born. Aahoaka is the well known hill between the forks of the Wailua River. Nounou is the hill back of Waipouli and Kapaa. The kuamooloa of Kane is the upper part of the ridge between the Wailua and Opaikaa Stream. The stream of Makena is at the bottom of the river not far above the poi factory. The house of Kulanihia I have not located. (Dickey, 1915, p. 3)

The first four lines of the mele pana located the position and relationships of the sacred places of Wailua. There are two bent loops or “arms” (right and left) over a central diamond in the string figure. This central figure represented Makaki’i, literally the “source of the images,” which was the central temple of a complex where chiefs were born and possibly related to the present Maka’ākūi heiau (temple). The “arms” of the figure located Hulu’ena and Manu’ena temples where feather gods were kept (R. Wichman, personal communication, October 2007). It is interesting to note that Manu’ena (Red-hot bird) was a site associated with a cave where the mudhens, keepers of fire making, once lived. There, Māui tricked the chief mudhen, Ka’alaeahuapī, to reveal firemaking to him.

When “‘O Nounou a’o ‘A’ahoaka” is chanted, the stringer transforms the first figure into two hills—Nounou and ‘A’ahoaka. The indexes are inserted under the “bent arms” transforming it into a new figure showing two vertical loops representing the two hills. Nounou is commonly known today as the Sleeping Giant who in mo’olelo is Puni, a pilikua (giant) who fell asleep there. Nounou was the fortress of ‘Aikanaka in the days of Kawelo. ‘A’ahoaka can be viewed from Poli’ahu temple which is situated on top of the mountain ridge Ke Kuamo’o a Kāne.

When the entire figure is turned over, the ridge complex called Ke Kuamo’o a Kāne is revealed. From all approaches to Wailua Nui, one is struck by the awesomeness of this geographical feature, the “hunchbacked” mountain and hill peaks of Wailua. Great Wailua is, indeed, a well-storied cultural center of Kaua’i.

The progressive string figures of Wailua Nui Nanai are consistent with mo’olelo (history) tradition of hula where gesture and symbol are used to enhance the story. As performance cartography, the gesture and movements of both hula and hei augment the chanted text to represent geographical description and location.

Kauhale o Limaloa. This is the largest string figure made in Hawai’i and is made by two people. Limaloa was the Kaua’i god of mirages who dwelled at Mānā, Kaua’i, an arid and desert-like place (mānā) with long white-sand beaches and mirages. On the last four lunar nights of Kāne, Lono, Mauli, Muku, Limaloa built homes for returning spirit ancestors.
The four corners of the hei showed, according to context, a) homes for the spirits who return on the night of Kāne; b) the four traditional gods Kāne, Kanaloa, Lono and Kū; c) the four lunar nights–Kāne, Lono, Mauli and Muku; or d) the four corners of the coastal plain of Mānā, Kaua‘i.

Mele Pana
Kauhale a Limaloa

Kauhale a Limaloa
Compound of Limaloa

Kūkulu Kauhale a Limaloa i ka li‘ulā
Constructed in mirage

Ho‘okuene ana i ke kaha o Keāliaia
Arranged at the sun-baked, barren strip of Keāliaia

Holo ka wai lana i ka ‘aina a pau ē
Water mist spreads over the land

A pau lā.
And they are gone.

(Dickey, 1928, p.148)

The idea of the four triangles representing the four corners of the dry coastal plain of Mānā is interesting because the central rectangle of the figure locates an old strip of swamp once located in the center of Mānā remembered as ke ali‘alia, defined as “salt encrusted places with cool springs” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 20). Furthermore, the use of triangles in a string figure to section off land is not new. In the traditional Hawaiian homeland of Kahiki (Tahiti), A Mahara Ra‘itea divided the island of Ra‘iatea in the Society Islands into two divisions, each with four clans (Handy, 1925, p. 58).

On the island of Tahiti, A Mahara Taravao sectioned off the district of Taravao in a similar way (Handy, 1925, p. 59).

Kauhale a Limaloa required two people to construct it. They chanted as they worked to form the base figure. In Sāmoa, Kauhale a Limaloa is called fale sā (church) and in the Caroline Islands it is called naun (a house) (Jayne, 1906, p. 200). When chanting “holo ka wai lana,” the base figure is transformed into a triangle.

When “all is gone” is chanted, opposite strings of the figure were pulled to cause the figure to disappear with each performer holding its own string.

Kauhale a Limaloa can be transformed into what Dickey called Kuahiwi (Mountain). This triangular figure is used to represent water or the mist that caused mirages to disappear in “a pau ē, a pau la.” Another transformation occurs by expanding one side of the base figure to form Kanaloa, god of the ocean and sea represented by one of his sea forms, the humpback whale or koholā. This is the same figure for the Māori, Te Tohorā (Anderson, 1979, p. 140).

Dickey (1928) mistakenly called this base figure, Hale o Pele (House of Pele), Kuahiwi o Haleakalā (top of Haleakalā), and Hale Inikini (Indian House) and is perplexed that the latter does not look like the figure at all (p. 148). However, he may not have known that by manipulating the central, parallel strings of the figure, the above named figures are made. By pinching and lifting the central strings upwards, Kuahiwi o Haleakalā (Haleakalā Mountain) is created. By pinching and pulling the same strings downwards, Hale o Pele (House of the Volcano Goddess, Pele) is made. Hale Inikini (Indian House) is achieved by pinching upwards at the cornices, where all strings intersect and the four corners form a teepee. The same variations of the string figure are also constructed by the Māori but named Te Whare Kēhua, Te Rua Kāmara, and Te Motu Tohorā. Note the similarity between the spirit houses of Limaloa and Te Whare Kēhua as well a reverence to Kanaloa in Te Motu Tohorā.

Te Enata Henua of Hiva‘oa in the Marquesas call the base figure hahaua (great sting ray), and Maupiti calls it i’a (fish) (Handy, 1929, p. 49). I have seen a performance of the Mo‘orea version of hahaua. The woman manipulated the figure herself using her hands, feet, and teeth as “helpers” as she sang so beautifully a story of her island. The wide dispersion of Kauhale a Limaloa in the Pacific demonstrates the sensitivities of ocean faring, island peoples who share similar spatial understandings and affections.

Kalalea. Kalalea is a string figure for the mountain cliff overlooking Anahola. It is the cultural and familial landmark for Anahola families and the subject of admiration in chant: “Nani wale ku‘u ‘ike ‘ana la
e lā i ka luna aʻo Kalalea. How beautiful is what I am beholding above at Kalalea.”

In the middle of the Kalalea’s cliff face was a hole which unfortunately collapsed after a hurricane. Locals say that the warrior-king, Kawelo, threw his spear with his supernatural strength and that is what pierced Kalalea; however, that feat should be attributed to Kapūnōhu, who on a bet with Kemamo, pierced it with the famous spear called Kanika‘a from Kohala. Older stories say that the primordial bird, Kiwaha, was imprisoned in the valley basin behind the hill when he heard raucous humans on the seaside of the mountain, he pecked a hole in the mountain to view the activities.

The string figure shows this hole, Koananei [Koonane, Kōnane]. The mountain peaks are shown by triangles in the upper portion of the figure.

**Mele pana, mele hei**

_Aloha wale Kalalea noho ma i uka
I pity Kalalea living up the mountain_

_E pili ana me Koananei
Embracing Koananei_

_Me Kō‘ulau i ka mala
While Koula has a calm place._

*(Dickey, 1928, p. 111)*

The people of Moʻorea in French Polynesia created a similar string figure, _Moua Puta_, that explained a hole in a mountain pierced by the spear of an ancient hero (Handy, 1925, pp. 62, 63). The same figure is called _Te Puta a Vai Ami_ on Tautira, a peninsula on the island head of Tahiti Iiti, French Polynesia. They are not made in the same way as _Kalalea_ but the memorialization of heroic deeds is strikingly similar to Kapūnōhu and Kanika‘a.

_Pae māhū o Kaua‘i_. _Pae māhū o Kaua‘i_ is translated as “Hermaphrodites of Kaua‘i.” These _pae māhū_ (hermaphrodites) are memorialized in petroglyphs found at the mouth of Wailua River, especially at low tide. The petroglyphs are unusual in that they are the only examples in Hawai‘i showing humans in spiral form. Connected spiral-like loops are found in the _hei_ figure.

The _pae māhū_ came from Kahiki. According to Wichman (1985), the _pae māhū_ were chiefs from the Marquesas who lost a surfing contest with the goddess, Kapō‘ulakīna‘u, and who were consumed by a wave and later turned into stone (pp. 70–75). They may have been related to or were the same _pae māhū_ of O‘ahu that Puku, Elbert, and Moʻokini reported to be twelve _kahuna_ (medical healers) from Kahiki (1974, p. 173).

Another name for these rocks was the “Eight Brothers of Māui” (Joesting, 1988, pp. 7–8). According to the Joesting version, the Māui family lived at the mouth of the Wailua River. When Māui pulled Kaua‘i to O‘ahu by canoe, his brothers turned back in disobedience to see what was happening. Because they disobeyed, he turned them into the eight boulders. This is improbable because Māui’s ʻuā (feats, lit. shouts) did not include this nor did _kupua_ (demigods) have such power. However, other stories verify that Māui’s family lived at Wailua. As noted previously, Māui wrested the secret of firemaking from Ka‘ālālehua‘pī and her mudhens who lived at Manu‘ena in Wailua Nui. Moreover, one version of the string figure _Pae māhū o Kaua‘i_ bears a resemblance to the Māori string figure _Maui or The Four Brothers_ (Anderson, 1979, p. 122). Could _Pae māhū o Kaua‘i_ have once told of Māui and his brothers?

Dickey only recorded Ni‘ihau versions of the string figure _Pae māhū o Kaua‘i_. Both versions are unusual because they begin with the string loops on the thumbs—no other Hawaiian string figure begins this way. When Averkieve & Sherman (1992) noted “The Kwakiutl string figures also bear resemblance to those of Hawai‘i” (p. 5), they were referring to _pae māhū_. We know that cedar logs from the northwest coast of North America arrived in Hawai‘i on ocean currents because canoes were made from them. Could this string figure be derived from an errant group of male travelers from the northwest coast who were brought here by those same currents? Could wayward Kwakiutl have been this mysterious group of _māhū_? It is an intriguing connection.

**Chanting the Landscape**

The chief method of chanting the landscape was through _mele pana_. _Mele pana_ located place names and
landmarks and *hei* showed spatial relationships and geographic features. The spiritual power of place, no doubt, resulted in them being remembered. String figure making was a powerful way to preserve the memory and knowledge of those storied, celebrated, and sacred places. Oliveira (2006) wrote: To know a place is to be able to chant the landscape. *Mele* can be used to connect *Kanaka ʻOiwi* to their *kulāwi*; thereby ‘mapping’ their relationship to those places (p. 239). Mele pana could be recited as chant, chanted and accompanied by hula, or accompanied by string figures. *Mele pana* that accompanied the making of string figures were usually accompanied by progressive string figures which is consistent with Polynesian performance cartography. When no *mele pana* existed, the string artist told *moʻolelo* or recited simpler, impromptu ditties to enhance the performance. A single figure would suffice such as *Hale Paʻakai, Hula o Lumahaʻi,* or *Pali o Keʻe,* figures not included in this presentation.

The fact that *hei* was highly dependent on text, whether it be *mele pana* or *moʻolelo,* is significant for several reasons. Dickey (1928) noted that the Hawaiians of his period borrowed few string figures to none from foreigners. The few figures that were borrowed used nonsensical rhymes and jingles with western themes (e.g., *Pahiolo* [saw], ‘*Eki* [aces]). It would appear that foreign and alien string figures did not attract Hawaiians or lead them to adopt them because the stories, genealogies, and histories attached to them were not Hawaiian in origin and, thus, held no meaning for Hawaiians.

On the other hand, Hawaiian string figures were adopted by other immigrant groups in the plantation setting. In the segregated plantations, *hei* formed social bridges between people. Unfortunately, the use of *hei* as performance cartography and its other functions diminished as other pastimes and games took hold and they were replaced by western-type games and pastimes. The unfortunate matter is that the games of former years were replaced with electronics that are played solitarily and thus void of the socialization inherent to playing *hei* and other such games.

Another reason for the decline in *hei* practice is related to the close dependence of *hei* on Hawaiian language text. When the Hawaiian language was banned in schools in 1896, a whole generation was suddenly punished for speaking Hawaiian. The abrupt shift to English had devastating effects on literacy, academic achievement, and the use of the national language among Hawaiians (Benham & Heck, 1998; Kamana & Wilson, 1996).

Since *hei* depended on Hawaiian language text, the trickledown effect of the English-only policy caused *hei* to decline rapidly. Performance cartography dependent on longer *mele pana* declined quickly and resulted in few elders educated after 1896 knowing how to perform them. By the time Dickey (1928) recorded and notated string figures in Hawai`i, a generation had suffered the effect of English-only policies and were becoming illiterate in the Hawaiian canon of knowledge. He wrote

> Doubtless the loss of knowledge of the old allusions, along with the loss of knowledge of the old mythology, history, and the names of winds, and seas, has had a great deal to do with the decline of the pastime of string figures. (p. 12)

Fortunately, the kāpuna photos at the end of Dickey’s book remind us of those who loved the land and were willing to allow Dickey to record their *hei* performances for generations to come after them.

### Revisioning the Landscape

A question: Were these chance constructions in string or were the ancients able to construct “maps” in string with conscious intent? The fact that many *hei* figures have antecedents in Kahiki, the traditional Hawaiian homelands in the present French Polynesia, indicate that there was an intent to consciously construct “maps” with *hei.* The *A Mahara* string figures of Ra‘iatea and Tahiti and the *Moua Puta* of Mo‘orea were some of the figures that demonstrated this purposeful intent.

Furthermore, there are many other *hei* from other islands of the Hawaiian archipelago that serve as “maps” that cannot be discussed fully here but deserve brief mention to demonstrate how widespread this performance cartographic practice was. *Waiʻī o Lewa* is often translated as *Dangling Breasts* because it displays two dangling loops that are *lewa* (dangling). However,
the figure really refers to the *Breasts of the Goddess Lewa* who resided in the limestone bluffs of Kahuku on the northwest shores of O’ahu. On that limestone bluff was a cave where Lewa dwelled and where there were two stalactites that resembled breasts that oozed a milk-like substance. It is through the performance cartography lens of understanding that one recognized that *Wai‘ia o Lewa* were the breast-like stalactites of the goddess Lewa. This indigenous lens also redefined *Kanukuokamanu* from merely representing the “beak of a bird” to a map showing the mouth of the Wailoa River in Hilo with Kanukuokamanu on the Pi‘opiro side of Wai‘akea and ‘Ohele on the other.

Descendants of the kingdom of Kaua‘i and neighboring island of Ni‘ihau chanted the landscape of their islands in *mele pana* or narrated place and space in *mo‘olelo* thereby keeping alive the collective memory of storied places. Indeed, *Wailua Nui Nanai* and other performance cartographies served to “reference their constructed places, legitimize their existence, and reinforce their legacies” (Oliveira, 2006, p. 212). The conscious intention of *kūpuna* to memorialize place name and sacred space through *mele pana* and *hei* also serve to construct our personal and social identities as Hawaiians (cf. Basso, 1996, p. 5).

Hence, a revival of *hei* as performance cartography in Hawai‘i can serve to strengthen Hawaiian cultural identity, which waned considerably since the 1893 illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. With the growing interest in Hawaiian language, history, and culture, *hei* as an education tool has the potential to teach a whole range of subjects through and in the Hawaiian language. Moreover, decolonizing old views and misconceptions of *hei* as a “mere pastime and game” can begin the process of recognizing the academic and cultural worth of Hawaiian string figure making. *Hei* meaning “to snare” has the power to recapture our imagination and creativity.

**He Ha‘ina—An Epilogue**

Another Kaua‘i story takes place at Ke‘e on the ko‘olau (windward) side of the island. In the epic performance of “Hi‘iakaikapiopele,” Hi‘iaka has discovered that Lohi‘au is dead. His body is brought back from the depths of the earth and positioned in a long house according to an elaborate floor plan with *lei* (garlands) of symbolic greenery and foliage that stretched from corner to corner forming lines corresponding to the ancient meridians of Kanaloa, Kāne, and Wākea. These traditional meridians were similar in aspect to the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer and the equator. Hi‘iaka performs her rituals on prescribed nights of Kanaloa, Kāne, Lono, Muku, Hilo, Hoaka, Kū, and ‘Ole. This detailed ritual map with its symbolic beauty and imagery was described fully by Ho‘ouluumāhiehi (1905–1906/2007 in *Hi‘iakaikapiopele* Rev. ed. pp. 187–189).

Eventually, Lohi‘au is revived and travels to Hawai‘i to meet Pele. The ritual floor crisscrossed with fragrant and symbolic garlands to revive Lohi‘au is reflected in the string figure referred to by some as *Ka Hehei o nā Keiki, the race or the string figure making of the children*, a Hawaiian name for the constellation Orion. If so, the string figure also serves as a “map” of the stars. But that is another story to revive and tell.

**Ha‘ina pau loa—Conclusion**

In conclusion, Oliveira (2009) wrote that “‘space’ is often not defined as ‘place’ until it is given a name and is labeled on a map by the colonizer” (p. 110) but that our place names are our “survey pegs” to the past and “our means to legitimize our existence and hegemony in Hawai‘i” (p. 111). This legitimacy is achieved through recognizing the varied and creative performance cartographic practices of our people. Through *mele, hula, inoa ‘āina, mahele ‘āina, ‘ōlelo no’eau, mo‘okā‘auhau, hei*, and others not described, our kūpuna perpetuated their memories and love for those places so that we can reenact and remember them today.

**REFERENCES**


The following inquiry is based on my encounter, or lived experience, with a kind of knowing that is not necessarily rational, or linear, in a Western framework of intelligibility. I call this “knowing,” and the healing that springs forth from it, spiritual among other things because of how I perceive and experience the energy/healing when it comes through me. In the literature and oral traditions of many peoples, the term “spiritual” is used for the kind of knowing that I am referring to. For me, I feel expanded, humbled, in awe; I feel great love, like the love one feels when taking in the ocean rising to meet the moon or suddenly walking into a mist of butterflies. This knowing/feeling often comes unannounced, but it doesn’t have to be that way. It is accessible through pule (prayer) and especially through noʻonoʻopono (meditation), to name just two possible entry points. Though I am, through time and practice, getting more adept at cultivating balance between the ego and the spiritual state and understanding and nurturing the conditions for this knowing in myself, I am still learning. I am not an expert.

In 1986, I began healing people of diseases from which their doctors had already pronounced they would be imminently dying or chronically doomed to suffer. I was able to completely reverse the diseases or chronic illnesses they had: pneumonia, bleeding ulcer, ovarian cancer, lung cancer, and emphysema to name a few. There was a lot of talk involved in some cases, but no talk involved in others. I prescribed no herbs or external botanical remedies. I merely lay on my hands around the body or on the body. In a few cases, I sent my energy and wasn’t even in the same room, or on the same continent as the person who was ailing.

My experience led me to question the Western concept of health and healing and the way I was raised to think of it. The Western biomedical model, for the most part, assumes a mind-body dichotomy and although there are physicians who have become more aware of the limitations of this point of view, a majority of Western doctors treat the body in isolation from other facets of a person’s life. The biomedical world assumes that if a body isn’t functioning properly, the causes can be reduced to either a biochemical or neurophysiologic cause. Disease is thought to be caused by a “specific, potentially identifiable agent,” and the body is often treated as though it were a machine needing repair. There is also belief in a standard regimen such as diet, exercise, hygiene, and regular doctor’s visits, in order to maintain or reinstate health (Freund & McGuire, 1999, pp. 6, 7).

The sociological perspective on health and illness understands health and illness differently than the biomedical model in that it sees “…medical ideas of the body and its diseases [as]… socially constructed real-
ties that are subject to social biases and limitations” (ibid.). Within the process of constructing concepts of illness and health, power exercises itself in implicit, legitimized, taken-for-granted ways that can manipulate people, “unwillingly and unknowingly” and have an influence that impacts “us physically and in how we perceive, care for, maintain, and ‘repair’ our bodies” (ibid., pp. 8, 9). Thus, for example, as of this writing, the phenomenon of millions of Americans who submit themselves to the prognosis and prescription of doctors without fail and without question, as if the doctors were gods.

I take the sociological perspective of Freund and McGuire as my own, for in my healing encounters, I have found that in addition to the physical factors involved, emotional, psychological, and spiritual components of a person’s psyche have as much and sometimes more influence over the well being and strength of their immune systems. I believe that the separation of the body and mind is a fragmented and limited model and have found evidence to this effect in the fields of biochemistry, neuroscience, and parapsychology. Furthermore, I see the body, mind, and spirit as interacting dynamics of the human condition, and as these dynamics respond to stimuli in the environment (social as well as physical), the state of health or illness is affected. I am not intending to bifurcate alternative healing and the biomedical model. I merely wish to outline from which model I am speaking and how I am defining a crucial part of the nature of health and healing for this project. In this discussion, I approach the body/mind/spirit as a unified phenomenon. I see healing as straddling both the biophysical and the body/mind/spirit models.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), defines complementary and alternative medicine as “a group of diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not presently considered to be part of conventional medicine” and lists distinctions such as these:

1. Complementary medicine is used together with conventional medicine... to help lessen a patient’s discomfort following surgery.

2. Alternative medicine is used in place of conventional medicine. An example of an alternative therapy is using a special diet to treat cancer instead of undergoing surgery, radiation, or chemotherapy that has been recommended by a conventional doctor.

3. Integrative medicine combines treatments from conventional medicine and CAM for which there is some high-quality evidence of safety and effectiveness.

My interest in these definitions lies more in the subtext of the classifications, or in the histories that remain hidden beneath the text. For example, a common denominator of the three categories is that all of them, in one way or another, have their roots in native, layman, and ethnic forms of healing, or forms of healing that are, and have been for often thousands of years, accessible to (lay) people.

Paul Starr writes in his definitive history of the rise of America’s medical profession, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*, that in North America, pre-independence, and before the consolidation of the medical profession’s authority (1850–1930), native medicine was a source of popular treatment. From the time of the first settlements, colonists were drawn to native healing because initially, natives were “free from all the dread diseases that afflicted Europeans, and their good health was...thought to be a product of their special knowledge of indigenous medicinal herbs.” Native cures were, according to an early historian, “too many to repeat,” and included surgery. Cotton Mather wrote that “Indian” medicine was “truly stupendous,” as did many other colonists who believed some Native healers to be as good as “regular white doctors” (Starr, 1982, pp. 48–49).

Ethnic medicine includes such practices as Ayurveda, Chinese herbology, acupuncture and qigong, to name a few and lay, or popular medicine included such practices as homeopathy, botanics, midwifery, inoculation, chiropractic, bone setting, abortion, osteopathy, and surgery. Although the transfer of information went both ways between lay practitioner and those who were trying to create a medical profession, the relationships between the two entities were
not friendly. Lay practitioners were suspicious of the motives of doctors who lay practitioners felt were more interested in acquiring wealth and status within a restricted domain of practice than in healing. Both lay practitioners and the populace resisted attempts to take the commonsense of healing arts out of the hands of everyday people.

Important remedies used by regular physicians, such as smallpox inoculation and cinchona (quinine), were borrowed from folk cultures as well. In the nineteenth century, lay competition created much of the pressure against the medical profession to abandon “heroic” practices such as bloodletting, intestinal purging, vomiting, blistering and treating people with salves made of mercury (Starr, 1982, p. 47). Starr goes on to chronicle the rise of the American Medical Association and the medical profession from “generally weak, divided, insecure in its status and its income, unable to control entry into practice or to raise the standards of medical education...[to a]... powerful, prestigious, and wealthy profession,” with legitimized authority (pp. 7–9).

The history of American medicine is a long lesson in politics and capitalism intertwined with the, “success in science in revolutionizing...the (adequacy) of the unaided and uneducated senses in understanding the world” (ibid., p. 135).

Nineteenth century medical science had its earliest successful applications in public hygiene. The key scientific breakthroughs in bacteriology came in the 1860s and 1870s in the work of Pasteur and Koch. The 1880s saw the extension and diffusion of these discoveries and by 1890 their impact began to be felt. The isolation of the organisms responsible for the major infectious diseases led public health officials to shift from the older, relatively inefficient measures against disease in general to more focused measures against specific diseases. These new efforts made a particularly notable difference in the control of water-borne and food-borne diseases. Sand filtration of the water supply, introduced in the 1890s, was far more effective in preventing typhoid than was earlier sanitary reform; regulation of the milk supply dramatically cut infant mortality. ...The other early successful use of bacteriology was in surgery. The advent of antiseptic surgery in the late nineteenth century sharply reduced the mortality from injuries and operations and increased the range of surgical work. (ibid., p. 135)

The introduction of technological advances such as the stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, laryngoscope, microscope, x-ray, spirometer, and electrocardiograph produced data seemingly independent of the physician's as well as the patient's subjective judgment, while drug companies began deferring to and tailoring their products to be in compliance with the American Medical Association's (AMA) guidelines. These developments...further reduced dependence upon the patient, but they increased dependence on capital equipment and formal organizations. Nonetheless, from the patients’ standpoint, these detached technologies added a highly persuasive rhetoric to the authority of medicine. (ibid., p. 137)

The confluence of developments worked together in the building of an industry and led to the present-day situation in which we currently exist: on the one hand, there is the medical system that has sovereignty and absolute authority over who and what is allowed to legitimately practice medicine, while on the other hand, we have the population, the vast majority of whom can not afford to pay for the services of doctor or hospital or for pharmaceutical costs without health insurance and 50 million Americans unable to afford health insurance (U.S. Dept. of Commerce).

What this brief history demonstrates is that the legitimization of medical knowledge in America—what is designated as worthy of study, what gets subsumed under the category of “science,” and what is relegated or dismissed to the alternative fringe—has had much more to do with an inflection of power than the institutions of science/medicine and academia have so far, in any deeply significant way that trickles into the classrooms of our children, ventured to address.

**Insurrection of subjugated knowledges**

The term “alternative medicine” then, becomes a historically inscribed, political definition that illustrates both the colonial and the modern stratification of knowledge—colonial because of the period that gave birth to the medical association, and modern because of the earlier period in which the separation of mind
and body (as mechanism) was formulated by the Newtonian/Cartesian worldview. The fact that what is now called “alternative medicine” was alive and well prior to the 18th and 19th centuries, and well documented in some cases for thousands of years around the world to work, shows that unlike the sudden springing forth of new knowledge, “alternative medicine” today emanates from knowledge which has been *subjugated* within what Walter Mignolo (1995) identifies as the Occidental, monotopic hermeneutic of the Western modern/colonial world system.

This is an important distinction because the supposed Western *postmodern/post* colonial term “alternative medicine” clearly demonstrates a lingering, present day inflection of what Foucault (1972/1980) referred to as, “*subjugated knowledges.*” That is, “the whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or sciﬁcity” Foucault went on to say,

*I also believe that it is through the re-emergence of these low-ranking knowledges, these unqualiﬁed, even directly disqualiﬁed knowledges … and which involve what I would call a popular knowledges (le savoir des gens) though it is far from being a general commonsense knowledge, but is on the contrary a particular, local, regional knowledges, a differential knowledges incapable of unanimity and which owes its force only to the harshness with which it is opposed by everything surrounding it—that it is through the reappearance of this knowledges, of these local popular knowledges, these disqualiﬁed knowledges, that criticism performs it work.* (pp. 81–82).

Years after I first began my healing practice, while I was still bemoaning the fact that I didn’t really understand what I was doing and still worried that I could be accused of fakery and peddling of self-delusion, I learned that the Chinese not only had a name for what I was doing (Qigong), but had been practicing it for 4,000 years. At the time, I was highly relieved to know there was an authentic body of knowledge to describe what I had been doing (for a few years and with great anxiety and trepidation) by the seat of my pants. I was also outraged. The fact that this could have been a 4,000-year-old practice in China and we everyday folk didn’t know about it in America astounded me. Was I the only one in America to ever feel healing energies coming through her hands and body the way I was feeling it? Was this energy coming through me because I was Chinese? I couldn’t have been the only one in America that this was happening to. Did other groups experience this kind of healing energy within their cultures? Well, let me qualify. I did discover that New Agers were doing similar kinds of healing, and though it helped me to know there were others who were waving their hands around bodies, I was never fully convinced of the legitimacy of New Age practitioners who seemed to just sprout, out of thin air (such as myself!), espousing (sudden) awareness of energetic healing techniques and whose efficacy, in my observation, was definitely hit or miss. I didn’t trust teachers whom I interacted with, who seemed to have the same “theories” as me about how the energy was working.

However, even with my doubts about the New Age (and myself), I was convinced then, and through my research, have grown stronger in the conviction, that what I have experienced of the spiritual healing phenomenon is a regularly occurring human phenomenon not necessarily bound to one culture, but surely and speciﬁcally informed through many cultures. I would be hard pressed to ﬁnd a single culture outside of Western modern/colonial science, in fact, that doesn’t have a very long history of some facet of energetic, hands on healing. When I say this is a regularly occurring human phenomenon, I mean it is common in the same way that being a musician, an athlete, a builder, a farmer, a linguist, or a mathematician is common. Though not everyone is proficient in any one of these skill sets, they are skills—kinds of knowing that are ordinary to the human condition and can be reﬁned with training and practice.

And since that is the case, I am impelled to pose the question, what forces were/are in play that influence(d) me to self-repress and self-denying, to abnormalize and pathologize myself instead of accept and welcome my experiences as a gift or a skill? How do those forces continue to manifest themselves in the Western/American (post)modern/(post) colonial
iteration of what is considered “real” and “normal” as it pertains, not only to healing practices, but to ways of knowing and ways of experiencing one’s Self? What are some of the consequences of these forces on the human experience (which includes the impact on the body as well as the impact through individuals, singly and collectively, on their social and physical environments)?

Because of my ethnicity and the fact that my ways of knowing could have been answered by any of the three cultures (Hawaiian, Chinese, Korean) I descend from—had those cultures been allowed to flourish instead of forced to assimilate into the western, post-overthrow world of Hawai‘i—the question, what is the lived experience of an alternative healer in a Western construct of social reality, becomes tied to an historic phenomenon of the subjugation of peoples (in the case of native peoples in America), their ontologies and epistemologies; and their knowledges (both native and otherwise). Ergo, the question is imbued with much more kaona and mana‘o ho‘onalunalu (hidden or double meanings that must be pondered, meditated and speculated upon, mulled over) than it initially leads one to assume. The question might also be read as, “What is the experience of the subaltern (that is, an alternative healer) who must find ways to live in a world where his/her ontological perceptions are degraded, denied, disqualified, disrespected, or not allowed?” Or, “What is the experience of a subaltern who must find a way to heal (herself and others) in a hostile environment, from the historical ravages of genocide and ethnocide against her people/culture?” Or, “What is the experience of a subaltern who must find a way to restore a connection to her ancestors and her immediate family that have been severed by an imposition of foreign language/contexts/technologies/knowledges/powers?” Or, “What is the experience of a subaltern who must heal herself from the devastation of a colonized mind?”

In the mid 1990s, I had a dream that directed me back to the university. I had been a promising student in the late 1960s, but I was dissatisfied with what I felt was the irrelevancy of my university erudition to my daily life. At the time, I had a notion that I was being brainwashed, that much of what I was studying belonged to a world I didn’t inhabit, and with no tolerance left with which to handle even the most mundane of ritualized behavior, I left unceremoniously. I balked then, at the dream, twenty-five years later, which directed me particularly to take up Hawaiian Studies at the local university. I had already learned to honor my dreams, however, and so with heaviness in my heart, I re-entered the bastion of Western knowledge production known as the University (of Hawai‘i).

From Hawaiian studies I moved into political science, with a focus on indigenous politics. It was from these programs and from my own research that I have found a way to think through my encounters with the supernatural; that I have found a way to heal certain of my own imbalances, gaps, and disconnects between my body, mind, and spirit. It is through the act of reflecting upon, not only the historical native encounter with imperializing Eurocentric forces, but the various contingencies, subjectivities, and assumptions involved in the very act of thinking itself, that I have been led to a new appreciation for the difficulties of my childhood relationship with my family.

Because of these factors, and because the prevailing condition of knowledge production in the West is, as Mignolo (1995) conceptualizes, the Occidental, monologic hermeneutic of the Western modern/colonial world system, I choose to privilege a non-Western point of view in my approach to this topic. Therefore, I begin again with my genealogy, a Native Hawaiian epistemology.

**He Mo‘olelo Hikapiliolana Pokole: A Brief Genealogy**

He kanaka Hawai‘i wahine au. I am a Hawaiian woman of mixed blood, born less than ten years after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and raised in Kailua, O‘ahu, Hawai‘i. During the time of my childhood, the sugar and pineapple plantations were the main source of economic stability in the islands. The United States enacted statehood upon Hawai‘i (1959), the nation it had conspired to overthrow with haole/foreigner businessmen and had been occupying (and is still occupying as of this writing) since 1893. The resultant effect of “statehood,” was a dramatic proliferation of construction in the 1960s, and the rise of tourism and the United States military as the number one and two economic industries in Hawai‘i.
My father’s parents were both educators from Korea who came to Hawai‘i separately and at different times, as a way to escape imminent death or degradation in their mother country. Their marriage was arranged without either one knowing the finer details of the other. Grandfather had attained the highest honors of a gentleman scholar in what is now Seoul, Korea. He was revered for his position, the status of which was culturally represented by his wearing of a scholar’s gat.\footnote{The yangban (literati scholars) were an elite class, schooled in both classical and Neo-Confucian thought, who were dedicated to the Confucian ideals and aesthetic both in internal character as well as external practice. They were expected to hold public office and help cultivate and raise the standards of the society in which they lived and were highly respected for their knowledge and pursuits. “Numerous texts were authored by members of the yangban class (which) provide insight into the ancient and contemporary texts they studied, the new ideas they developed, how they discoursed among themselves, and how they developed government policies” (Lee, 2000). The yangban wrote in Classic Chinese even after 1443, when the Korean han’gûl (alphabet) was developed.

In a nearly untold story, discreetly handed down through my father to my brother,

\textit{Japanese Soldiers one day barged into grandpa’s class, killing a number of students and severely beating grandpa. The soldiers then dragged grandpa through the streets by his hair, degrading his gat (to symbolize debasement of Korean sensibilities, truth, and knowledge) and all but scalping him. Because a few of his students died and he wasn’t also killed, and because he had been publicly “scalped” of his status, Grandpa suffered a great loss of face.}^8 \textit{He had two options to retain his honor: either kill himself, or leave Korea, never to return. He therefore, by dawn the next morning, took the first boat out of Korea. The boat was headed to Hawai‘i, and in 1906, Grandpa landed at Koloa on the island of Kaua‘i.}^9

My grandfather left his hair shorn for the remainder of his life. He never again donned his Korean Literati attire, though he did become a Methodist preacher for the Korean population on the plantation. He never returned to Korea, and he never again saw his parents.

Neither of my grandparents spoke English fluently and therefore, though both were (highly) educated in their own Korean tongue, they worked and lived mostly on the plantation as common laborers for a large part of their adult lives. They birthed, in the process, seven children. Life on the plantation was difficult and Grandmother, who had been a teacher in Korea, lived on no more than three hours of sleep per night. She made her living doing laundry for the plantation workers, acting as mid-wife when called upon, and making kimchee\footnote{Kimchee”} to sell. We were told she was the first person to sell kimchee on the Ewa Plantation. Grandfather arose before dawn to work in the fields, but was fond of drinking and did not usually return home until after midnight. He also subsisted on less than four hours of sleep a night, but it was not because of his industrious nature.

My father, Albert Kwong Ho Kim, the third child and first boy of the Yu-Kim marriage, was given all the leeway of the first son by his father, who was also a first son. That is, in the eyes of his father, my father could do no wrong. Yet, in the eyes of his mother, my father was incorrigible. Grandma didn’t have much time and patience for first son privilege and “incorrigible.” She spent much time having to whip him with thin tree branches, which she would strip of their leaves and extraneous bark and apply liberally to whatever part of his body she could catch. This must have been quite a feat for Grandma, given her tiny stature. Grandma stood, in her shoes, little more than four and a half feet tall. For various reasons, my father became independent at a young age. He sold lei and newspapers on the streets of Honolulu, near the docks, by the time he was five and became financially self-sufficient by the time he was seven.

My mother’s mother, Rose Waiwai’ole Kalāmali’o Naehu, a Kanaka Maoli (full blooded Hawaiian), died upon giving birth to my mother, Rose Chow. My mother’s father, Chow Hoon, a Chinese tailor from Guangzhou, broken-hearted over his loss, retreated with his elder sons to China, leaving the younger children to be hānai.\footnote{My mother was hānai by her mother’s cousins, Mary Kūkahiko and Gregory Kamanā Kalā. She grew up living on a large piece of land called an ahupua’a that stretched over an}
area encompassing parts of Kaupō, Kipahulu, and Hana, on the island of Maui. There were thirteen of them living in the kauhale ‘Ohana Kalā (Kalā Family compound): my mother Rose, her (hānai) mother and father, nine siblings, and Tūtū Lōlō. George Kekahuna, Mary Kūkahiko’s grandfather. Tūtū Lōlō was named as such because he was paralyzed.

The kauhale consisted of three small shacks made of wood and tin and an outdoor shower. Two of the structures were connected by a covered, wooden walkway, the lānai. “The main house was like a living room,” says my mother. It was the largest house but still, only a tiny room where the family would entertain visitors and congregate. At night, this room was used for the family sleeping quarters. Everyone slept, side by side, head to toe, together on the floor of the screenless-windowed room, sharing space also with a ceiling full of moths, mo‘o (lizards), bugs, and mosquitoes. The structure that was linked to the main hale (house) was used for cooking. The third structure was the outhouse. Off to the side, and only partially enclosed, was the outdoor shower, hooked up to the main waterline. “The water was cold, but we were lucky to have it,” says my mother today, “We took a bath once a week, in that cold water.”

My mother’s stand-out memory of her childhood was first and foremost of hunger. In the main, my mother’s family ate a meal a day. Her father planted what he could and was a lawai‘a, a fisherman. The family subsisted on fish and poi, and the children scoured the trees for lilikoi, guava, and mango. They stole into the plantation fields for kō (sugar cane). Although they had title to an entire ahupua‘a, the ‘ohana never had enough to eat.

An ahupua‘a, the traditional Hawaiian land division within a larger district called an ‘okana, generally stretched from mauka (the mountains) to makai (the sea) (Abbott, 1992, p. 11). It took a whole community, living dispersed upon the ahupua‘a, to cultivate and care for the land and ocean environments necessary to the Hawaiian cosmological, social, and cultural structures. When the ‘Aikapu, the “central metaphor … around which traditional Hawaiian society was organized,” (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1992, p. 33) was overthrown in 1819, as a result of Hawaiian contact with Western foreigners; and when land was carved up into parcels to be sold and owned as “property,” due to legislation in 1845–1850 (known as the Māhele), even those such as my grandparents who managed to maintain ownership of an ahupua‘a, could not manage to cultivate enough food and resources to adequately feed their ‘ohana. Therefore, when Tūtū Lady told my mother that all the land their ‘ohana traversed and lived upon during the various seasons was owned by them, my mother inwardly doubted Tūtū Lady’s veracity. Mother’s doubt pivoted around the understandable and unresolved issue of how one family could own so much land and yet be as poor and as hungry as her ‘ohana.

By the time she was an adult, my mother could easily encircle her waist with the span of her two hands, thumbs touching thumbs, fingers touching fingers. My mother had known starvation intimately and on a daily basis for eighteen years. It was at that age that my mother left Maui to relocate to Honolulu. She had no sooner graduated from high school, valedictorian of her class, than she was on the boat. Despite the encouragement of her teachers to continue her education, my mother wanted to begin working immediately. Mother was not interested in more education for herself, she wanted to earn money. In the main, she wanted to eat regularly. By the end of relocation day, my mother knew for the first time in her life, what it was like to go to bed with her stomach sated. She did not know and she did not care that Hawaiians believed (and many still do) that all living things are imbued with a spirit and consciousness and that the universe itself is an interconnected, familial relationship between land, the elements, plants, animals, spirits (ancestors), and people. She had no awareness that, as Haunani Trask elucidates in her book, From a Native Daughter, “Nature was not objectified but personified, resulting in an extraordinary respect (when compared to Western ideas of nature) for the life of the sea, the heavens, and the earth” (Trask, 1999, p. 5). My mother was hungry and she wanted to eat.

My mother’s second most vivid memory of her childhood was her third grade May Day Health
program, which featured, as the special fun event of the day, the “clean kids,” representing, “Health,” chasing away the “dirty kids,” representing, “Germs.” For the rest of her life, my mother would retell, almost relive, the moment she realized it was only Hawaiian children who were collectively singled out as “Germs.”

“Hawaiian children,” concludes my mother, innocently, were mostly, “…poor, dirty, unclean…I could see why we were selected as ‘germs,’ but I will never forget it.”

It was clear to my mother that most non-Hawaiian kids did not care to be near the Hawaiian kids. “We were all so poor; we wore the same clothing all week long. We went to school in them, we played in them, we swam in them and we slept in the same clothes for a whole week. When we took our weekly showers, we changed our clothes. We had ‘uku (lice), we had kākī’ō (impetigo), we were dirty. I can just imagine how we smelled.”

I also noted that she steered us away from learning her language, stating that her mother never taught her to speak Hawaiian. “But if Tūtū spoke Hawaiian and not English,” I asked, “How could she not teach you to speak Hawaiian?”

“I don’t know,” my mother replied impatiently. “My parents spoke to us in pidgin. I learned how to speak English at school… and I was raised by my older sister, Mary. That’s the way we did it. The older children looked after the younger ones.” It is probably worthwhile to note that Aunty Mary did speak fluently in Hawaiian, as did my mother’s older brothers. I asked my mother once, searching for a reason to account for why she chose to learn English and leave Hawaiian behind, if she might have been ashamed of being Hawaiian. My mother answered, “It didn’t bother me to be Hawaiian. I never felt ashamed of being Hawaiian. It just wasn’t good to be Hawaiian.”

The children of my mother’s ‘ohana were also influenced by an ignorance of their historic past; a past that was alluded to by their mother, but explicitly mystified by Tūtū’s insistence that it was ”dangerous” for the children to know their past. This erasure of a Hawaiian historical context from my mother’s memory was underscored when Hawaiian history was not taught in the whole of her educational experience. It was as if Hawaiians did not have a history. The contact between the Western world and a Native world was articulated in my mother’s American History classes as inevitably, “Indians: bad, savage, barbaric, uncivilized; except Pocahontas, who helped Pilgrims and was good.”

Hawaiian language was expressly forbidden to be spoken on the school grounds. English was made the official language and basis of instruction in all schools through legislation in 1896. Although the Hawaiian language is not specifically named in this legislation, coming a mere three years after the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, there is little doubt the ruling was intended to yoke young Hawaiian minds under the Western frame of reference (Schutz, 1994). My mother did not know it was against the law to speak Hawaiian in school, but by implication, Hawaiian became the language of the ignorant, the uneducated.

A deeply interesting detail is the fact that my mother, until my brother and I began our studies into our Hawaiian past, did not know that less than one hundred and fifty years before her time, Hawaiians had a flourishing culture, with an estimated population of close to a million (Stannard, 1994). She also did not know that a mere one hundred fifteen years after the arrival of the Europeans, the Hawaiian monarchy was overthrown and the population of Hawaiians was tragically reduced to a mere 40,000 due to introduced diseases. She did not know that at the time of the overthrow, Hawaiians had the highest literacy rate in the world. It seems unthinkable today, but curiously, my mother had no knowledge of the Overthrow.

The truth is, even though my sister and I attended a school for Hawaiian children, the highly revered Kamehameha Schools, for two years in the mid 1960s, neither of us came away with any real, historical, factual knowledge of our Hawaiian history or our culture.

Relativity

My genealogy informs my locus of enunciation. I identify as one whose lineage includes the incursion of US expansionism and Eurocentric imperialism into...
my ancestral lands and the imposition of Western state apparatus onto the landscape of my environment and my family relations, as well as upon my mind, body, and spirit. My mother’s experiences and her reaction to those experiences have impacted me. Although I live at the intersection of female, Hawaiian, Chinese, and Korean sensibilities, my own rich heritage of ethnic and native culture was systematically suppressed. Otherwise, I would have had a way, as I mentioned earlier, to naturally and organically understand and develop my “extraordinary knowing” (Mayer, 2007).

I was raised mostly in Hawai’i, speaking mostly English and trained, for the most part, in American public schools. That means, to the intersection of female/ Hawaiian/Chinese/Korean, I must also add the American (materialist, capitalist, Christian dominant) strand. Additionally, as I was subject to unexplained, energetic phenomena since childhood (that is, psychic knowing, discussions with “guides,” seeing auras, vivid dream world, etc.) and I have had, since childhood, to negotiate this type of discourse on my own, without the support of culture, parents, or social practice, and because I have had the experience of participating in healing encounters with people where I was the person “facilitating” the environment of healing; and, because I have had to negotiate and learn to live with my natural energies against great internal struggle and conflict, I also add the strands of “(‘alternative’) healer” and “Colonized Other” to the intersection of female/ Hawaiian/ Chinese/ Korean/ American. It is precisely these last two strands that bring me to the conflicted experience of being marginalized and “alternative” in a Western construct of social reality, and it is the conflicted experience I have undergone that has finally brought me to the understanding of what it means to be an unwitting subject of the “coloniality of power” (Mignolo, 2000, p. xiv).

For all of these reasons, I find Walter Mignolo’s rendering of the subaltern perspective as “fractured enunciation” (ibid., p. x) to be remarkably apt. I can neither belong to only a single category of tradition nor absent myself from any of the categories I name. Mignolo enunciates this as a condition of a global imaginary. Mignolo, using many other scholars as inspiration, argues the limits of the modern world system discourse, conceiving of it instead as a modern/colonial world system, and he creates a space, “…to tell stories not only from inside the ‘modern’ world but from its borders. These are not only counter or different stories; they are forgotten stories that bring forward, at the same time, a new epistemological dimension: an epistemology of and from the border of the modern/colonial world system” (Mignolo, 2000, p. 52). Very much influenced by Gloria Anzaldúa’s work, Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza, Mignolo calls stories or knowledge from this space, “border thinking” or “border gnosis,” and defines border gnosis as a knowledge that springs from the cracks between indigenous, subaltern knowledge, on the one hand, and what is legitimized as “true knowledge” in the power structure of colonizing forces, on the other.

**Border gnosis as healing practice**

The story of my ancestors is a story of subjugation and of world views in collision (Deloria, 1978). The change from a Hawaiian cosmology and way of knowing; from a Hawaiian, “gathering and horticulture,” economic structure (Abbott, 1992, p. xi), replete with a comprehension of the stars, which, along with understanding currents, tides, and ocean environment plants and animals, enabled the Hawaiian people, for centuries before European contact, to navigate wa’a (canoe) over vast distances around the Pacific, even to South and North America as legends (and research) have it (Whipp, 2007); of best days and ways to plant and fish; of the importance of co-existing in harmonious, productive, and effective ways with the natural world; of the kind of scientific observation that guided them to construct fishponds that were sometimes as large as 450–500 acres and eliminated a whole trophic level of the food chain (no other group on the planet has done that) (Kelly, 1976, 1979); of how to develop elaborate kalo terraces with complicated irrigation systems; of the need to devise a vast and detailed system of classification for plants (i.e., folk taxonomy) (Abbott); of how to keep drinking and irrigation water pure and flowing, with a minimum of erosive damage (even with a probable population of upwards of a million people); of the kind of nuanced
observation that led them to name nearly 300 types of winds (Nakuina, 1990); of the existence of energetic configurations of the earth by which land boundaries could be determined (papa hulihonua) (Kamakau, 1964/1991, p. 47); of scores of healing plants and healing methods that included and prefigured recent neuroscientific discoveries of the human brain’s left and right hemispheric functions (Chun, 1986, p. 23); to an enforced, Western, materialist mindset has been devastating to most Hawaiians and, indeed, has proven to disintegrate and decimate more than just a nation. It has brought about the very near annihilation of a whole system of knowledge and way of apprehending that, far from being better left in the “primitive” past, is a crucial and relevant contribution for the revitalization and rejuvenation of the earth and its earth community.

Europe began ranking cultures and societies chronologically in the eighteenth century. In 1724, Joseph François Lafitau wrote *Moeurs des savages américains comparées aux moeurs des premiers temps* (Customs of the American savages compared with customs of primitive times) and in *Philosophy of History, written* in 1822, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel undertook a massive rendering of world history in which he assumed humanity’s evolution in successive phases from primitive bondage to the rational freedom of civilizations; from first stage civilizations of the Orient to the later, more enlightened stages of Germanic and Christian civilization (Hegel, 2001). Thus began, as Johannes Fabian (1983) notes, the replacement of savages and cannibals in space (that is, in the colonies, in the new world, in Africa, etc.), with primitives and the exotic Other in an earlier time (that is, chronologically ordering native peoples to the “primitive” and primal beginnings of humanity and Orientals to early stage civilization). Europeans considered themselves to be (latest stage) civilized, “enlightened,” and “rationally free.” According to Mignolo (2000),

*Toward the nineteenth century the question was no longer whether primitives or Orientals were human but, rather, how far removed from the present and civilized stage of humanity they were.* (p. 283)

This shift justified to the European colonist and intellectual alike the dehumanization and dismissal of native peoples’ rights, culture, intellectual development, and ways of knowing, juxtaposing natives against a Eurocentric notion of enlightenment, progress, civilization, and coeval.

To be clear, I do not imagine, nor do I advocate, an exclusive return to the ancient Hawaiian traditions, but neither can I accept the kind of Eurocentric thinking that ranks cultures and societies chronologically by ordering native peoples (and native knowledge) closer to “primitive” and Europeans closer to “enlightened.” Johannes Fabian calls this transformation of the “Other” in space to the “Other” in time the *denial of coevalness* (1983). In considering the denial of coevalness, one only need remember the modern/colonial enterprise, from the moment of the first European contact, to directly grasp the collective subjectivity, will to power, and the utter blindness with which Europeans elevated themselves despite their own horrific, murderous, and racist actions against the “barbaric” and “primitive” Other. David Stannard, in *American Holocaust* (1992), recounts how tens of millions of Native American peoples were killed by Europeans, making their destruction, “far and away, the most massive act of genocide in the history of the world” (Stannard, 1992, p. x). Massacres were ongoing and as savage and inhuman as can be imagined. About the same people Columbus had on his first voyage described as, “well built people of handsome stature,” who were “wondrous timid,” “artless and free with all they possess...and (who) show as much love as if they were giving their hearts...” (p. 63), by 1495, during Columbus’ second voyage, Bartolomé de Las Casas (a Spanish missionary who was on that trip) reported

*Once the Indians were in the woods, the next step was [for Columbus' men] to form squadrons and pursue them, and whenever the Spaniards found them, they pitilessly slaughtered everyone like sheep in a corral. It was a general rule among Spaniards to be cruel; not just cruel, but extraordinarily cruel so that harsh and bitter treatment would prevent Indians from daring to think of themselves as human beings or having a minute to think at all. So they would cut an Indian’s hands and leave them dangling by a shred of*
skin and they would send him on saying “Go now, spread the news to your chiefs.” They would test their swords and their manly strength on captured Indians and place bets on the slicing off of heads or the cutting of bodies in half with one blow. They burned or hanged captured chiefs. (de Las Casas, The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account [1542], as quoted in Stannard, D., 1992, p. 70)

Freud would call this kind of Eurocentric thinking that projected savagery on native peoples while Europeans sadistically and savagely slaughtered, by the millions, men, women and children, a “defense mechanism” (Freud, 1937). And Nietzsche, in Beyond Good and Evil, is also helpful in comprehending the phenomenon of projection when he says, “He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster” (R. J. Hollindale, Trans., 1973, p. 102).

I rehash the horrors of the earlier encounters between Native and European in order to unambiguously contextualize the force with which natives and their knowledge were subjugated; to illustrate the depth with which the European felt how “low down on the hierarchy,” how “disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated (these) naïve knowledges” were/are (Foucault, 1972/1980, pp. 81–82). To be sure, this kind of bias still exists within the Western (post)modern/(post) colonial tradition of knowledge acquisition. The scope of so called, legitimate knowledge from within the modern/colonial world systems tradition and the means of knowledge acquisition and dissemination, though perhaps not in as obviously virulent a form, remains foundationally and predominantly an Occidental monotopic hermeneutic.

The alienation, disempowerment, and psychic/spiritual wounding that Hawaiians suffer as a result of this kind of institutionalized fragmentation, disenfranchisement, and ethnocide can be quantified by socio-economic and health indicators. In the 1980s and 1990s, Hawaiians were the most highly represented of the US population in high school dropout rates, incarceration rates, and “overall mortality and death rates for heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes, and risk factors, such as obesity, hypertension and alcohol-use...” In 1990, the life expectancy for Hawaiians continued to be the shortest of all ethnicities in Hawai‘i; the age-adjusted mortality rates for all causes of death were higher than for any other ethnicity; with the exception of accidents, the five leading causes of death (heart disease, cancer, stroke, accidents, and diabetes) were highest for Hawaiians over any other ethnicity in Hawai‘i; infant mortality rates were the highest: of reported cases of AIDS, Hawaiians ranked the highest (Blaisdell, 1997). These socio-economic and health indicators are similar to the numbers for the dispossessed and colonized native and black peoples across the US.

Although the renewed movement towards Hawaiian sovereignty that began in the late 1970s is changing the trajectory of Hawaiians to a more meaningful, collective self destiny, Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) must still work through the tyranny of, as Ngugi wa Thiong’o calls it, the “cultural bomb” (1994, p. 3). Certainly, in any case, the wedge of doubt and distance that was solidly lodged between my mother and her mother; between my mother, me, our genealogy and culture; and in turn, between me and my essential Self is a wounding yet to be fully healed.

Is it possible to make whole again that which has been ruptured, alienated, fractured, and fragmented? Can this chaos shadow of the native psyche be transformed and healed? My kūpuna used to say, “A’ohe pau ka ‘ike I ka hālau ho‘okahi. All knowledge is not taught in the same school. One can learn from many sources” (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 24).

The essence of this ancient Hawaiian proverb contains an inherent healing function similar to that which is contained in the idea of “border gnosis.” It allows for a diversity of experience, expression, and knowledge. We can all learn from others. There is no One Way. That is, not East OR West; not Native (primitive) OR Modern (enlightened); not Black OR White, night OR day, but both. That means whole, ALL: human AND animals AND plants AND earth AND sky AND seen AND unseen, material AND immaterial; ALL in existence, together, teaching and learning from each and all.

Bringing about health and healing has much to do with understanding wounding—whether on
a physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual or intellectual level; whether the wound is individually experienced or collectively perpetuated; whether the wound is historically, socially, or politically inflicted; intergenerationally or genetically transmitted; consciously or unconsciously, physically or non-physically, materially or immaterially communicated. One doesn’t need a college degree to see that wounding happens on much more than just a biophysical level. Non-biophysical, immaterial wounding more often than not negatively impacts the biophysical level; which means, non physical healing can also positively impact the biophysical level.

The acceptance of that knowledge alone can bring about revolution.

REFERENCES
ENDNOTE


7. http://www.korea.net/kois/magazine/pictorialKoreaView.asp?Html_no=179. “Made entirely by hand, the gat is composed of two parts, the crown that covers the head, and the brim which blocks the sun. The crown is made of finely woven horsetail hair or oxtail hair. The brim is made with fine strips of bamboo sewn together with thread finer than a human hair. The gat is finished with a coating of lacquer…When wearing a gat, the hair was first drawn up into a topknot that was kept in place with a headband called manggeon, which in turn was tied with a strip called tanggeon. The gat was then worn over the top… It has a minimal beauty, being completely black with no ornament except for the string that ties under the chin… These days it is very rare to see anyone wearing a gat on the streets of Korea…. This does not mean that the dignity and authority of the gat has disappeared. For example…if a man wearing a gat were to board a jam-packed subway train, several youths would immediately get up to give him their seats.”

8. There are two forms of “loss of face” in Korea. One is embarrassing, but can be lived with. It has to do with a lack of ability or trustworthiness. The other is tantamount to loss of moral authority and integrity. My grandfather believed he was responsible for the lives of his students and should have been killed before any of his students suffered at the hands of the soldiers. It is evident that Grandfather never got over this seminal incident; for when his second daughter began dating my uncle, a man of Japanese descent, Grandfather beat her until she was unconscious. My aunt married my Japanese uncle anyway.

9. Rev. A. Kim, Jr., personal communication, 8/06/2008

10. kimchee, also spelled kimchi or gimchi is a traditional Korean side dish, made with many vegetables, but mostly in Hawaii, with cabbage, turnips, or cucumbers. It is a fiery dish spiced mostly, since the 17th century, with chili peppers and eaten as an accompaniment to rice and other foods.

11. A more modern Hawaiian practice of raising as one’s own, children who may or may not be biologically related. Connected in concept, but not exactly the same as the western practice of “adoption” or the traditional Hawaiian practice of hānai, which was, the privilege of grandparents to take and raise as one’s own, the first-born child of one’s children. (Pukui, 1972, p. 49).

12. “Land division usually extending from the uplands to the sea, so called because the boundary was marked by a heap (ahu) of stones surmounted by an image of a pig (pua’a), or because a pig or other tribute was laid on the altar as tax to the chief” (Pukui, 1986, p. 9).

13. Tūtū is the Hawaiian word for “grandparent”. Lōlō means paralyzed.

14. Hawaiians lived in groups of houses, not just one house. Traditionally, the houses were generally grouped into the Hale Mua, men’s eating house; the Hale ‘Aina, Women’s eating house; the Hale Noa, the sleeping and visiting/sitting place; and the Hale Pe’a, the Women’s menstruation house. My mother’s family retained that kind of grouping but since the tabu of men and women eating together was abandoned in 1819, they no longer held to the same distinctive groupings. The more traditional Hale were cleaner than the tin and wood shacks of my mother’s day. They were made of various wood for the skeletal structure and covered with pili grass. For more on this, see Pukui & Handy, The Polynesian Family System in Ka‘u, Hawai‘i. pp. 7–14.


16. Recently unearthed chicken bones, whose DNA matched closely with a Polynesian breed of chicken and discovered at an archaeological site called El Arenal on the coast of Chile, implies Polynesians made contact with the west coast of South America as much as a century before any Spanish conquistadors
Ke Ha’a Lā Puna i ka Makani: Pele and Hi’iaka Mo’olelo and the Possibilities for Hawaiian Literary Analysis

ku’ualoha ho’omanawanui

Ke ha’a lā Puna i ka makani
Ha’a ka ulu hala i Kea’au
Ha’a Hā’ena me Hōpoe
Ha’a ka wahine
‘Ami i kai o Nānāhuki
Hula le’a wale
I kai o Nānāhuki
‘O Puna kai kūwā i ka hala
Pae i ka leo o ke kai
Ke lū lā i nā pua lehua
Nānā i kai o Hōpoe
Ka wahine ‘amī i kai o Nānāhuki
Hula le’a wale
I kai o Nānāhuki

Puna is dancing in the breeze
The hala groves at Kea’au dance
Hā’ena and Hōpoe dance
The woman dances
[She] dances at the sea of Nānāhuki
Dancing is delightfully pleasing
At the sea of Nānāhuki
The voice of Puna resounds
The voice of the sea is carried
While the lehua blossoms are being scattered
Look towards the sea of Hōpoe
The dancing woman is below, towards Nānāhuki
Dancing is delightfully pleasing
At the sea of Nānāhuki.

(Kanahele & Wise, 1989: iii)

‘Ōlelo Mua

In 2003, the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa political science department sponsored a symposium titled “Indigenizing the University.” This symposium featured indigenous scholars such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Graham Smith, and Taiaiake Alfred who addressed how Indigenous political theory and methods of research were necessary to support indigenous research, and how changes to the university personnel structure were needed to include indigenous people at every level of the university. A central question emerged for me from that symposium—is it possible to indigenize research theories, methods, and practices within the discipline I study, research, and work in—English? If so, how? This essay explores selected examples of my ongoing development of culturally informed theories that guide the interpretation of Hawaiian orature and literature in nineteenth century Hawai‘i and beyond. Specifically, these are concepts developed within indigenous Hawaiian cultural practice adapted to the discourse of literary analysis, namely kuleana (one’s rights and responsibilities), mo’okū’auhau (genealogy), and makawalu (multiple perspectives).

I begin with a broader overview of the issues and scholarship which informs my approach, followed by a discussion of the selected indigenous concepts listed above and how I’ve applied them to literary analysis, focusing on the literary production of the Hawaiian volcano goddess Pele and her favorite youngest sister Hi’iakaikapoliopele (hereafter referred to as Hi’iaka). With over thirteen separate narratives authored by multiple authors over a period of approximately fifty years, this literature provides one of the most extensive bases for comparative analysis within a single mo’olelo (story, history). As we begin this exploration of specific aspects of Pele and Hi’iaka mo’olelo, the lines of oli (chant) in the opening epigraph, “Ke Ha’a Lā Puna i ka Makani” (Puna is dancing in the breeze), remind us that in Hawaiian
epistemology, movement or action is evoked by ‘ōlelo (language) and the power of words. Because the study of literature is linked to disciplines closely associated with colonialism, such as English, anthropology, and folklore studies, it is uncommon for Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) or other indigenous texts to be analyzed utilizing indigenous perspectives, methodologies, or theories. This is not unusual, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s work addresses. In Decolonizing Methodologies (1999), Tuhiwai Smith recognizes that

research is a significant site of struggle between the interests and ways of knowing of the West and the interests and ways of resisting of the Other . . . it is surely difficult to discuss research methodology and indigenous peoples together, in the same breath, without having an analysis of imperialism, without understanding the complex ways in which the pursuit of knowledge is deeply embedded in the multiple layers of imperial and colonial practices.” (p. 2)

This is true in literary studies as well. With a focus on western literary theory, literary studies is a colonial and a colonizing practice which tends to ignore or devalue indigenous texts. Tuhiwai Smith’s encouragement of indigenous scholars to challenge ourselves to reach back to our kūpuna (ancestors) and cultural protocols in conducting our academic research is as important in indigenizing the field of literary studies as any other discipline. Similarly, Manu Meyer (2003) promotes Native Hawaiian epistemology as an important foundation of Kanaka Maoli cultural practice, including academia. In her scholarship on Hawaiian literature, Haunani Kay Trask (1999a) accurately described the writing process for Kanaka Maoli as “writing in captivity” (p. 17). Trask (1999b) argues that Kanaka Maoli texts have been held captive because of colonialism, and calls for decolonized analysis (p. 167). My research focuses on Hawaiian literature, particularly decolonizing and indigenizing analysis of such. I was trained in three academic disciplines (Hawaiian studies, religion, and English), and the differences in theoretical training and research methodologies between them are somewhat divergent. Collectively, the works by Tuhiwai Smith, Meyer, and Trask inform the indigenizing approaches to the analysis of Hawaiian literature I work with, demonstrating that indigenous research methodologies transcend disciplinary boundaries.

My literary analysis of Pele and Hi’iaka mo’olelo begins such a valuable undertaking within the discipline of literary studies, playing a small part in the recovery of our literary traditions which were lost through aggressive colonial practices that banned our native language and suppressed our indigenous narratives. By providing an indigenous counter-analysis to colonial scholarship that has typically romanticized, infantilized, or vilified Kānaka Maoli and our cultural productions (such as mo’olelo), my research seeks to kahului (overturn) these problematic interpolations and to support the continuing reevaluation of these texts in culturally relevant and pono (appropriate) ways. It is therefore appropriate that such research benefit the larger Kanaka Maoli and perhaps other indigenous communities through a process Pualani Kanaka’ole Kanahele aptly describes as “unveil[ing] for ourselves the knowledge of our ancestors” (Kanahele & Wise, 1989, p. iii).

Towards a new Oceania—disciplinary background of literary studies in the Pacific

In the introduction to Nuanua, Pacific Writing in English Since 1980 (1995), Albert Wendt categorizes indigenous Pacific literature as a post-colonial literature, defining this term as “not just mean[ing] after; it also means around, through, out of, alongside, and against” (p. 3). Indigenous Pacific literature embodies all of these meanings. It isn’t just indigenous Pacific writing that works around, through, alongside, and against colonial literary productions, but indigenous theories and methodologies in the study of our literature as well. In his essay “Towards a New Oceania” (1993), Wendt writes about the influence of our ancestors on us, stating, “Our dead are woven into our souls like the hypnotic music of bone flutes: we can never escape them. If we let them they can help illuminate us to ourselves and to one another. They can be the source of new-found pride, self-respect, and wisdom” (p. 10). It is with this source of ancestral inspiration in mind that I engage in the challenge of introducing indigenous
theory into literary studies, beginning with an analysis of Pele and Hi‘iaka, a central moʻolelo in our repository of traditional literature.

**Indigenous methodologies: kuleana, makawalu, moʻokūʻauhau**

The formation of a “kuleana consciousness”

Kuleana means both right and responsibility, an important cultural concept; in the academy, it is applicable to the concept of one’s right to engage in academic inquiry, or to share information, as well as one’s responsibilities in this knowledge and sharing. Indigenous scholars must be cognizant of what and how we have a right to know and share; as kahu (caretakers) of knowledge, we are responsible to our advisors, disciplines, and institutions, but we have equal responsibility to our ancestors, lāhu'i (nation), and ‘āina.

Indigenous scholars represent our cultures and communities as well as our disciplines within the academy; professional and personal kuleana is different, but overlapping. We have kuleana as scholars to get degrees and promote ourselves in our fields. But we also maintain kuleana to the families and communities that we come from, to not only benefit ourselves professionally, but to represent them well and to give back. Kuleana involves how we choose our research topics; we have a relationship to our subjects, the responsibility to seek permission to engage and follow cultural protocols, to know what is kapu (sacred, off limits) and what is noa (public, free of restriction) within the parameters of our research. Kuleana also involves the second cultural component I am examining, moʻokūʻauhau.

Moʻokūʻauhau is typically viewed as our personal family history or genealogy, linking us in the present to our kūpuna who come before us. My engagement in Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo research is a kuleana informed by my own moʻokūʻauhau—my Hawaiian kūpuna are from Puna on my paternal grandmother’s side and Kaʻū on my paternal grandfather’s side. These are lands that Pele’s volcanic abode straddles, where my kūpuna and ‘ohana (family) of these lands acknowledge her as ancestor and worship her as goddess. I could not have commenced my research without the permission of my ‘ohana, nor have continued without their kākoʻo (support).

Kuleana also implies an understanding of what is kapu and what is noa in sharing, researching, and publishing. In the case of Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo, there are ‘ohana and hula hālau, for example, who protect the traditions passed down within them and may not want their knowledge made public by someone else (or at all), and these traditions are thus kapu to me as an academic researcher at various levels. Over the years, some individuals and hālau have shared information with me to better my own personal understanding of the Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo, while asking me not to write about these chants or stories. Their willingness to share information with me is based on established trust and a personal friendship with me. But I in turn may not necessarily publish or otherwise make this information public, as it is beyond my kuleana to research, discuss, and write about these stories without authorization from the families they belong to. Thus, I studied the publicly available moʻolelo, those which were deemed noa by being printed in the widely circulated and publicly available Hawaiian newspapers. This is an important point to acknowledge when practicing scholarship with a “kuleana consciousness,” meaning, a consciousness informed by a sensitivity to kuleana—again, right and responsibility—to culture, to family, to subject. In other words, it is not okay just to get the green light to commence with research from the professor, the committee, or the department head. The Pele traditions are real cultural practices and beliefs for real people; Pele is family. She is not Madame Pele, she is Tūtū Pele. She is a grandmother, an ancestress. It is very important to remember and respect that. This is part of the indigenous methodology I employ, but I am not alone.

In the introduction to the second edition of *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-u, Hawai‘i* (Pukui, Handy, & Handy, 1972), Terence Barrow discusses how authors E. S. Craighill Handy and Elizabeth Green Handy had increased access to the Kaʻū community because they were hānai (adopted into the family) by their colleague Mary Kawena Pukui’s mother, Paʻahana Wiggin, a full-blooded Hawaiian woman with deep roots there, “as a means of forestalling mali-
conscious gossip or Hawaiian resistance to the overcurious haoles” (p. xii). Of this practice Barrow writes, “When word of this act passed along the Hawaiian grapevine, the expedition’s path was made easy where it would otherwise have been difficult” (ibid.). Pukui’s full Hawaiian name, Kawena’ulaokalaniahi’iakaikapolio pelenâleilehuaapele (The Rosy Glow of the Heavens of Hi’iaka in the bosom of Pele wearing the crimson lehua wreaths of the volcano goddess) is given for the purpose of demonstrating her genealogical link to the goddess (p. xvii). The authors then state

Her lineage is from the ali‘i . . . and kahuna . . . of Ka‘u and its neighboring district of Puna. As the names given reveal, hers is the heritage of the mytho-poetic nature gods of Hawai‘i known as the Pele clan or family, which include Lono-makua (the embodiment of cloud, rain and thunder), Kane-hekili (lightning), Wahine-‘oma’o (the “woman clad in green,” i.e., the verdure of the forests), Laka . . . . the tutelary god of the hula ritual, Hi‘iaka (of the rainbow and healing waters), and other minor figures. (ibid.)

By including this information up front, the authors establish (for both Kanaka and non-Kanaka Maoli audiences) their kuleana to take up this groundbreaking study. Barrow remarks on the importance of this work when he writes

The authors of this book helped to initiate the new era in Hawaiian research in which living twentieth-century Hawaiians were given a central role as participants in the studies made. Dr. Handy [a non-Hawaiian] and Kawena Pukui were among the first who made enquiries in the field among Hawaiians resident on their traditional lands. This approach to gathering knowledge may seem normal enough today, but in the first decades of this century [when this study was conducted in 1935] there was a prevailing opinion that all knowledge the Hawaiians might have had was lost forever. (Pukui, Handy, & Handy, 1972, p. xi)

In Hawaiian cultural thought, the connection, and more specifically, the familial relationship between ‘āina and kanaka, is irrefutable. Hawaiian tradition describes Hāloa-naka, the first kalo (taro) plant and child of the gods Wākea (Great Expanse of Sky) and his daughter Ho‘ohokūkalani (To Generate Stars in the Heavens) as the progenitor of the lāhui Hawai‘i (Native Hawaiians), which solidifies the familial relationship between ‘āina and kanaka (Kame‘elehiwa, 1992, p. 25). The Hawaiian term for Native is kama‘āina, literally, “land child” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 124). Even more relevant to this study, Pukui, Handy, and Handy (1972) write specifically about the relationship between kanaka and ‘āina as mediated through the relationship with Pele and her ‘ohana:

To comprehend the psyche of our old Hawaiians it is necessary to enlarge the implications of the word “relationship” beyond the limitations of the “interpersonal” or social. The subjective relationships that dominate the Polynesian psyche are with all nature, in its totality, and all its parts separately apprehended and sensed as personal . . . Pele is volcanism in all its forms, while her sisters are rainbows seen at sea, rosy glow of dawn on clouds and mountains (Hi‘iaka), the green cloak of jungle of the upland forest (Wahine‘oma’o). (p. 118)

More importantly, kanaka were and still are given these godly names that “confer status” to the carrier these names, given and spoken with a sense of potency and prestige, even today perpetuate the sense of the reality and sanctity of these Persons, when borne by living descendants of these lines. Lono and Ku, Pele and Hi‘iaka and many other aumakua . . . have their namesakes amongst living descendants of their lineage. (ibid.)

When I am asked how I came to choose this topic, my answer is always the same: I did not choose it, it chose me. I strongly believe I am guided by my kūpuna on this path of discovery and scholarship. I also have a strong sense of what this kuleana means to me, my ‘ohana, and the greater Hawaiian nation. The goal of implementing and following a practice of Kuleana consciousness is to transform peoples’ conscious understanding of how one approaches and works with a given topic of study with cultural protocols, practices, and parameters in mind. Within literary studies, it is an intentional nudge to shift the aim of not just what one reads, but how one reads, i.e., how one reads Hawaiian literary studies versus Biblical studies, for example. That while we might understand going into the
research that these areas are different from each other, what we get out of it is also different, based in part on a kuleana consciousness-based research methodology.

Understanding our kuleana in approaching and working with a topic also influences how we better understand the kuleana consciousness exhibited within the texts and how the stories unfold—what is revealed, what is not, who reveals knowledge, when, and how, and to whom, when it is withheld and why, and the consequences of each.

**Conceptual strategy for organizing research—mo’okū’aauhau**

One of the foundational tenets of Hawaiian culture is mo’okū’aauhau—genealogy. Mo’okū’aauhau literally means “genealogical succession” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 254). The root word, mo’o, is a “succession, series, especially a genealogical line, lineage” (ibid.). The word mo’o is also connected to literature; moʻolelo (or moʻoʻolelo) are narratives, histories and stories of all kind, both oral and written; moʻo akua are stories concerning the gods (ibid.). While moʻokū’aauhau is most familiar in the study of human lineage, Hawaiian moʻolelo can also be studied in this cultural framework.

Moʻokū’aauhau is a useful cultural concept in organizing, approaching, and studying Hawaiian literature, including Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo, in a way that makes sense from an indigenous perspective. An initial research question guiding my study examined whether these were unique, unrelated texts, or was there some connection between them? This was an important question to ask: if the texts were completely unrelated, it offered possibilities for analysis that would be unique and challenging—multiple versions of moʻolelo are commonly uncredited, and studied as folklore. Texts credited to a conclusive author are considered literature, with any duplication of the material by subsequent authors seen as plagiarism. Yet some moʻolelo were credited to writers, complicated by the fact that some of the names given as “authors” are believed to be or have been proven to be pseudonyms. In either case, the Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo have provided a unique opportunity to study indigenous literature in a way that defies common western literary analysis and classification.

Examining the moʻolelo from a genealogical perspective allows, in part, for an understanding of the texts in relationship with each other, as outlined in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>STRAND 1</th>
<th>UNRELATED</th>
<th>STRAND 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>HAUOLOA</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>KAPIHENUI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>KAʻAWALOA</td>
<td></td>
<td>KAʻILI [NAKAUINA]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>MAILE WREATH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>PAʻALUHI &amp; BUSH 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>EMMA [NAKAUINA]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>HOʻOULUMĀHIEHIE 1</td>
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<td>1906</td>
<td>HOʻOULUMĀHIEHIE 2</td>
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<td>1908</td>
<td>RICE POEPOE</td>
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<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>EMERSON</td>
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<td>1916</td>
<td>WESTERVELT</td>
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<td>1923</td>
<td>RICE</td>
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<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>DESHA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>KANAKAʻOLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>NOGELMEIER</td>
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</table>

Table 1. Textual Moʻokūʻaauhau between the major Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo, 1860–2006

At first glance, it might appear that these texts are multiple retellings of the same story with little (if anything) in common. A closer examination, however, reveals a relationship between them in content and context, represented in the table by genealogy chart-type lines, linking the texts with the closest relationships in genealogical “strands.” The hiapo (oldest) strand beginning with Kapihenui (1861–1862) is almost reprinted word for word by Paʻaluhi and Bush (1893), with some interesting variations. Emma Beckley Nakuina (1883), the only Kanaka Maoli to publish an English language version of the moʻolelo, is the hiapo text in the second strand of the moʻokūʻaauhau. Later reprints include Desha (1928), a nearly identical reprint of Hoʻoolumāhiehie (1905–1906), and Poepeoe (1908),

4
which is thematically indistinguishable from Ka‘ili. These mo‘olelo inform the contemporary publications by the Edith Kanaka‘ole Foundation (2002) and reprint translation of Ho‘ouluumāhiebie by Nogelmeier (2006). The mo‘olelo by Hau‘ola (1860), Ka‘awa (1865), the Maile Wreath (no date), Manu (1899), Rice (1908, 1923) and Westervelt (1916) have no discernible relationship to either strand (Kapihenui or Ka‘ili), or to each other; Rice’s 1923 publication is a brief summary of his 1908 Hawaiian language mo‘olelo.

Relationships, especially family relationships, are of utmost importance in Hawaiian culture. Lilikalā Kame‘elehiwa (1992) writes that

*when recounting a history in Hawaiian terms, it is . . . important to examine the beginnings of and the relatedness of the players. These genealogical relationships form the parameters of cultural patterns inherently reproduced in Hawaiian history. They reveal the Hawaiian orientation to the world about us, in particular, to Land and control of the Land.* (p. 3)

The occupation (noho) of land is a central theme in Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo; Pele and her ‘ohana alternately create and destroy it and assert their authority over it and over competing genealogies, such as mo‘o (lizards) and other kupua (shape shifting) figures. Mo‘okū‘auhau is such a central cultural concept that the entire universe is thought to be the result of a genealogical relationship, the most well-known version being Kumulipo. An exquisite and extensive 2,108 line cosmogonic genealogy, Kumulipo (which can be translated as “source of deep darkness”) recounts hundreds of generations of human relationships which extend back to the creation of the universe in pō, the beginning of time.

Drawing from this important cultural concept, I extend the metaphorical used of mo‘okū‘auhau to include a Kanaka poetics of articulation based on multidimensional relationships within, between, and surrounding the individual texts. It is a kaona or metaphorically-driven, multiply-layered idea which can be viewed in several specific ways:

- Traditional mo‘olelo come from the ‘āina. They are about the relationships between ‘āina, kānaka, and akua, and also about how the ‘āina has come into its present form (such as when the bodies of slain mo‘o become specific geographic features, as when Hi‘iaka slays Mokoli‘i (Little Lizard), resulting in the islet Mokoli‘i, thought of as the tip of the mo‘o’s tail sticking up out of the water. This small island is related to the nearby valley called Hakipu‘u (Broken Back) representing the body of the slain lizard) (ho‘omanawanui, 2008). They include the naming of wahi pana (geographic features or places made famous through stories), and the naming and character of winds, rains, conditions of the environment, etc., which demonstrate Hawaiian intelligence of, familiarity with, and relationship to the ‘āina.

- Kānaka are genealogically related to each other, to Pele and Hi‘iaka, and to the ‘āina. Thus, for Kānaka Maoli, these mo‘olelo are family stories; they are also stories about the interconnected relationships between kānaka, ‘āina, and akua.

- The story variants are thus related to each other. They are also about affirming the relationships between people to each other and to the ‘āina. Different islands produced different versions of the mo‘olelo to highlight or downplay certain perspectives or mana‘o related to place. Over time, people on those islands perhaps began to tell or know the mo‘olelo in that particular way, which can be viewed as regionalized family resemblances.

- The writers and editors consciously chose to develop these mo‘olelo into what becomes literary genealogical lines—a “mo‘o mo‘olelo” so to speak—strands of which vary, although ultimately they are related to each other.

- Ultimately, the strong theme of aloha ‘āina (literally “love for the land,” a Hawaiian expression of patriotism) which resonates throughout the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo is made manifest by this mo‘okū‘auhau within and between the mo‘olelo. Noenoe Silva (2004) presents a similar explanation when describing aloha ‘āina:

- Aloha ‘āina is an old Kanaka concept based on the family relationship of the people to the land, and on the idea that people actually were born of the material of the land. According to traditional Hawaiian
cosmologies, all things on the earth are alive and are the kinolau—the many physical bodies—of gods, who are themselves physically related to people in genealogies . . . The islands, the taro, and the people are thus conceived of as members of the same family who love and sustain each other. In the struggle against annexation, Joseph Nāwahī, John Ailuene Bush, and others developed “aloha ʻāina” as a discourse of resistance, and simultaneously as a particularly Kanaka style of defensive nationalism.

In a culture which mediates human genealogy through the mating of Papahānaumoku (Earth Mother) and Wākea (Sky Father), the extension of a genealogical concept to Hawaiian texts makes sense in a specific way. In her 2001 master’s thesis applying Meyer’s work on Hawaiian epistemology to contemporary Hawaiian literature, Monica Ka‘imipono Ka‘iwi identifies strands of the literature by generations, utilizing another genealogical approach.

As Silva points out, aloha ʻāina is a discourse of resistance (and nationalism), one informed by a discourse of genealogy, as Kanaka pride in heritage is rooted in the ʻāina. These concepts are particularly relevant to the study of this moʻolelo about akua who are physical manifestations of ʻāina and elements of nature; what better way to present and enact literary aloha ʻāina than through the Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo, ancestors who embody the ʻāina itself?

There are multiple ways to organize, analyze, and discuss texts; classification by date, author, or related themes are probably the most common, all of which I use within my scholarship. Yet as Kumulipo also demonstrates, other avenues of systematic and culturally appropriate classification methods are also valid and useful.5 An examination of the larger body of these Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo reveals a more closely linked relationship between some texts over others. Moreover, just as family genealogies are linked to particular islands or specific locations, such an ʻāina-rooted pattern also emerges within the different genealogical strands of the Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo. For example, writing from Kailua, Koʻolauapoko, Kapihenui (1861–1862) presents an Oʻahu version of the moʻolelo. Poepoe makes specific mention of having Maui and Hawaiʻi island versions in his possession, which he is careful to delineate throughout the course of the moʻolelo (Kuokoa Home Rula, January 10, 1908, p. 1).

Further analysis reveals an even closer relationship (and influence) between specific texts, as demonstrated earlier in Table 1. These varying traditions speak to the richness and diversity of Hawaiian verbal and literary arts, and to the depth and breadth of the Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo in particular. The multiple perspectives offered in the differing versions demonstrate makawalu, multiple perspectives or insights into the moʻolelo. This complexity is demonstrated in the corpus of Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo in other ways, as authors, texts, publications, versions of moʻolelo, editors, and even languages relate to one another in intricately interwoven ways.

Makawalu—understanding the metaphor of the eight-eyed bat

If later writers were aware of Kapihenui’s published moʻolelo, why keep writing and offering alternative moʻolelo? John Charlot (1977) argues that the writers function as redactors, choosing to add in, edit out, or change details and episodes as they saw fit. I argue there was more agency on behalf of Kanaka Maoli writers than just redactors; collectively their reasons for publishing multiple versions by multiple writers speak to a much more sophisticated cultural action informed by cultural practice—makawalu (multiple perspectives). Creativity certainly should be considered. However, the multiple versions of the moʻolelo are part of a nuanced moʻokūʻauhau extending beyond blood relations to relationships with schools of thought, practice, politics, and ʻāina.

The word makawalu literally means, “eight eyes,” and connotes an understanding of multiple, many, or numerous (Pukui & Elbert 1986, p. 228). Martha Warren Beckwith (1970) identifies eight as an important number in different dimensions across the Pacific (p. 209–210). In Hawaiian mythology, Peʻapeʻamakawalu is an eight-eyed bat, the nemesis of the kupua (trickster) Maui (ibid. p. 228–229). The pig-god Kamapua’a battles Lonokaʻeho, a chiefly character with “eight foreheads of stone” (ibid. p. 209; Fornander, 1921, p. 327–328). A known metaphor in
traditional literature, makawalu is an indigenous concept utilized in other contemporary contexts by Pualani Kanaka‘ole Kanahele, and applied in other indigenous educational contexts by Monica Ka‘imipono Kaiwi and Walter Kahumoku (2006). Makawalu is applicable in indigenous scholarship as it encourages the scholar to break free of a more singular or perhaps pedestrian approach to one’s topic; it is also applicable in studying the Pele mo‘olelo because of the multiplicity of texts, mele (songs), oli (chants), pule (prayers), context, and meaning.

Like other literatures, Kanaka Maoli mo‘olelo reflect and uphold Hawaiian cultural values, language, and identity. By doing so, they demonstrate the depth of knowledge, civility, and intelligence contained within these traditions. These texts were originally composed in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) during the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an era that saw the loss of a sovereign kingdom and the subsequent annexation of Hawai‘i to the United States. These mo‘olelo served to inform, encourage, and, sometimes, provide guidance in the ongoing struggle to retain and value Kanaka Maoli cultural knowledge and practices during these politically and culturally tumultuous decades. In contrast, Nathaniel B. Emerson’s Pele and Hi‘iaka (1915), the most well-known publication of the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo, reframes the story to fit western literary functions and aesthetics. Emerson does this in part through a generic reference to the previously published Hawaiian texts in his preface, before proceeding to offer a highly edited, condensed version pieced together from several versions of the mo‘olelo penned by more knowledgeable Kānaka Maoli. Instead of upholding Hawaiian cultural values in a way meant to exhibit cultural artistic achievement, Emerson’s text justifies the ongoing colonization of Hawai‘i. Penned for an English-speaking, primarily American, audience, Emerson’s agenda is to provide insight for this foreign audience into the indigenous people and culture of their newly acquired U.S. possession, the Hawaiian islands.

Asserting an indigenous analysis of Hawaiian literature is another application of makawalu. By offering a counter-perspective to western-based scholarship, a new understanding of the literature that is culturally appropriate is revealed. One example is seeing the vast reproduction of Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo (and not mo‘olelo for other akua figures, such as Lono or Kāne, for example) as part of the cultural value placed on performative texts. There are hundreds if not thousands of hula-related oli and mele associated with Pele and Hi‘iaka from the oral traditions preserved on printed page. Kapihenui (1861–1862), the first published Pele and Hi‘iaka epic, contains nearly 300 oli, mele, and pule. Despite the wealth of chants and other culturally important information Kapihenui’s mo‘olelo provides, it has been described as “poor literature” because it comes across as very mechanical (Charlot, 1998). Throughout the text, Kapihenui’s language is highly repetitive, repeatedly introducing most of the oli with the phrase, “Alaila, ua hele lāua a oli ‘o ia penei—” (Then the two of them went on, and she chanted like this—). Throughout the mo‘olelo, there is very little variation of sentence structure or language; he repeats the above phrase, for example, 57 times.

Analyzing the text from an alternative, indigenous perspective, however, reveals a different conclusion. An important question to ask, particularly taking into account the time period and historical context is, What is going on here? Does Kapihenui have as a goal to write “good” literature informed by western aesthetics, meaning, to vary his word choices and sentence structures? To follow western rules of style and grammar? What I concluded by analyzing the mo‘olelo within an indigenous framework acknowledging the performative nature of oral tradition is that as the very first mo‘olelo transferred to the palapala (written page) from the oral tradition, Kapihenui is not necessarily trying to create a grand piece of Hawaiian literature. Rather, he is trying to capture an oral tradition on paper for the first time, one which would prominently feature poetry and highly minimize prose. As the century progressed and Kanaka Maoli became more ma’a (adept) to western literary aesthetics (and, one may conceivably argue, less familiar with older traditions because of increasing colonialism), the prose narratives became longer and more complex. Thus, the organization of the mo‘olelo in an indigenous framework is different from that of the west, in part because the reliance on an oral-based poetic structure aids performance and
memorization more so than a longer and more complex prose narrative.

Therefore, in Kapihenui, the short sequences of prose function as links between the poetry in a way I’ve described in analyzing other literature using a lei metaphor: the short lines of prose are the string that hold the pua (lit. flowers; metaphorically, chants) (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 344). Pele and Hi’iaka are also very intimately connected to hula, which is performance. Moreover, hula is a dance form that requires words; oli and mele are crucial for choreography. Consequently, there is an inherent link between the performative aspect of the text and the text itself.

To use a different analogy, imagine sitting near the SăkXODGDQFHSODWIRUP from the Pele epic are performed. Is it desirable to sit WKURXJKORQJOLQHVRISURVHWH\[W“1R³WKHDXGLHQFH wants to get right to the story, to see it unfold through the hula, to hear the mele, to participate in the perfor–mance. Understanding this performative aspect of the mo’olelo which may have influenced Kapihenui invites a re-interpretation of his mo’olelo. From a western perspective, it may not be the most engaging piece of literature to read. But I can easily visualize the struggle Kapihenui might have had—how does one take a beautiful, dynamic, three-dimensional mo’olelo, that when it’s performed as hula, mele, and oli engages the senses through visual, auditory, olfactory, organic, and kinesthetic elements—how does a writer take all of that into consideration and reduce it to words on paper? Is this writing on a piece of paper hula? No. Is this a vibrant, dynamic part of the culture? No, although it does allow for continuity of the practice during the extensive period of hula being banned except for touristic performances in commercial contexts (Silva, 2000). It must have been very difficult to take up that task; I have tremendous aloha (respect, admiration) for Kapihenui, because I can’t imagine the difficulty of being in his position, the first one to attempt that work.

Makawalu II: wa’a, lei haku, and a hulihia discourse

Three primary metaphors I use throughout my work to frame Hawaiian literary analysis within cultural parameters are mo’okū’auhau, wa’a (canoe; vessel), and lei haku (braided garland). Having discussed mo’okū’auhau above, I will turn here to the metaphoric application of the wa’a and the lei haku to Pele and Hi’iaka literary analysis.

Wa’a is typically understood as a canoe (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 375). In his collection of poems Star Waka (1999), Māori poet Robert Sullivan widens the metaphoric use of wa’a/waka as a vessel of different kinds of transport, particularly in poems like “Honda Waka” (comparing his automobile to a canoe) and “2140 A.D.” (future space travel) (p. 7, 8). In a Hawaiian context, wa’a metaphorically refers to a woman; it is also applied to moving masses of molten lava (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 375). Pele and her ‘ohana travel to Hawai‘i from Kahiki (ancient homeland) in a wa’a. Hi’iaka and her companions must travel between islands in wa’a; for centuries, the wa’a was the most important vehicle of transportation from island to island across the vast expanse of Te Tai Moana Nui (Oceania). On another level, the mo’olelo itself is a wa’a, a vehicle transporting our ancestors and ancestral knowledge across space and time, continuing to enlighten and inspire us, reminding us who they were, who we come from and by extension, who we are today. Each mo’olelo is a wa’a that carries the mana’o (thoughts) and intentions of each writer; it serves as a metaphoric vehicle for each of their mo’okū’auhau pili koko (personal genealogies) as well.

The final metaphor is that of the lei haku; it has been used in other contexts, such as to describe ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hopkins, 1992) and to describe contemporary Hawaiian poetry (ho’omanawanui, 2005). It is an appropriate metaphor to describe the Pele and Hi’iaka mo’olelo as well—there is a close connection between lei haku as adornment in hula performance and Hi’iaka herself, who is a noted lei maker.

The mea kākau (writers) of the large corpus of Pele and Hi’iaka literature weave together a significant correlation of seemingly unrelated practices, such as aspects of religion and culture, as well as gender and power politics. One example is the link between hula and lua (fighting arts). Another is demonstrated in ‘anā’anā. Often mis-translated into English as “witchcraft” or “sorcery,” even in Hawaiian sources (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 24), ‘anā’anā embodies the
two sides of the healing arts: the power to give or restore life through prayer and supplication (via Hi‘iaka), and the power to take life through similar means (via Pele’s other sister, Kapō‘ulakīna‘u). The ‘ōlelo no‘eau (proverb), i ka ‘ōlelo ke ola, i ka ‘ōlelo ka make (in the word there is life, in the word there is death) encapsulates the culturally important concept of word power, which is demonstrated in several ways throughout the Pele narratives. This is prominently featured in the extensive “dueling” chant sequences between representatives of the Pele clan, most notably with Hi‘iaka and the clan’s enemies, in the use of canonized vocabulary for Pele which reveals her power, and through ‘ōlelo no‘eau for Pele, some of which also allude to resistance. Not only is Pele a goddess with her own literature, she also has her own vocabulary.

For example, hulihia, a canonized word throughout the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo, applies not only to the flow of lava “overturning” the established order on the land, but also, I argue, spoke metaphorically to Kānaka Maoli from the 1860s to the 1930s to kahului or resist western colonization through what I call a “hulihia discourse.”

A traditional way to express this hulihia discourse is embedded in the epithet for Pele, noho Pele i ka ‘āhiu (Pele stays in the wild) (Charlot, 1998). This epithet speaks not only to Pele’s powerful female nature (definitely not “feminine” or demure by Western standards), but to her stature as a goddess having the authority to kahului the sovereignty over the land established by Kāne and the other male gods, without the fear of retribution. Furthermore, while the worship of male gods centered on the practice of ‘aikapu (literally, “sacred eating,” where men and women ate separately and certain foods were restricted from women), Pele worshippers were considered ‘aikū. ‘Aikū means to “to eat freely; to do as one wishes; to break taboos or transgress” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 10). It also means “to eat in an improper manner” or “to take food that is set apart as temporarily or permanently sacred or forbidden to use,” and “to act contrary to custom, prescribed rule, or established precedent; to overlook, disregard, or take no notice of a tabu” (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1996, p. 145). In practice, this perhaps meant that Pele followers did not have to follow the ‘aikapu mandated by the kāhuna for the male gods. Kame‘eleihiwa (1996) further speculates that it “may have been that the Pele kapu were not the same as those practiced by the Ali‘i Nui who lived under the ‘Aikapu,” particularly since “the political power of the ‘Aikapu depended most heavily upon the worship of Kū, or Kūnui‘kea, at the luakini” (ibid.). Arguably, the practice of ‘aikū demonstrates another dimension to Pele’s godly stature, and reveals the strength of her female mana. It also demonstrates the intertwining of mana wahine and political power. This concept of mana wahine metaphorically applied to the publishing of Pele mo‘olelo throughout the politically tumultuous years from the 1860s to the 1930s, a time when the aggressive colonial push to wrest control of Hawai‘i intensified.

Prior to colonization, the relationship between Kānaka Maoli and Pele was internally varied in the context of traditional polytheistic religious practices, as Kānaka Maoli worshipped nā Akua (gods) most suitable to their ‘ohana, geographic regions, or occupations. With the coming of missionaries, who sought to implant the “jealous God” of Christian monotheism upon the hearts (and land) of Kānaka Maoli, the relationship between most Kānaka Maoli and our indigenous gods was irrevocably altered—for many, it was completely severed.

Thus, in tracing the history of Kanaka Maoli-produced Pele literature as a literature of resistance to western colonization, it is important to acknowledge and examine the politicized intertextuality of the various mo‘olelo. On one hand, the narratives of Kanaka Maoli authors were in competition with colonial writers. On the other hand, these two strands of literature also inform each other. This interweaving is no mere coincidence for Kanaka Maoli writers, who have actively sought to disrupt the colonial appropriation of our traditional mo‘olelo. Thus, rather than seeing Kanaka Maoli-produced texts as acts of submission and domestication, I read them as political strategies embodying resistance, especially as they involve cultural and linguistic coding. Furthermore, this strategy of resistance worked because it was well executed, playing to dismissive colonial attitudes that wrote off these narratives as “pagan” myths and “harmless” folktales. Conversely, the haole misunderstanding of the cultural and linguistic codes embodied in these mo‘olelo resulted in misappropriations of the texts.
Thus, Kanaka Maoli continue to weave a lei of resistance to colonization through our literary and performing arts, of which Pele and Hi‘iaka literature is but one example. Likewise, we continue to assert our indigenous right to claim our traditions, practices, and cultural knowledge, and to claim the ‘āina that is formed from the body of our ancestral deity—Pele—upon which we are still sustained as a láhui.

The power of Pele and Hi‘iaka mo’olelo is inextricably linked to mo’okū’auhau, mana wahine (female power), and religion, a political undertone implied through association with each. Pele was and is revered as god and ancestor. As with the tāro-child Hāloa, Kanaka Maoli are genealogically connected with Pele. Incarnated as Pelehonuamea, she is a form of Papahānaumoku, the Hawaiian earth mother, or closely linked to her because she is—as lava—the creator of new land. Pele is associated with the birth and growth of land in other ways, including through her relationship with her siblings, such as her numerous Hi‘iaka sisters, who collectively and metaphorically represent the healing of the land through the regeneration of vegetation upon it after it is devoured or created by their elder sister, Pele (Kanahele in Puhipau & Landers, 1989). Thus, Pele and Hi‘iaka work in tandem, reflecting two lines of Hawaiian cultural thought: the reciprocally supportive relationship between older and younger siblings, an important Hawaiian value upon which traditional society was based, and the balance of opposing principles as represented by the Hawaiian value of pono (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1992, p. 25–26).

Pele is an important symbol in part because she is the only female volcano deity in the Pacific. Thus, the corpus of Pele and Hi‘iaka mo’olelo raises issues of gender, sexuality, and desire, themes presented throughout the literature. For example, Pele has the authority and ability to overpower males, both godly and human. Another is the presentation of aikane (same-sex and bisexual) relationships within the narratives, suggesting that these behaviors fall within the norm and are acceptable for both genders. Desirability is linked to performance (hula and oli) where the men perform for the women (rather than the other way around) to attract a lover.

**Ha‘ina ‘ia mai ana ka puana (conclusion)**

Ha‘ina ‘ia mai ana ka puana; the story has been told. For many and varied reasons, indigenized theories, approaches, and methodologies are applicable to what we as indigenous scholars do within the walls of the academy. In my own teaching, research, and writing, I advocate for the importance of recognizing that the lessons inherent in our traditional mo’olelo are applicable today within a cultural context; they are not just cute stories from long ago to be mislabeled and dissected as folklore, mythology, or oral traditions. Within the context of literary studies, indigenous theories, methodologies and practices are important aspects in understanding our own literary history, traditions, and practices. As the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo’olelo exemplify, there is much to be discovered, because despite the immense repository of Hawaiian-language literature, Pele and Hi‘iaka “are sisters . . . that we [still] do not know much about” (Kanahele & Wise, 1989, p. i). Overall, as indigenous scholars who represent our culture and larger communities in the academy, we must be at the forefront of excellence and demand of ourselves and others that pono scholarship be done with aloha—with love and respect, goodness and generosity—benefiting our work, our cultures, and our láhui.

**REFERENCES**


Ho’oulumāhieie. (1905, July 15–November 24). Ka moolelo o Hi‘iaka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele, ka wahine i ka hikina a ka la. Hawaii Aloha, pp. 1, 4


ENDNOTES

1 “Ke Ha’a La Puna” is “the first recorded hula in the Pele and Hi‘iaka saga” (Kanahele & Wise, 1989: 65–66).

2 Pukui’s Hawaiian name and its translation are broken into three parts by Barrow; I have condensed them into one name and one translation here.

3 An example is the ongoing discussion of whether Ho’oulumahieie, considered by scholars working in the area to be a pseudonym, is actually Joseph Poepeoe, who also published under his own name (see Charlot, 1998; Silva, 2004; Nobgelmeier in Ho’oulumahieie, 2006; and ho’omanawanui, 2007).

4 Poepeoe was editor of the newspaper Ka Na‘i Aupuni at the time the moʻolelo was published.

5 One example in Kumulipo is the ordering of the birth of fish in the second wā (time period; chapter). While one western method of classification is by size, i.e., smallest (simplest) to largest (most complex), the birth order of fish species builds on root words, sounds, mnemonic tools, and is a kind of linked assonance, or morphological phonology: i.e., “i’a” (fish) and “na‘i’a” (dolphin) (see ho’omanawanui, 2005, p. 37).

6 This is discussed in depth by Pukui and Handy (1972).
Aloha Pē: Ka Huliau

Kimo Cashman

We are the stories we tell. This is the story I tell.¹

Fire the Pōhaku Cannon
This is the world we saw.
This is the world we are seeing.
This is the world we want for you.
This is our journey to create a world for you.
This is the story of our journey.
This is the story of the firing of the Pōhaku Cannon!²

Ka Huliau

A series of events that occurred approximately ten years ago had a profound effect on my life. These events occurred within a very short period of time and have set me on a particular path, a life’s journey.

Going Home to Kelemānía

Day one – We are on our way to Kelemānía, the motherland of sorts—the homeland of my great-great grand parents. This is my first visit to Kelemānía and maybe my last. It is, therefore, a very special trip. I feel like I am going home. I feel a strong connection to Kelemānía.

This is also the homeland of my ipo’s ‘ohana. Unlike myself, she still has a relationship with her relatives in Kelemānía. They will be taking care of us during our visit. I have not met them yet, but I have heard many stories about them and their ‘āina and am eager to meet them all. There is a bit of apprehension as well. I am not sure of what to expect from the German people in general. I am a dark-skinned Hawai’ian man with long-bushy hair. I am assuming that I look different from most of the German people. How will I be treated? Will the family welcome me? Will my ipo and I be in any kind of danger because of the way I look? I am not sure of what to expect. But still I am eager to visit Kelemānía and meet the ‘ohana. I am eager to learn about Kelemānía and maybe find a connection to my own ‘ohana. I not sure. I little bit scared.

Nā Pua O Ingelheim

We meet the ‘ohana at the airport and they seem eager to meet us. They greet the women with bunches of flowers that they tell us were picked from their gardens. Most of the younger folk speak a little English so we are able to talk-story. We head to the house where we will be staying. It is located about thirty minutes from the airport in a town called Ingelheim. The town seems to be similar in size to Waiawā. There are a number of fields with fruits and vegetables growing and old, but well-kept stone buildings. There are also signs of modernization—a Walmart, graffiti, new homes are being built. ‘Anakala points in the direction of some of his fields and tells us he will take us on a tour of the area once we are settled in. As we approach our destination, it feels like we have stepped back in time. The cobblestone pathways, barely wide enough for our car, wind between rows of old brick houses. Large brick walls completely surround each house and courtyard giving each a fortress like feel. We drive up to a sliding gate made of wood that is the entrance to ‘Anakala’s place. He opens the gate and we drive into the courtyard fronting his house.
The beautiful two-story home overlooks the courtyard that they tell us once housed farm animals during the winter months. The courtyard is quite large. There is enough space for about eight cars. There is a dining table and some chairs set up in a corner of the courtyard. The family has prepared a meal that is waiting for us. ‘Anakala, however, insists that we tour his fields before we eat.

Das Cherries

The fields are about two-blocks away from the house. ‘Anakala’s mo’opuna lead the way as we walk through the quiet town to the fields. The mo’opuna, two boys who are about four or five years old, run ahead of our group and seem just as excited as we a few minutes later. One of the boys picks a few yellow flowers to take home to put on the dinner table.

The family has almost 100 acres of neatly sectioned fields of cherries, apples, Mirabelle plums, strawberries, asparagus, and a variety of other crops. ‘Anakala tells us that the fields belong to different families in the community. He points to his ‘aina, his daughter’s ‘aina, and his son’s ‘aina. We walk towards his ‘aina along the dirt path that runs between the sectioned fields and see some of the other families working. According to ‘Anakala, the families try to help each other during the harvest seasons. I also notice huge piles of firewood stacked on every field. ‘Anakala tells us that they store the wood for use during the cold winters.

We stop at one of ‘Anakala’s ‘aina—roughly five acres full of cherry trees aligned in rows. Each cherry tree is about ten to fifteen feet tall. I don’t know much about cherry trees but it seems like they are ready to be harvested. Each tree is just loaded with cherries. Cherry juice is believed to help alleviate the pain associated with gout attacks. If I have a gout attack on the trip, I know where I need to come.

We return to the house and spend the evening eating, talking, laughing, and singing. The ‘ohana is beautiful. I can already tell that they are a strong, proud, and ‘olu’olu people. They remind me of our ‘ohana at home in Hawai‘i. I see personality traits of members of our ‘ohana from Hawai‘i in many of them.

Land and people

Today will be another busy day. We wake up early in the morning and prepare to work in the fields with the ‘ohana. It is cherry season in Ingelheim and ‘Anakala them have a lot of cherries to harvest. The ‘ohana have already done so much for us. It is good to finally have an opportunity to help them out in some way. This is a chance for us to move beyond just being visitors to actually being a part of the working ‘ohana and to show them that helping each other is a natural part of how we do things too.

We load the trailer and the tractor with buckets and ladders and make our way to the ‘aina. I sit on the tractor fender as ‘Anakala speeds to his destination. I hope I don’t fall off the tractor and die in Kelemānia.

We reach the ‘aina, and ‘Anakala gives us a quick demonstration on how to pick cherries. I set up a ladder, climb up, and begin picking cherries. There are four of us picking the cherries while the rest of the ‘ohana collect and carry the harvest to the trailer to be unloaded. I eat most of the cherries I pick from the first tree I work on. The cherries are ‘ono.

It feels really good to be working. I feel like I am a contributing member of their ‘ohana. There is somewhat of a language barrier but we are all working together. We speak the language of hard work and taking care of each other.

I am overwhelmed by the fact that I am working in a cherry field in Kelemānia. I am lucky to have this opportunity. It is tiring work. Hopefully we can work again tomorrow.

On a much sadder note, I receive word from our ‘ohana at home that Grandpa has fallen ill and has been admitted to a hospital. He is not doing well. Our thoughts are with him.

Hale Pule

We head south today to visit ‘ohana in Kotschach, Austria. We’ll be on the road for about a week accompanied by ‘Anakala and ‘Anakē. This is not a good time for ‘Anakala and ‘Anakē to be away from their ‘aina, but they are concerned about us traveling alone across Kelemānia. We’ll try to get
back to Ingelheim as soon as possible so we can finish harvesting cherries.

We pass a number of small towns along the way to Kotschach and see people working their ‘āina. There are bails of hay dotting the fields. Their ‘āina, like ‘Anakala’s, are beautiful. Everyone seems to be preparing for winter. We stop at a few of the towns to rest and look around. The towns are all very similar. Each of them has a few shops, old buildings, and a small church. We make it a point to visit each church to aloha what seems to be the soul of the town. There are graveyards in close proximity to each of the churches. I wander about the cemeteries scanning the headstones for our ‘ohana names but find none. I think of Grandpa especially while we visit the churches and make simple offerings in his name. I know he would appreciate the mana of these places. He is with us along this journey through his homeland.

Schonau

In Konigsee, we take a boat ride out to St. Bartholomew’s Church. The church consists of three white towers with red-fluted roofs. There is a clear reflection of the towers in the water. The water of Konigsee is a shade of blue that I have never seen before. It is beautiful. Snow capped mountains surround Konigsee. The air is cold but fresh. The boat captain plays a German melody on his bugle that he dedicates to Grandma. The sound from the bugle echoes throughout the Konigsee valley. At Konigsee, Grandma them share stories about their childhood in Kelemânia.

Reiden

After driving all day, we find our way to a quiet little town called Reiden. The town seems to have gone to sleep for the night. We find a bed and breakfast to stay for the night. Our hui takes up three of the five rooms in the old house. We rest for a moment and then take a walk through the town. We visit the church that is at the center of the town. We go into the dimly-lit church to pule, and then head back to our “old house.”

We wake up in the morning to the sound of cows mooing and cow bells clanking. The ground floor of the house we are staying at is apparently a stable for approximately ten cows. We see through the screenless window, an elderly man walking with the cows through the town. We find out from the inn-keeper that the cows are kept in the stable during the cold nights and taken to the fields in the morning to graze. At Reiden, we listen to ‘Anakala tell stories in German. They must be good stories because the kūpuna are laughing. We laugh along with them as if we understand exactly what they are saying. I hope they are not talking about us. My ipo and I listen intently for our names as they talk with each other. We don’t hear our names mentioned but they may have already given us German nicknames that we are unaware of. We continue to laugh along with them. I think they are talking about us. Good fun!

Maria Luggau

Maria Luggau is near the border of Austria and Italy. As we drive through Italy, my ipo notices a display of the stations-of-the-cross made out of wood in a field. We stop to look. The church of Maria Luggau is nearby. The church is beautiful. The exterior is painted white with gold trim. Gold is the predominant color on the inside. The altar is surrounded by statues that appear to be glowing. It is an easy place to sit, be silent, and pule. Grandpa is in our thoughts all the time. As we are leaving Maria Luggau, Tūtū reminds us of a road sign we saw as we drove into town. The message on the sign is a notice to all visitors to take their “rubbish” with them as they leave the town. This is a good message. Our ‘ōpala is not their kuleana. It is ours. This is a good sign for home. This is something I can imagine Grandpa saying.

‘Anakē Mutter

‘Anakē Mutter took care of the kids when she was a kid herself. She is our oldest relative and a tough, but equally as kind, lady. She lives alone in her home in Kotschach, Austria but her children and grandchildren live nearby. From the balcony of her house, we can see a church across the valley. The church is nestled in the forest and is barely visible if not for the lone light coming from its bell tower. In the room that we are staying in, there is a black and white picture of twenty-seven young men in German military uniforms. We find out from ‘Anakē Mutter that the picture is of the young men from Kotschach who died in World War II. These
men, or these boys, in the picture seem so young. ‘Anakē Mutter them share stories about the war, the camps, the loss, and the exodus to Hawaiʻi.’

Amidst the beauty of this place, there is a sadness that I sense, especially when I listen to ‘Anakē Mutter, that I am trying to understand. Through her stories, ‘Anakē Mutter makes me feel like I have lived her experiences. I almost understand her tears, her sense of loss, her struggles, her aloha for her ‘ohana, and her aloha for this place. I sense, as she speaks, that she is telling us that the end of something is near - the end of a life, the end of a way of life, the end of a relationship. I’m not sure. But I think ‘Anakē Mutter is looking forward to the end. ‘Anakē Mutter’s house is a spiritual place for everyone.

‘Anakē Schwester

The church of St. Hildegard sits above the Rhine river and Rudesheim. You can see it from the fields in Ingelheim. This is ‘Anakē Schwester them’s church. Miracles are attributed to this church and its nearby streams.

Grandma tells stories about St. Hildegard, the Rhine, and her childhood. Grandma is now in her eighties and has a difficult time traveling. She shares a story about her fear that her next trip to Kelemānīa may be her last.

Our journey in Kelemānīa is nearing its end. We are back in Ingleheim and everyone seems glad to be “home.” There is much to be done in the fields so we’ll spend the next few days picking cherries with the ‘ohana. The best part of the trip is the time we spend helping the family in the fields. Helping them is a way for us to mahalo them for their aloha.

We are preparing for our trip home. We are not looking forward to saying goodbye to everyone. Our ‘ohana in Kelemānīa is beautiful. They shared their homes with us. We shared stories. We worked together. We helped each other. They made me feel like I was one of their own. I feel a strong connection to them and with the places that are dear to them. It feels like I am at home.

As we pack our things for our journey home, there is one gift in particular, amongst all the gifts that we picked up for our family that is especially important.

It is a wooden crucifix inscribed with the names of the churches and places we visited on our trip. The crucifix is for Grandpa. Grandpa is a man of God. The crucifix is a way for us to bring the pule we said for him along our journey throughout Europe, directly to him. We want to give the pule to him. It is our way to aloha him.

From Kelemānīa,
We travel to see Grandpa who is still in a hospital in the states.
This is the last time we see him.
This is the last time we speak with him.
The last story he tells us is about fishing in Hāmoa.
He passed away soon after our visit.
He passed away, way too soon.

We are the stories we tell. This is the story I tell.

There is a mele by Noland Conjugation entitled “Great Hawaiian Man.” When I hear this mele, I am reminded of some of the kāne in our ‘ohana, especially Grandpa.

Thoughts of him and his life ring through as I hear this mele.

A Great Hawaiian Man
We knew a great Hawaiian man, him made of ‘āina, of many sands.
And as we watched him walk within the waters off Hōkū‘ula, we found ourselves surrounded in the wonder of his life.

His story continues, “It’s a white man’s world.”
We knew a great Hawaiian man, he was a simple fisherman.
We can clearly see him from the place he told us to quietly wait. He helps us realize the reason why we carry on.

Sail on our soul of Haneo‘o. The ‘iwa spreads its wings and carries us home.

You are the path, take us home, take us home.
His story continues, “Every Generation has its war.”
We knew a great Hawaiian man. He is standing with us in a sacred land.
In those final moments, we could feel it in the grasp of his old hands and we understood. We are the children left to carry on. We are tomorrow, we are living here today, holding on to wisdom that he gave us yesterday.
His story continues, “Be proud you Hawaiian.”
We knew a great Hawaiian man. We watched him
walk in the waters off Haneo’o.
We found ourselves wandering in the moments of his
life.
Fly on soul of Haneo’o, take us home Grandpa, we
wanna go home.
His story continues, “Haneo’o is home.”

**Aloha e Tūtū Kāne**

He was the po’o of our family. He was an
important connection for us to our ancestors, to
places, and to a time long gone. Through the stories he
shared with us and by just spending time with him,
we learned who Grandpa was - his beliefs, his way of
doing things, his aloha for people and place, and his
hopes and dreams. I realized much later in life that
as we were learning about Grandpa, we were also
learning about ourselves, our kūpuna, and our home.
Grandpa was our connection not only to past events
and our kūpuna, he was our connection to ourselves.
He was helping us to understand who we are and
where we are from. He was also helping us to build
and understand our relationship to people and place,
and therefore understand our kuleana to people
and place.

**Ka Huliau**

Grandpa’s passing marked a time of great change.
Everyone’s role in the family was affected by his
passing. His children were especially affected as they
assumed roles within the ‘ohana that we took for
granted were his—the leader, the po’o, the story-teller,
the kupuna, the organizer, the face of our ancestors.
His children became the elders in the family.

With our po’o gone it became all of our kuleana to
tell his story and the stories he shared lest we forget
who we were. His passing is a stark reminder of how
quickly time passes by and how urgent it is for us to
seek the knowledge and insights of our kūpuna.

Only a moment after our journey to Kelemānia,
Only a moment after his passing,
In the midst of celebrating his life,
A daughter was born!
Hulō! Hulō!
Our baby is here!
A little girl sent to us by Grandpa them,
A little girl in the likeness of them.
Hulō! Hulō!

Reflection: Our daughter is here. And we hold gifts
in our hands to share with her given to us by Grandpa
them, our ‘ohana in Hawai‘i, our ‘ohana in Kelemānia,
and the places we hold dear. Our gifts are our
experiences, mo’olelo, connections to people and place,
and our aloha. We hope she comes to cherish these
things and sees them as integral aspects of who we are
as a hui. We hope that an appreciation for these gifts
helps her understand her kuleana to care for our hui.

**We are the stories we tell. This is the story I tell.**

“He hi‘i alo ua milimili ‘ia i ke alo, ua ha‘awe ‘ia
ma ke kua, ua lei ‘ia ma ka ‘ā‘ī” (Pukui, 1983, p. 67).

There is nothing more special in our lives than our
give meaning to our lives. They are our future. “Make
no ke kalo a ola i ka palili‖ (p. 229). They are the center
of our lives. Children, all children, are gifts to be
cherished.

As I was growing up, I heard many stories
about our kūpuna who cared for owthers. Kūpuna
who cared for others, especially those who cared for
children, were well respected in our family. They were
celebrated. Accounts of their lives were memorialized
in stories that were told over and over again. They
were the kūpuna who were chosen by our parents and
grandparents to be remembered. They were the special
kūpuna, whose lives and actions we were encouraged
to emulate. I ka nānā no a ‘ike. They were the kūpuna,
through whom, our family’s ‘ano evolved. They were
the kūpuna that would continue to live through stories.

The stories of these kūpuna became part of our
lives. From these stories, I understood that the mana of
kūpuna and māku in our family was based, in part,
on how he/she took care of children. From these
stories, I learned that the kuleana of māku and
kūpuna in our ‘ohana was to care for the ‘ohana,
especially our children.
Ka Mo’olelo o Tūtū Malino

Tūtū Malino, we were told, was the kupuna who took care of all of the kids in the family. She was the kupuna who made sure the kids had birthday and Christmas presents. She was the kupuna directly responsible for making sure the kids were safe, piha, and felt loved. From the stories we heard, it seemed like Tūtū Malino thought of everyone else before she thought of herself. She was the one whom everyone was confident they could turn to in time of need—even the adults. She treated all of the kids like they were her own children. And she was the kupuna who reminded other kūpuna of their kuleana to take care of their kids. She had a good-good soul. Stories about Tūtū Malino are told over and over again even though she passed many years ago.

I heard stories about Tūtū Malino but I also have my own memories of her. And from these memories along with the stories I have heard, I know that Tūtū Malino had plenty mana. There are a few in our hui who possess some of her qualities and this is good to see. Tūtū Malino is still here.

I see Tūtū Malino

One day, I rode in the back seat of a car with Tūtū Malino and her ipo. Tūtū Malino was sitting in the front-passenger seat and her ipo was driving. We were speeding along and Tūtū Malino was yelling to her ipo to drive faster. “Hurry up! Hurry up!!!!” Her ipo remained silent as he drove the car—faster and faster. I was scared. We pulled up to a house and the car screeched to a stop. This was Tūtū Malino’s sister’s house. “Keep the car running!” yelled Tūtū Malino. Her ipo sat nervously with his hands tightly squeezing the steering wheel. He didn’t say a word. I think he was scared too. Tūtū Malino bolted out of the car and into the house. I couldn’t see what was going on but I heard yelling, swearing, and things being knocked around. I was even more scared now. I watched the front door as the ruckus continued. Then the door exploded open and Tūtū Malino came roaring out of the house holding a baby in one arm and an oxygen bottle in the other. Tūtū Malino made her way to the car while the baby’s mom, tattered and worn, frantically chased after her. As the baby’s mom got closer, Tūtū Malino turned back and swung the oxygen bottle in her direction. The oxygen bottle nearly hit the baby’s mom in the head. The mother backed off but kept yelling. Tūtū Malino got in the car and in an eerily calm voice said, “Let’s go.” We sped off with baby in Tūtū Malino’s arms. I found out later that the mother was threatening to harm baby. Tūtū Malino never gave baby back to the mother. Tūtū Malino was relentless, even crazy at times, in her care for children. Long live Tūtū Malino.

We are the Stories we tell. This is the story I tell.

Mālama iā ‘Oe

You came to us in a flash and we weren’t sure about how to proceed, what to do, what to teach you, and what was best for you. We did know, however, that circumstances required us to focus on protecting you and making sure you would remain with us forever. Our focus at the time was not on plotting a life’s course for you. Survival, the survival of our family unit, was at stake. A lot of people were sharing advice with us about what we should do and what we shouldn’t do for the survival of our family. We considered, however, that the advice we were getting, although most of it offered with good intentions, was coming from people who had never been in our situation before. The stress, the panic, and the fear we felt when you first came to us, were things that people could sense, but not really understand. We had to make major decisions that would affect the rest of our lives based on what we alone felt was correct. We had to overcome our concerns about what others thought of our decisions. We had to be strong. We had to be extremely focused because, again, the future of our family was at stake. Without you, there was no family. We felt we were all alone and in some ways this was a good thing. Being alone helped us to stay focused and forced us to trust ourselves.

As I reflect on those early years, I am relieved that things worked out well. We feel safe now. I realize, however, that we were not as alone as we thought we were. Our kupuna were helping us along our journey. The stories we heard about kupuna, like
Tūtū G, and the ‘ike they would send to us through dreams, through chance happenings, through Kōkua who would just happen to appear when needed most, helped us to stay strong and to make difficult decisions during a tumultuous time in our lives. Our kūpuna were watching out for us and in their own way, showing us what to do and when to do things. They were guiding us along a path that led us to our kuleana to mālama you.

“Ka ‘ike a ka makua he hei na ke keiki” (Pukui, 1983, p. 151).
The knowledge of the parents is (unconsciously) absorbed by the child.

We constantly reflect on what we have experienced and what we have seen in our lives, as we care for you. Reflecting on our experiences helps us to figure out what we need to teach you and provide for you.

This is what (the world) I saw.

I saw a man, a fire, raging.
The biggest fire I had ever seen.

A cane fire, full on out of control and just eating up everything in its path.

The smoke so thick, I could barely see through it.
Black ash fell from the sky.

I saw a man battling a raging fire.
Doing whatever it took to put out a fire.

Working through the night, without sleep or drink, to put out a fire.

Never stopping to think about how hot or tired he was.

I saw a man possessed to put out a fire.

I saw Tūtū Waiāhole, a man possessed.

I saw a mother caring for her mom.

I saw a mother caring for her mom whose soul was already gone.

I saw a mom caring for her mom while still caring for her young children.

I saw mom, Tūtū Malino, caring for everyone.

I saw celebrations. I saw Merry Christmas. I saw Happy New Year.


I saw us celebrating the celebrations of the celebrated.

But, I also saw us celebrating each other, celebrating our home, celebrating the lives of kūpuna.

I saw a people marching. Marching in unison. A sea of ‘āweoweo

Holding hands, chanting, a people marching, a people on the move, amidst a surging sea of red. A call from beyond.

A people and a family all too familiar with kū’e once again, like our kūpuna, marching in the streets.

Amidst a surging sea of ‘āweoweo.

I saw, through stories, the people and places Tūtū them spoke about.

I met, through stories, a kupuna whom I had only known through a faded photograph. I heard the voice of Kupuna Kumu, who died a generation before I was born, as she shared ‘ohana stories. I understood, from the stories, their beliefs, their dreams, their kuleana, and their struggles.

I saw my ipo.

We were camping with my ipo’s family in Kahuku. The campsite was on the backside of the golf course and near to the ocean. It was a rough place to camp. We were basically camping in the bushes. The closest bathroom was a couple miles away. This was my first camping trip with my ipo’s family and I wanted to show them, well, mostly my father-in-law, that I was a tough guy and could handle the rough camping conditions. I sensed that my ipo also wanted me to prove my worth to her father. Her father is a tough bull who likes to do manly things like hunt, fish, play with guns, and tease younger men like me. The pressure was on. I was confident that I could handle the rough camping conditions but I wasn’t sure to what extent he was going to ridicule me in front of the family and/or how he was going to assess my manly abilities.

After we set up the tents, the cooking/eating area, and the portable bathroom, we all sat under the main tent to relax. It was about mid-day. My ipo, who was by my side, softly whispered to me, “My father them look on her face, sternly said, “You have to go with
them!” I wasn’t worried though. Most of the men on the camping trip were much older than I was. I thought if they could make it through the waves and lay the nets, I should have no problem.

The afternoon came, and the men gathered to prepare the nets. I joined in on the preparation. It seemed like about 10 of us were going to be setting the nets in the water. That was more than enough people to do the job. The nets were tied together and loaded into an inner-tube connected to a plywood base. We carried the nets to the water’s edge and I thought, “OK, this won’t be too bad. All 10 of us will swim out through the waves, drop the nets, and return to shore.” My strategy was to stay on the margins of the group as we swam out, conserve my energy, and make it back to shore alive. We pushed the tube into the water, and we put on our diving gear. I realized then that only three of us were putting on diving gear. “Oh My God!” I thought to myself, “Where’s everyone else?” The other men who prepared the nets had no intention of going in the water. They were slowly retreating up the beach and were not about to change their minds. I stood in the water with my diving gear on—my ipo’s father and another poor soul stood next to me. With only three of us in the water, I would have to work extra hard to prove to my ipo’s father that I was a real man—a man worthy of his daughter. There was no chance for me to hide amidst a school of elderly swimmers.

“What, ready?” my ipo’s father grunted.

“Ya. We go.” I replied.

I took hold of the tow-rope connected to the inner-tube and began to psyche myself up to pull the nets out through the waves. My ipo’s father and the other diver swam ahead. I submerged my body into the water and pushed off from shore. The inner-tube was extremely heavy under the weight of the nets. I put my face down into the water and struggled to pull the inner-tube. But then I felt the weight of the inner-tube lighten as if something, perhaps a wave, was pushing it from behind. I looked back to see what, or who was helping to lighten the load. It was my ipo. My ipo! She, seeing that only a few of us were in the water, grabbed some diving gear and jumped in the water to help out. I couldn’t have pulled that inner-tube out into the surf without her. We took the nets out, set them under the direction of my ipo’s father, and swam back to shore. It was hard work and we were exhausted. We swam back to shore and sat for a while to catch our breath. My ipo’s father looked at me and then gestured in the direction of his daughter,

“How that girl, rugged ah?”

“Rugged,” I replied.

I realized that he didn’t care how rugged I was. Only I cared about how rugged I was. He just wanted me to see how special his daughter was and how special she was to him. That day, I saw my ipo and her hui.

I saw another man possessed.

My ipo told me a story about what had happened in front of our house just the other day. Our neighbors across the street were arguing/fighting. They argue a lot. Usually their fights are not too bad—a lot of yelling coming from their house but nothing more than that. We usually don’t even see them fighting, we just hear em. But on this day, according to my ipo, the neighbors, a husband and wife, were arguing in the front of their house in plain view of all of our neighbors. The husband was standing on the street yelling to his wife who was standing on their porch. My ipo didn’t know what they were arguing about. But she heard the husband yelling, “You like see possessed? You like see possessed? I show you possessed!” My ipo tried to copy the husband’s gestures as she told me the story. My ipo even had this crazy look in her eyes as she spoke the words.

“You like see possessed? You like see possessed?”

Then, according to my ipo, my neighbor started acting crazy. He motioned his arms in a forward-spinning windmill type of action and kept yelling at his wife, “You like see possessed ah? I show you possessed! I show you possessed!” My ipo was really getting into telling the story. She spun her arms to simulate what the neighbor was doing. And then, according to my ipo, he began messing up his hair while he continued yelling, “You like see possessed, ah? I show you possessed! I show you possessed!”

As my ipo told and acted out the story, I envisioned the possessed neighbor in my mind. I
could see him standing in front of his house. I saw a man whose frustration level perhaps peaked, which resulted in a “crazy-looking” street performance. I sort of understood his frustration.

As my ipo told the story, I thought of another story involving that same neighbor. A few days prior, I drove into my garage after a long day of work. As I got out of the car, I saw my “possessed neighbor” walking across the street in my direction. I walked towards him and we shook hands at the edge of my driveway.

**Possessed neighbor:** Wassup Hawaiian.

**Kimo:** Hey, how you Hawaiian?

**Possessed neighbor:** Good, good. Ah cuz, we making one fundraiser to bring my daughter home from school for the holidays. We selling pasteles and Gandule rice. If you like pick up some, let me know. The ting ‘ono.

**Kimo:** Yeah, yeah, shoots. Where she going school?

**Neighbor/Father:** She go school in Washington. I assumed that his daughter was of college age and was attending a university in Washington. But he explained that his 10-year old daughter, who was legally deaf and blind, lived with relatives in Washington and attended a “special school.”

**Possessed Father:** We going bring my daughter home for Christmas.

Where I live, we don’t ask our neighbors to help out with our fundraisers. There is an unspoken rule that we don’t ask each other to buy stuff. We kind of just keep to our selves. But this possessed father was going to all of our neighbors to sell pasteles and gandule rice. The possessed father was doing what he needed to do to bring his daughter home.

**THE STORY I HEARD:**

**Father:** You like see possessed? I show you possessed! I going bring my daughter home!

I saw a space in need of transformation.

One day, I attended a meeting with other faculty members at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s College of Education (COE) in which a representative from the federal government inquired about the efforts of COE faculty to address the educational needs of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, including Native Hawaiians. I chose to attend the meeting hoping to share aspects of our program and to see how the feds could support our efforts.

I realized just how big the college was as I sat in that meeting. Only a few of the COE faculty members in attendance were familiar to me. As we spoke about our respective programs, I heard, for the first time, about the multitude of programs within the COE that were intent on helping Native Hawaiians. My colleagues were talking about programs dealing with Native Hawaiian health issues, Native Hawaiians and Special Education, Native Hawaiians and science education, culturally relevant Native Hawaiian curriculum—just a wide variety of programs. Some spoke about their desire to ultimately empower Hawaiians. Empower Hawaiians?

None of my counterparts at that meeting was Native Hawaiian. I was the only Hawaiian in attendance. I knew they were not Hawaiian by the way they spoke about my people. By the way they spoke about their projects. They use words like, “them, they, theirs.” I did not hear words like, “Us, our people, my ‘ohana.”

And as my counterparts spoke, none of them looked at me—the only Native Hawaiian in the room. They seemed to be speaking only to each other. Perhaps they were not concerned with what the only
Native Hawaiian in the room had to say about their individual projects to help Native Hawaiians? They knew I was Hawaiian because I told all of them I was. But they seemed to be more concerned with what the others in the room thought of their efforts to “help” my people. They did not seem to care about the fact that, as they spoke about Native Hawaiians, they were speaking about me and my ‘ohana. And I was sitting right in front of them.

Perhaps to them, my ‘ohana, Native Hawaiians, were mere subjects in their little projects—Not real people with the capacity to think and determine for themselves. Perhaps, deep down, they were not thinking of me and mine as real people—just problems to be dealt with. Or maybe they were just concerned about advancing their academic careers on the backs of my people.

But there in that meeting of select COE faculty members, sat a Native Hawaiian man named Kimo. I listened as my colleagues spoke about how they were attempting to save my people. I listened to them speak about what they thought was best for me and my ‘ohana. I thought to myself, “Who do they think they are?” “Who do they think we (Native Hawaiians) are?” “They forget where they are!”

So I waited patiently for my colleagues to finish their sermons. I waited for just the right time to remind them that I am Hawaiian and that we (Hawaiians) determine for ourselves what is important for our people. And we determine how we take care of ourselves.

“Any final comments before we close the meeting?” said the meeting facilitator.

“Yes, I want to end the meeting by thanking all of you for the work that you do for my people. Mahalo Nui!!!”

Mahalo Nui!

I used the word mahalo purposefully. Mahalo is a powerful word. It is commonly used to acknowledge the generosity of others, but it can also be used to claim, to show ownership over something, and to protect mana.

“Mahalo to all of you.”

“As you folks spoke about your projects and efforts to help my people, I kept hearing you folks use the term Native Hawaiian. When you folks talk about Native Hawaiians, you folks are talking about me and my family. When you talk about Hawaiian communities, you are talking about the community that my family lives in, the community that my daughter plays in, the community that I will drive to when I leave here today.

My name is Kimo.

Every time you think about or refer to Native Hawaiians, I want you folks to think about me and my family. Think about Kimo Them.

And any time you think of a project or program that might affect Kimo Them, obviously, you need to talk with Kimo Them about it before hand.

If, for some reason, you want to know how you can help Kimo Them, then you ask Kimo Them how you can help. Ask Kimo Them.

Kimo Them will determine what is best for Kimo Them, as you will determine what is best for you and yours. If Kimo Them feel that Kimo Them need your kōkua, then Kimo Them will ask you for help. But don’t do anything that will affect Kimo Them without getting Kimo Them’s approval.

If you need to talk-story with Kimo Them, just stop by Kimo Them’s offices.

Kimo Them’s offices are right next door to yours.

Mahalo Everybody!

Kimo Them, are right here!

Native Hawaiians, are right here!

At the University of Hawai‘i.

And here at the University of Hawai‘i, Kimo Them will address the concerns that are most important to Kimo Them.

Mahalo

I saw hope for the future. In a dream, I saw mo‘opuna running around and playing and laughing. I saw little mo‘opuna eyes looking at us and wondering how big the world we saw really is. I dreamed we were looking forward at our mo‘opuna. Pairs of old eyes serving as cloudy windows between generations of kūpuna experiences and keiki who will soon reciprocate to us things that we didn’t know we didn’t know.
Ho‘okulāiwi

He ‘elele ka moe na ke kanaka.
A dream is a bearer of messages to man.
Aloha Pē,
We reflect on the dream.
And listen closely to the messages being sent to us.
The message that is most clear, is that the world we
need to create for you,
is one that is simply full of love.
And hopefully, when it is your time to create a world
that you dreamed about,
you will see too, that it need simply to be full of
aloha.
Ua ola loko i ke aloha.
Love gives life within.

When I met mom’s family, I was surprised how
close-knit her family was. They all lived in close
proximity to each other and were a part of each other’s
daily lives. Mom and her immediate ‘ohana lived next
door to grandpa them. It must have been nice for her
to see her grandparents everyday, to have them pick
her up from school, to take her cruising, and to be able
to go to their house whenever she wanted to eat their
food. Mom’s aunties, uncles, and cousins would visit
on almost a daily basis. There was always extended
family around to help one another unconditionally, to
irritate each other, and to just talk story and live life
together. From the stories I heard, it wasn’t always a
happy place, but what a good way to live. The aloha
was unconditional. What a good way to grow up.

Daddy grew up in a good place as well. We
didn’t see our extended family as often as mom saw
hers. But we had a tight hui with Daddy, Papa, Tūtū,
‘Anakala, and ‘Anakē. We took care of each other and
as you know, we still do today. You can call on them
whenever you need kōkua. “Ike aku, ‘ike mai, kōkua
aku kōkua mai; pela iho la ka nohona ‘ohana” (Pukui,
1983, p. 130).

One day, I was talking with ‘Anakala Nā. I was
talking about you and he was talking about his kids.
He said this as we were talking.

The kids gotta have the love, to want to take care.
They gotta have the love from the hui and for the hui to
go after what they need to take care of the hui.

HO’OLAUELE

These are the written works I reflected on as I wrote this piece.
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ENDNOTES

1 This caption was inspired by a phrase used by Thomas King (2003), “The truth about stories is that that’s all we are.” (p. 2)

2 According to Gregory Cajete (1994), “Humans are one and all storytelling animals. Through story we explain and come to understand ourselves. Story – in creative combination with encounters, experiences, image making, ritual, play, imagination, dream, and modeling—forms the basic foundation of all human learning and teaching.” (P. 68)

3 I agree with Cajete’s (1994) statement regarding the importance of helping kids to understand story and context: “The difference between the transfer of knowledge in modern Western education and that of indigenous education is that in Western education information has been separated from the stories and presented as data, description, theory, and formula. Modern students are left to re-context the information within a story. The problem is that most students have not been conditioned by modern culture or education to re-context this information. Their natural sense for story has been schooled out of them. They do not know how to mobilize their imagination to interact with the content that they are presented – they have lost their innate awareness of story.” (p. 139–140)
The Task of an Educator is Supporting “Communities of Learners” as Transformative Practice

Huia Tomlins-Jahnke

The notion of transformation offers an opportunity for critical reflection about what it is that we as teachers do in our practices within institutions that either liberates or inhibits the power of the learner. The notion of transformation immediately brings to mind one of the most influential educationalists of our time, Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator whose theories of transformation continue to inspire, and who said

How difficult is the task of an educator. No matter where this kind of educator works...the great adventure—is how to make education something which, in being serious, rigorous, methodical, and having a process, also creates happiness and joy. (Paulo Freire Center Finland)

A process of education that brings happiness contrasts with the reality of many who have experienced or continue to experience the “banking” system of education that Freire describes. This is a concept of education in which the scope of action allowed by the teacher as the depositor of knowledge, to the students extends only to their receiving, memorizing, repeating, filing, and storing the deposits (Freire, 1996). This philosophy of education associated with theories of cultural deprivation was what I was exposed to as a teacher trainee in the early 1970s. The cultural deficit view was popular among social commentators during the 1960s and 1970s. Cultural deprivation was considered the major reason for indigenous and minority student failure such that compensatory education would make up for poor housing, poor parenting, and family dysfunction. Jim Cummins’s “cultural discontinuity theory” identified the disconnect between home and school as the root cause of minority school failure. He concluded that when administrators used culturally biased tests to determine what these students lacked, the students were disadvantaged (Cummins, 1986; Reyhner, 1998, p. 90).

To prove the point, the teachers college program I experienced in New Zealand included a field trip to the “culturally deprived” area of South Auckland called Otara. The sole purpose of the field trip was to have students survey firsthand, albeit from the “safety” of an education department bus, what a “culturally deprived area” actually looked like. There were a few Maori students but most were middle-class Pakeha from the Hawkes Bay/Tairawhiti area of New Zealand. Most students from this area of the country were sent to train as teachers at a residential college in rural South Auckland some 500 kilometers away.

At the time of the field trip to Otara, early in the first year of study, very few students had yet ventured outside the college environs. The bus slowly traversed the streets of Otara and circled the Otara shopping center while the lecturer, acting as tour guide, offered a running commentary of facts and figures about the place and the people. We learnt there were high numbers of Maori and Pacific immigrants from rural villages, and that this was the home of the notorious high crime rates, poor educational achievement rates, poor parenting, and children who lacked experiences, who spoke poor English, who lived poor lives, and who had very low Performance Achievement Test (PAT) scores.

What the commentary lacked of course was, among many others, the lived reality of the people we were gazing at from behind the bus-framed windows, and the historical facts of a town constructed by the state as an experiment in social engineering through the implementation of a policy of pepper-potting brown folk among white folk. And there was no mention of the indentured labor pool Pacific Islanders were brought specifically to New Zealand to fill. Little did I know that three years later I would return to Otara to
embark on my teaching career, armed with a teachers college certificate and a flawed philosophy based on a deficit view that considered Maori and Pacific children in particular as empty receptacles which the teacher as the educator was to fill. This is the classic “banking” method of education Freire described as the “pedagogy of the oppressed.”

In Otara my transformation as a teacher happened fairly rapidly because it was very clear in reality that the children and their communities led rich and authentic lives. The tools of my trade, including the instructional content of a Euro-centric curriculum, severely limited them, and in the process served to inhibit their fundamental right to an education. It is precisely such limitations, evident in all sectors of education and entrenched in state systems, that contributed in 1984 to the rapid establishment by Maori of te kohanga reo and kura kaupapa Maori from outside the state: A potent symbol of Maori resistance to a dehumanizing order. Te Kohanga Reo was a quiet revolution that quickly spread globally to transform the indigenous world. First peoples of the land set about establishing language nests and systems of education centered on indigenous epistemology, values, customs, and languages, thereby reinvigorating a commitment to self-determination. Change, however, is never straightforward.

The extraordinary outcome of the United States presidential elections in 2008 put to rest any doubts about the power of transformation, the power of change. Cornel West described this moment in history as a “symbolic gravity difficult to measure” as American voters in droves opted for change. Barack Obama is the first black man to assume the most powerful political office in the world, but as a highly educated individual he has much in common with his predecessors. His pathway through tertiary education has been along those same elite Ivy League institutional byways that have produced former presidents and their spouses. Obama is a graduate of Columbia University and Harvard Law School. His wife Michelle graduated from Princeton and Harvard. Bush Jr. is a graduate of Yale, and so too is Hillary Clinton, while Bill Clinton is an Oxford graduate.

The tides of change resulting from the 2008 elections have seen New Zealand embrace a level of conservatism that signals a number of likely changes to the provision of tertiary education. Internationally, universities are in a state of change as they face the pressures from a number of fronts; the globalization of universities in terms of the increased flow of international students, international competition for academic staff, research alliances, and international rankings. Furthermore there are the changing expectations and demands of governments, the business sector, families, and students; the fiscal pressures from government budgets and policy changes; and the effects of information and communication technology. The relationship between education and larger issues of the economy and politics make it abundantly clear that a good education is directly tied to economic needs (Apple, 1996).

These global forces and their impact at the local level have significant implications for Maori, and indeed, for society as a whole, as tertiary institutions position themselves as part of a global network of education providers within which indigenous peoples as tangata whenua, or first nations, seek to participate on their own terms. This not only includes reaping the economic and social benefits that accrue from participating in higher education; but also influencing structural change within institutions at the micro & macro levels (e.g., curriculum, pedagogy, and policy) so that indigenous forms of capital (e.g., indigenous values, knowledge, cultural traditions, and languages) (Pidgeon, 2008) are not superficially framed in politically correct rhetoric or token gestures, but are embodied and projected by the institution as standard practice and procedure.

Indigenous scholars have consistently challenged institutions to be more responsive to indigenous students and their communities (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Pidgeon, 2006, 2008). In providing guidance on how institutions could support indigenous education in North America, Kirkness and Barnhardt suggest a set of interconnecting principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility. They advocate institutions support indigenous education by demonstrating respect of indigenous cultural integrity and by ensuring the programs and structures are relevant to indig-
enous perspectives and experiences; that reciprocal relationships are formed through positive partnerships between the institution and indigenous communities; and that the institution has a responsibility to ensure active participation of indigenous people at all levels of the institution (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

For the most part Maori have tended to initiate varying levels of participation within the tertiary sector as a response to a perceived apathy on the part of the institutions. Information about the academic learning experience of Maori students in the tertiary sector is limited. A recent study found that comfort in the university, adequate social support, and self belief were significant factors impacting Maori students’ decisions to either stay at university until the end of their course or leave early (Zepke, Leach, & Prebble, 2005). Until the middle of the last century, Maori education received no special attention other than from the Maori Education Foundation (MEF) and some tribal scholarship boards that provided funds for Maori participation in post-primary education and tertiary study.

The MEF was established on the recommendation of the Hunn Report on Maori Affairs in 1960, which revealed that, compared with the European population, the proportion of Maori apprentices and university students was significantly lower. It was interesting that in 1959 the Parry Committee on New Zealand universities made no mention of Maori education in their report. In 1962, the Currie Commission on Education singled out Maori as one of four groups with so called “special needs.” The Commission advocated a greater part for Maori in higher education, and a greater contribution by Maori to positions requiring professional and semi-professional qualifications and skills.

Almost a half century later, this proposition still holds currency and is identified by the Tertiary Education Strategy, which advocated for a greater say by Maori in education provision, and for the tertiary sector to be more responsive to Maori needs and aspirations (MOE, 2001). Maori under-representation at all levels remains, but in a tertiary sector transformed by the proliferation of Maori initiatives evident in kaupapa Maori, or Maori-centered teaching and learning programs, research centers, and workforce development schemes, and by the significant impact of where wananga on the tertiary landscape.

This has seen Maori participation in higher education increased exponentially, so much so that Maori have moved to having the highest participation rate of any ethnic group in New Zealand. However, information shows that participation is highest at the sub-degree level, where the fees students pay are at the same level of fees as students enrolled in degree courses, thereby incurring a long-term burden of debt. The growth in participation rates at higher levels of tertiary education is still lower than those of non-Maori, including retention, and completion rates. The growth in the number of Maori in industry training and Modern Apprenticeships has increased although Maori are more likely to be training at lower levels than non-Maori. While there have been significant gains in the sector, nevertheless participation, retention, and completion for Maori in higher education remains a concern. And this concern is poised to be even more challenging for tertiary institutions as government policy emphasizes recruitment of school leavers over adult learners, a capped entry environment, and increased entry requirements based on high school NCEA results. Maori are more likely to be second-chance adult learners and less likely to hold the new entry requirements. How institutions respond to Maori needs and aspirations is a key factor to increasing Maori tertiary success.

It is some time since I worked as the first learning advisor for Maori students at Massey University and profound changes have occurred in the intervening years. The Maori Learning Advisor role was established at Massey in 1991 as an intervention strategy aimed at addressing the low retention rates of Maori students. This was an important initiative because it signaled a shift in institutional practice around the provision of support services to Maori that mirrored what was happening in other institutions around the country (Grant, Reilly, Roberts, & Whaitiri, 1991).

Appointing a designated Maori position helped to demonstrate the institution’s support of a Maori initiative, and represented a concrete response to Treaty of Waitangi obligations as outlined in the institution’s goals. Resource priorities were apportioned to fund the program from the general pool, thereby recognizing
the importance of Maori participation and retention in terms of the institution’s overall aims and the importance of a strategic approach directed at increasing the number of Maori graduates. This was a shift from the usual trend of seeking funds from Maori sources in order to fund Maori priorities. Such thinking, if it is a consistent approach by institutions to policy for Maori, is problematic because it serves to strengthen barriers to Maori participation and access to higher education by assuming fiscal priorities and resources based on mainstream imperatives.

A salient point raised by indigenous educators representing the major colonized countries of the world at the American Education Research Association Conference in Chicago in 2007 is an observation that indigenous programs within western institutions are the first to be severely contained, downsized, or disestablished against claims such programs are fiscally liable or substandard, thereby enabling resources to be redistributed to mainstream programs. In the current tertiary funding environment, Maori centered programs tend to be small and therefore vulnerable.

The Maori learning advisory position I held was located in the Department of Maori studies, responsible to the head of the department and therefore independent of the university learning support advisory team. The institution demonstrated a move away from the common practice of integrating Maori specific positions within the wider organization. Housing the learning advisor within Maori studies was a strategy that not only avoided isolating a singular position away from Maori networks, but enabled a high level of autonomy and flexibility to work within Maori centered frameworks in response to Maori student priorities. Such priorities are not always in tandem with those of the wider student body. Sometimes it requires a form of engagement based on cultural imperatives and taken-for-granted assumptions that contribute to Maori success but which are often a source of misunderstanding. This is often the case when the position is located outside of Maori control where programs are likely to be compromised if not managed with insight and understanding.

On another level, siting the advisor and learning support program within an appropriate community of practice, fosters explicit relations (e.g., whanau, hapu, iwi) and social practices (e.g., te reo me ona tikanga) that “…gives structures and meaning to what we do” (Wenger, 1998, p. 47) and serves to focus attention on learning as a collective, community based process. In fact a singular advisor even in this context is not without limitations so that in more recent years a move to a team of advisors has become the accepted way. The concept of “communities of practice” is therefore useful for thinking about relevant approaches to supporting successful participation of Maori in higher education.

What constitutes success for indigenous students depends on what we mean by success. The government measure of tertiary success is based on degree completions while students and their communities employ quite different criteria for success. First Nations scholar Michelle Pidgeon argues that success in higher education should include measures that look beyond graduation rates, educational attainment, or the financial status one gains from a university education to include the successful negotiation of mainstream higher education while maintaining one’s cultural integrity (Pidgeon, 2008). For some, gaining skill sets that contribute to tribal aspirations irrespective of having completed a higher education qualification, is seen as success, particularly when put to immediate use for the “good of the people.”

According to Etienne Wenger, communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. They are groups of people who share a concern for something they do and they learn how to do it better as they regularly interact. Over time they develop a shared repertoire of resources—e.g., experiences, stories, tools, equipment, and strategies that take time and sustained interaction to develop. Collective learning results in practices that reflect the way in which participants constantly engage in the pursuit of clearly defined enterprises such as the pursuit of a certificate, a diploma or a degree; the development of a teaching program; or contributing to workforce development. Interacting with each other and building relationships enables them to learn from each other. Furthermore, sharing the same conditions, experiences, interactions,
and engagement builds an identity defined by a shared domain of interest (Wenger, 1998, p. 45). The concept of communities of practice is not new nor is it unfamiliar. But it is useful when thinking about how support services for students might be provided.

In Ngati Kahungunu the whare wananga at Papawai near Greytown in the Wairarapa was a community of practice formed in the 1860s by Nepia Pohuhu, Paratene Te Okawhare, and Moihi Te Matorohanga, who were highly literate men and close kin. Their aim in establishing the wananga was a response to the call by local hapu to record for posterity the ancient traditions of Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairarapa from the dictation of tohunga. The idea of writing down the ancient traditions was a radical one at a time when sacred knowledge had been a completely oral transaction and writing was a new technology. Te Matorohanga wrote a great number of manuscripts which are currently held in the Alexander Turnbull Library and are the source of constant study and analysis by scholars of Maori traditions (Thornton, 2004).

Another example of a community of practice formed for a specific purpose was the Te Aute College Students Association. The Association was established in the late 19th century by the Principal John Thornton, together with Archdeacon Samuel Williams, a group of professional lawyers and accountants, and the Bishop of Waiau. As mentors their role was to facilitate the gathering of past and present students of the college to implement plans for the reformation of Maori society led by past pupil Sir Apirana Ngata (Walker, 2001, p. 74).

From the time of his appointment as principal in 1878, Thornton laid the platform for establishing an effective and transformative community of practice by upgrading the Te Aute College curriculum with an emphasis on excellence in academic scholarship in line with the English grammar school system. Thornton believed Maori students should be prepared for matriculation and go on to university to train for the professions in law, medicine, and the clergy (R. Walker, 2001). His views were completely out of step with the colonial mindset of educators and policy makers of the day (Simon, Jenkins, & Mathews, 1994). His past pupils and influential leaders of the association included Sir Apirana Ngata who trained as a lawyer, graduating from Canterbury with a BA, MA, and LLB; Sir Maui Pomare who studied medicine; and Sir Peter Buck who became an internationally renowned anthropologist.

The identities as communities of practice of both the Whare Wananga o Papawai, and the Te Aute Students Association were defined by a shared domain of interest aimed at recording ancient tribal history and traditions and ameliorating the decline in the health, social, and economic well-being of Maori people; each participant’s committed membership that in this case lasted their entire lives; and a shared long-term vision in regards to concrete outcomes. They held a shared competence not only in their tribal culture and traditions but in their respective professions in lore, law, medicine, and the social sciences. What defined them and their members as a community of practice was their negotiation of meaning, of mutual engagement and participation in pursuing together the knowledge and understanding required to document oral histories for posterity, and to lead to better health and economic outcomes for Maori. Their practices were self determined, transformational, tribally oriented development programs in oral history, public health, education, economics, and agriculture. While Buck spent many years overseas, his engagement in shared practice continued through regular exchanges of letters with Ngata and others (Sorrenson, 1986).

Programs that significantly contribute to Maori participation within the tertiary sector are communities of practice defined by a shared domain. Generally they are innovative programs that are initiated and provided by Maori, focused on Maori development goals, and situated in an appropriate environment. There are many such programs across all of our institutions. But I want to focus on exemplars I am familiar with, in order to examine some of the characteristics of these programs and the principles that underpin them in terms of successful outcomes for Maori students in the tertiary sector.

Te Rau Puawai is a workforce development program established a decade ago to assist Maori who have an interest in, or are working in, the mental health field. The brainchild of Professor Mason Durie and the late Dr. Ephra Garrett, Te Rau Puawai is unique be-
cause it offers various support resources which enable students to successfully complete and gain relevant mental health-related qualifications from undergraduate to doctoral levels. There are at least three principles of engagement that underpin Te Rau Puawai in terms of fostering Maori success within the tertiary sector.

The principle of whakatuia, or coordinated practice, underpins what is the strength of this program, which is an infrastructure that allows a coordinated approach to student support in the provision of tertiary study that locates the student at the center of a learning community. The key components of Te Rau Puawai are its academic and peer mentors, the financial resources in the form of bursaries funded by the Ministry of Health, a fulltime coordinator, and an administrator. When combined, these components provide an effective wraparound-based approach to Maori support services. This approach integrates the student as part of a cohort into a collaborative process, based on individual needs-driven planning and services (Walker & Bruns, 2006) within a collective orientation.

This is not a one-size-fits-all approach because the students’ goals and aspirations are at the center of the delivery. They are involved in defining and customizing their learning program in social work, nursing, rehabilitation, psychology, and Maori studies. The activities that constitute the process are standard practices that include academic and peer mentoring, monitoring student progress, on-campus hui, a peer mentoring call center, study groups, regional visits to meet and support distance students, a website, and database. The regional visits to each student and on-campus hui, while they might be considered “labor intensive” and therefore expensive, are nevertheless core components based on the assumption that kanohi ki te kanohi, or face-to-face, is inherent in the provision of an effective Maori centered student support service.

The principle of kotahitanga, or unity of purpose, underpins a level of engagement where students, staff, and mentors act as resources to each other, exchanging information and making sense of situations and new ideas, and in the process they build relationships that enable them to learn from each other. As Wenger makes clear, “the learner contributes by being a member of a community and bringing to bear their history of participation in its practice” (Wenger, 1998, p. 55). The peer tutors are themselves senior members of Te Rau Puawai, who now have a history of participating in the practices that embody Te Rau Puawai as a community of learners. As last year’s newcomer, they help the new student and see all they have learned because they are now in a position to help someone (Wenger, 1998).

The principle of mana Maori, or Maori centered engagement backs up studies that have found cultural values, customs, and traditions to be essential elements in the provision of services to Maori (Tomlins Jahnke, 2005), and student support services are no exception. Thus, until recently, an added value was the location of Te Rau Puawai in Maori studies where cultural values are manifest in the school’s modality of activity and relationships. The students and the program were in an environment where culture counts and where Maori aspirations are more likely to advance without compromising the values and practices that are fundamental to “being Maori.”

Te Rau Puawai is primarily a Maori centered student support service that focuses on workforce development in mental health, where success is measured not only in terms of retention, participation, and completion rates, but also by the contribution of students to hapu or iwi development. Some of the principles that underpin the success factors of Te Rau Puawai as an integrated support service are also present in programs focused on single academic disciplines.

Toimairangi at Te Wananga o Aotearoa in Hastings, Toihoukura at Tairawhiti Polytechnic and Toi Oho ki Apiti at Massey University have, over time, developed communities of practice defined by a shared interest in and commitment to Maori visual arts and culture. As distinct communities of practice they share common characteristics which contribute to student success based on a number of assumptions.

These programs are the initiative of innovative Maori artist/educators who developed them to cater to Maori students and to contribute to the advancement of contemporary Maori art. As inspirational teachers, their ability to remain innovative in terms of pedagogy and program design is due in part to the degree of autonomy they enjoy within the bounds of institutional
structures, policies, and regulations. Being under Maori direction and control has enabled a distinctly Maori approach to the provision of Maori visual art practice to emerge based on the principle of mana Maori. In contrast with other fine arts programs, priorities are given to papers that have as the core focus Maori art history, language, and culture, rather than art history and culture rooted in Europe. This is not to say that Maori visual art programs do not reference western artists or art history; of course they do. It is that Maori, and to an ever increasing degree the Pacific, is prioritized in order to ensure relevant practice and maximum engagement of students.

Such priorities are associated with a second assumption that underpins these programs: that Maori student achievement is more likely to occur when students see themselves reflected in the curriculum and the environment. According to Ngati Kahungunu artist Sandy Adsett, the architect of Toihoukura and Toimairangi, for Maori people generally, and Maori students in particular, to appreciate art they have to see themselves in the art. On these terms, student/staff engagement includes an approach to Maori ways of knowing that has seen the emergence of a distinct pedagogy based on the principle of kaupapa Maori incorporating wananga, hui, moteatea, and karakia on the one hand and whakakitenga, or public exhibitions, at local, national, and international levels on the other. The imperatives associated with such pedagogy require an enabling environment upheld by such principles as manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga. On these terms, student/staff engagement includes an approach to Maori ways of knowing that has seen the emergence of a distinct pedagogy based on the principle of kaupapa Maori incorporating wananga, hui, moteatea, and karakia on the one hand and whakakitenga, or public exhibitions, at local, national, and international levels on the other. The imperatives associated with such pedagogy require an enabling environment upheld by such principles as manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga. In other words, as a community of learners what is shared (manaakitanga) and what brings the students and lecturers together (whakawhanaungatanga) is a level of participation characterized by mutual recognition and enabling engagement. Staff generally hold high expectations of students to achieve a high quality and standard of excellence, which in turn challenges staff to ensure their own art practice remains current and up for public scrutiny.

This attitude is manifest, for example, in the expectation that students will exhibit their works in public venues alongside senior Maori and indigenous artists, including their lecturers and mentors. In terms of quality and excellence, there is an expectation that the integrity of expression and form are resolved in the students’ art work to be exhibited because they are putting themselves on the line publicly. The incentive for students to achieve success is thus a temporal process in a real situation and, with their mentors, “...a matter of sustaining enough mutual engagement in pursuing an enterprise together to share some significant learning” (Wenger, 1998, p. 86). Ultimately there is a level of inclusion in what matters that Wenger maintains “...is a requirement for being engaged in a community’s practice just as engagement defines belonging” (Wenger, 1998, p. 74). An investment of practice in participation to this level is also a source of continuity in terms of succession planning and growing of new staff, new generations of teachers and artists. All the programs I have mentioned so far are staffed with former students, supporting Wenger’s view that “...the history of the practice remains embodied in the generational relations that structure the community. The past, the present and the future live together...” (Wenger, 1998, p. 90).

This leads to a third assumption: that there is connectivity between Maori programs within institutions and the aspirations of whanau, hapu, and iwi expressed in tribal development strategies. Whanau, hapu, and the wider community are important for promoting excellence and determining what counts as measures of success beyond those of participation, retention, and completions. Thus the importance of the wider whanau/hapu Maori community is actively promoted and practiced through student/staff involvement in local collaborations.

Student involvement in the refurbishment of local marae or responding to commissioned requests for public artworks is incorporated as an integral part of the program, with corresponding assessments that account for both individual and group effort. This approach is underscored by the principle of utu, or reciprocity, of “giving back” to whanau/hapu in terms of their responsibility to the wider community. Toihoukura and Toimairangi in particular are deeply linked to local whanau, hapu, and iwi.

The strength of an education initiative that is grounded in the community is in not isolating the ideas...
and thoughts about education from tribal realities and aspirations. Tribes tend to place their education strategies within a broad tribal development framework, a holistic and integrated method to planning that avoids the fragmented sectorial approach favored by governments and mirrored in the organization of tertiary institutions according to academic disciplines. One North Island tribe has aligned the development of their education plan alongside their Treaty of Waitangi claims process. In other tribal areas, strong linkages have been maintained between tribal councils and the tertiary sector evident in education strategies that correspond with tribal aspirations and manifest in programs. Some tribes have sought joint ventures with institutions; such is the case of Ngai Tahu who established Te Tapuae o Rehua as a “collaborative vehicle” to explore ways to increase access, participation, and achievement in tertiary education for Maori.

The concept of communities of practice is a useful way of thinking about how factors such as teaching programs, pedagogy, teaching staff, cultural contexts, environment, institutional operational systems, policies, processes, and support mechanisms interrelate in terms of their combined effects on student achievement. Inspirational teachers promote an engaged pedagogy and have high student expectations linked to both traditional and reflective assessment methods that offer diverse measures of success. Poor quality and ineffective teaching where classes are boring and meaningless and the teachers are disconnected from their students makes the job of supporting student learning all the more difficult and sometimes near impossible.

As South American educator Laura Rendon has observed,

> the negative elements of an educational system that effectively slaughters our sense of wonder and dismisses our culture, heritage and language also kills even our student’s motivation to participate in education…and has educators struggling with reducing high attrition rates and keeping more students enrolled until they complete their education. (Rendon, 2009, p. 4)

Innovative programs contain audacious, creative ideas that engage students, and are inclusive of a Maori centered curriculum because for Maori, culture counts.

To be truly effective as far as Maori are concerned, student support services should be coordinated in terms of infrastructure; provide wraparound services; have an integrated Maori centered focus underpinned by such values as whakatauia, kanohi kitea, kotahitanga, and mana Maori; and be connected to the wider community including hapu and iwi organizations. As a framework it is more likely that the provision of student support is relevant and connected to them as communities of learners.

In conclusion I am reminded of a well-known poem composed by an Apache child in Arizona that speaks of the lack of relevance mainstream education has for many indigenous children and their communities.

> Have you ever hurt about baskets? I have, seeing my grandmother weaving for a long time.
> Have you ever hurt about work? I have, because my father works too hard and he tells how he works.
> Have you ever hurt about cattle? I have, because my grandfather has been working on the cattle for a long time.
> Have you ever hurt about school? I have, because I learned a lot of words from school, And they are not my words. (Cazden, 1988, p. 23)

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ENDNOTES

1 This paper is based on a keynote address given by the author at the Association of Tertiary Learning Advisors of Aotearoa New Zealand (ATLANZ) Conference at Whitiereia Polytechnic on the 9th November 2008.


3 National Certificate in Education Achievement is the national qualification gained by school leavers.

4 Recently Te Rau Puawai was relocated to a central location on campus.

5 Personal Communication.

6 Walley Penetito, Nga Pae O Te Maramatanga International Writing Retreat, Solway Lodge, 7–13th June 2006.
Ngā Manu Kōrero: Revitalizing Communication, Customs and Cultural Competencies Amongst Māori Students, Teachers, Whānau and Communities

Rāwiri Tinirau and Annemarie Gillies

Introduction

The Ngā Manu Kōrero Speech Contest has grown to be one of the biggest and most positive events for New Zealand secondary-school students, where competitors articulate their thoughts and aspirations in both Māori and English. The contest is acknowledged as an avenue that enhances language and cultural development amongst Māori youth, yet no formal investigation has been launched to ascertain whether Ngā Manu Kōrero contributes to the revitalization of Māori language, customs and cultural competencies. Due to the number of schools involved and to the number of contestants that participate at school, regional and national levels, organizing and managing the event requires skill and experience in a range of areas, to ensure that it is run successfully in a culturally appropriate context. The purpose of this paper is to share the results of a research project that focused on Ngā Manu Kōrero, the findings pertaining to cultural revitalization, their application at regional and national level, and how they affect Māori students, teachers, whānau (family, families), and communities.

Background and history of Ngā Manu Kōrero

The Ngā Manu Kōrero Speech Contest was originally known as the Korimako Speech Contest, named after the trophy that was donated by the then Governor General, Sir Bernard Fergusson. The aim of the contest was to encourage among Māori secondary-school pupils a greater command and fluency in the use of spoken English. The Post Primary Teachers’ Association (PPTA) organized school and regional contests before the inaugural national final, which was held in August 1965. The contest was sponsored and organized jointly by the Māori Education Foundation (now Māori Education Trust) and the PPTA, with the intention that the contest be held annually. A section for senior Māori oratory was added in 1977, in memory of Waikato elder and scholar Dr Pei Te Hurinui Jones, who died in 1976. Dr Jones was famous for his oratory and prolific writing skills and was instrumental in revising the Williams Dictionary. He was also awarded the degree of Doctor of Literature by the University of Waikato. It was decided that the Pei Te Hurinui Jones section be open to all New Zealand students, with the purpose of enhancing and promoting the use of the Māori language amongst all secondary-school students.

At the national final held at Wairoa in 1980, a junior English section was added to the contest. A tāonga was presented the following year by the people of Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairoa in memory of Sir Turi Carroll. Sir Turi Carroll was the Chairman of the Wairoa County Council and was the inaugural Chair of the New Zealand Māori Council. The Rāwhiti Īhaka section for junior Māori oratory was presented in 1983 by past-principal Scottie McPherson and senior pupils of St. Stephen’s School in Auckland in memory of past teacher Rāwhiti Īhaka. The award acknowledged his skills in teaching science and mathematics; he was reputed to be one of the first Māori graduates in science.

Due to the growth and development of the contest, which now incorporates the four sections discussed above, it was felt that the name of the contest should be changed from the Korimako Speech Contest. In 1987, the contest became known as Ngā Whakataetae mō Ngā Manu Kōrero o Ngā Kura Tuarua, though today it is simply and widely known as Ngā Manu Kōrero. Over 1,000 speakers participate at 14 regional competitions throughout New Zealand, vying for 56 places at the national final. Up to 5,000 students, teachers,
whānau members, and supporters attend the national contest, hosted by a different region each year (Tinirau & Gillies, 2008).

**Research partners and participants**

The research partners in this particular research project were identified as the Māori Education Trust, the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers’ Association (PPTA), and the National Organising Committee responsible for the 2003 and 2004 National Ngā Manu Kōrero Speech Contest. In 2003 and 2004, the National Organising Committee consisted primarily of secondary-school teachers of te reo Māori (Māori language) in the Manawatū-Florowhenua region. In 2006, the researcher was asked to assist the Taranaki region to coordinate the national competition, and an incorporated society, Te Ohu Manaaki o Taranaki, was established for this purpose. Thus, direct involvement by the researcher in the national competitions in 2003, 2004, and 2006 has informed this paper.

The research participants were nominated by the research partners as spokespeople for their respective organizations. Both the Māori Education Trust and the National Organising Committees can be considered Māori in their orientation and organization (Tinirau, 2004a, 2004b; Tinirau & Gillies, 2008). The PPTA has Māori employees and representation and is informed by Te Huarahi, their Māori executive committee. As the PPTA and the Māori Education Trust have been at the forefront of administering and sponsoring the Ngā Manu Kōrero Speech Contest since its inception, it was vital this research gained support from these two organizations. As the National Organising Committee was formed to host the National Ngā Manu Kōrero Speech Contest for 2003 and 2004, support from this body was also considered crucial, before this research commenced (Tinirau, 2004a, 2004b; Tinirau & Gillies, 2008).

**Research principles**

After reviewing a range of methodological frameworks and ethical considerations, it was felt that the principles of this research should be based on those encapsulated in the Treaty of Waitangi.1 This was proposed by Bishop (1994) regarding issues of control and empowerment and the role non-Māori may have in Māori research. Although the research involved a Māori researcher and participants, the treaty principles—positive contribution, partnership, participation, and protection were still deemed applicable.

Research must be beneficial to the partners of research, and thus, the principle of positive contribution is of significance (Bevan-Brown, 1998). With regard to this project, the research would need to assist future organizers, teachers, adjudicators, participants, and whānau. Before the research could begin, a clear understanding of the aims and aspirations of the research partners was required. An appreciation for the research needs of the three organizations was gained when the idea for this research was first conceived and offered. As a result of direct communication, a research proposal was formulated and disseminated, and the research partners, through the research participants, were given the opportunity to scrutinize and support the research area (Tinirau, 2004a, 2004b; Tinirau & Gillies, 2008). The research has been used to guide national organising committees in their work towards managing and organizing National Ngā Manu Kōrero Speech Contests.

The principle of partnership embraces the view that those involved in research would be partners in this research. The notions of mahitahi (cooperation, collaboration) and whānau (Durie, 1998) require research to be based on mutual respect and understanding between the researcher and research partners. This research on Ngā Manu Kōrero sought to establish meaningful relationships with the research partners and to recognize the knowledge, skills, and resources these partners and their nominated participants could contribute toward the research project and to Ngā Manu Kōrero itself. The kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) interviews that were conducted saw the research participants draw on their personal knowledge and professional expertise in developing their responses, and having this and other opportunities to shape this project advanced research partnerships (Tinirau, 2004a, 2004b; Tinirau & Gillies, 2008).

Participation ensures that research partners are “active participants at all stages of the research
process” (Bevan-Brown, 1998, p. 236). This links to the notion that the mauri (spiritual life-force or essence) of the host community be acknowledged (Durie, 1992), and in the case of this research, the mauri of Ngā Manu Kōrero itself, through the Māori Education Trust, the PPTA, and the National Organising Committee, had to be acknowledged before the research proceeded. Participation was achieved throughout this research project, by involving the research partners (where appropriate) in the various activities of the research exercise. In particular, the interviews, fieldwork, and sourcing information directly involved all three research partners (Tinirau, 2004a, 2004b; Tinirau & Gillies, 2008).

Finally, the principle of protection must guarantee that the research partners own the knowledge collected, can make comment on the project, and may evaluate the outcomes of the research. Consultation with the research partners was considered paramount, especially with the interpretation of any provided information. Research participants were forwarded relevant sections of this research and were given the opportunity to respond and comment on the written material. This process helped protect their knowledge and ensure both that their comments were taken in the right context, and that any analysis and interpretation of information was consistent with their thoughts and ideas (Tinirau, 2004a, 2004b; Tinirau & Gillies, 2008).

**Research methods**

A mixture of purposive and whakawhanaungatanga (the act of building personal relationships) sampling techniques (Gillies, Tinirau, & Mako, 2007; Te Pūmanawa Hauora, 1997) was employed to select key participants for rich and illuminative information, the aim of which was to gain insight and meaning, rather than empirical generalization, to the population (Patton, 2002). Data was organized and analyzed using thematic analysis focusing on identifiable themes and patterns of living and behavior. However, this analysis resonates with the worldview of the community by involving Māori throughout this process. Finally, the duality of the roles of the Māori researcher (being both the researcher and part of the research community; an insider and an outsider simultaneously) and the

‘intimacy’ that benefits the research (Walsh-Tapiata, 1998) was acknowledged, providing a sense of security and safety for those involved. The researcher has had a long association with Ngā Manu Kōrero: first, as a past competitor and winner of the contest; second, as a regional coordinator from 2000 to 2001; third, as a judge from 1999 to today; and finally as a member of National Organising Committees in 2003, 2004, and 2006. Data was also obtained through sourcing several primary sources, and private documents were offered freely by whānau, organizations and communities to assist with the research.

**Findings: Using and learning te reo Māori**

Since the introduction of the Pei Te Hurinui Jones section for senior Māori oratory in 1977, Ngā Manu Kōrero has witnessed a growth in the number of speakers competing in the Māori sections. It should be noted that the number of competitors in the Māori sections at regional level tend to fluctuate from year to year for a variety of reasons. More recently, the Māori sections have a propensity to be dominated by students who have received Māori immersion schooling, although they may have relocated to mainstream or private schools. This involvement of Māori immersion students has brought a new dimension to the contest, where te reo Māori is not only the language spoken on the marae (traditional gathering place) and on the stage, but also amongst the audience:

_I have observed increasingly over the years is the language spoken at Manu Kōrero is equally Māori ... more and more now, that kōrero [discussion, talk] is in te reo ... that’s gotta be good. (T.M. Bowkett, personal communication, June 20, 2003)_

Ngā Manu Kōrero has also had a profound effect on the education of those learning Māori at secondary-school (Māori Education Foundation, 1989). However, the quality of the language being spoken by competitors continues to be an issue to monitor. Comments by judges have persisted in encouraging teachers and whānau to ensure that a speaker’s language is grammatically correct and that words are pronounced properly. The addition of the impromptu section for senior speakers has encouraged the development of fluency and articulation in both languages. Speakers at
Ngā Manu Kōrero are therefore not merely memorizing speeches—they are also encouraged to think on their feet.

**Māori customs and practices**

Tikanga Māori (Māori customs, practices) is applied to the organization and management of Ngā Manu Kōrero, and this differentiates Ngā Manu Kōrero as a distinctly Māori event. The observance of tikanga Māori has also had a positive effect on the students that have attended the contest:

*Participation is now nationwide and the active support of parents is to be commended. So too is the full observance of kawa [customs of the marae] by the host tribes. The young students and their supporters are uplifted—a feeling that permeated the whole occasion (Māori Education Foundation, 1989, p. 3).*

As different regions tono (offer, bid) to host the national final to be held within their district, those that travel to the contest will experience different tikanga, depending on the tangata whenua (people of the land, hosts). This gives rangatahi (youth) and others the chance to observe a range of customs and protocols practiced by the different hosts throughout Aotearoa. At a regional level, there may be several iwi (tribe/s) within the region’s boundaries, whose tikanga differ. Within some iwi, tikanga may be different amongst the various hapū (sub-tribes). Thus, Ngā Manu Kōrero allows rangatahi to witness this diversity and appreciate their own tikanga, as well as understand and respect the tikanga of others. Another cultural element that is promoted through Ngā Manu Kōrero includes the inter-generational transmission of language, knowledge, and skills (“Big turn-out at Tauranga,” November 1987). Competitors tend to source advice from not only their teachers, but also their own elders and whānau. This relationship between the old and the young is a continuation of the traditional approach to education within whānau, hapū, and iwi, where information was passed down to the next generation by those that retained the knowledge. Furthermore, the assistance acquired from elders and whānau reaffirms that the speaker is not only representing their school or their region; they also epitomize their whānau, hapū, and iwi, and have a responsibility to represent them to the best of their abilities.

Ngā Manu Kōrero also fosters immense support for speakers, which can be correlated to marae etiquette and tikanga Māori (Murchie, November 22, 1994). It is not uncommon for haka (traditional expressive dance) and waiata (song/s) to be performed by members of the audience before or after a speech, although spontaneous outbursts such as these must also be in keeping with local tikanga. Haka and waiata for winners of Ngā Manu Kōrero are also evident throughout the prize-giving ceremony. Support for a speaker can be measured by an audience’s reaction, not unlike that on a marae. The difference with Ngā Manu Kōrero is that the volume of applause is used to denote the impact that the speaker has had on the general audience.

**Enhancing Māori identity**

Ngā Manu Kōrero has had a positive effect on the rejuvenation of Māori identity amongst the rangatahi:

*… it was about ensuring that our Māori students, our Māori children had the opportunities to learn, and to express in English and in te reo Māori. Part of that is building their self-esteem, their confidence, and their pride of who they are … that essence, that wairua [spirit] about the kaupapa [purpose] is still strong (T.M. Bowkett, personal communication, June 20, 2003).*

In recognition of a speaker’s affiliations and identity, contestants at school, regional, and national level are encouraged to complete a student profile, detailing their affiliations to their maunga (mountain/s), awa (river/s), hapū, iwi, marae, and waka (canoe/s)—all of which have become an intrinsic part of Māori identity. These student profiles are used by the compère to introduce the speaker to the judges and audience. Ngā Manu Kōrero also promotes research skills, where many speakers choose to investigate matters of personal and tribal importance; in the Māori sections, tribal dialects and styles are presented, reaffirming the link that Ngā Manu Kōrero has with promoting whānau, hapū, and iwi identities. Nga Manu Kōrero offers participants a forum to express themselves and to develop their self-esteem and confidence:
There is that whole thing about building up self-esteem … confidence in the public arena … the public image you portray comes as a result of having entered the Ngā Manu Kōrero (D. Hauraki, personal communication, June 19, 2003).

The audience is expected to support all speakers, and give them a courteous hearing, and this support, together with that which emanates from a speaker’s whānau, school, and region, is crucial in building confidence and pride. The link between knowing te reo Māori and confidence has also been reiterated (Hearn, 1990).

Being a competition, there is a risk that a speaker’s confidence and self-esteem may be damaged by, amongst other things, stress, lack of time or preparation, and comments from the judges or audience. However, all speakers—regardless of whether they have performed well or not—are acknowledged for their delivery and are presented with a certificate of participation. It is hoped that through this, and continuous encouragement, the confidence and self-esteem of speakers may be extended.

The real effect that Ngā Manu Kōrero has had on Māori language, culture, and identity is not only appreciated by organizers, reporters, leaders, sponsors, teachers, kaumātua, and whānau, but also by the rangatahi themselves. Following one particular national final, one student contemplated their experience of Ngā Manu Kōrero:

I believe that as a part of learning te reo at school, opportunities like these should be essential. By just being a bystander at this event you can gain a lot of knowledge. The kapahaka [Māori performing arts group] was just great, and it really does show how much support there is within a group towards their speaker, in the way they perform so strongly. And you can learn a lot from that. But for me the best thing about it was being and feeling a part of a Māori society. Being welcomed into a whole new community and being made to feel that you belong. Feeling their love and warmth and continuously learning different Māori customs, e.g., kawa of the marae/kaupapa of their iwi etc … there is so much more wairua in the culture. The way they spoke, with it all around us, all of us found ourselves improving and strengthening our Māoritanga [Māori culture]. And there was a constant use of te reo amongst our group and we were so proud. We came back so much more confident, so much in fact, I found it difficult to switch back to speaking English after my return (Rangiaho, n.d.).

Thus, Ngā Manu Kōrero offers rangatahi an opportunity to further their language and public-speaking skills and to extend their confidence within an environment that is culturally appropriate and encourages the revitalization of Māori language, culture, and identity.

Developing oratory skills

Skills in oratory were highly valued by Māori, as it was through oral transmission and discussion that knowledge was passed down through the generations:

… oratory was the only way that whakapapa [genealogy], mōteatea [traditional song/s], history were passed from generation to generation … an essential element in retaining things Māori … oratory and whāikōrero and speech making … it is part of the fabric of our culture, our society, our identity (D. Hauraki, personal communication, June 19, 2003).

Ngā Manu Kōrero therefore provides a forum where the tradition of oratory is not only preserved, but where high standards of oratory are encouraged and attained. The contest also showcases the product of Māori language revitalization activities, as well as the re-emergence of traditional forms of language and delivery styles (“Māori oratory successes,” 1980). It is recognised that Ngā Manu Kōrero prepares speakers for positions on the marae:

You have displayed tremendous skill, ability and confidence and what you have now achieved will be of good use on our many marae when your time comes. (“A learning experience for all,” October 1982, p. 5)

Although Ngā Manu Kōrero encourages and promotes the use of te reo Māori, it also advocates fluency in English (Māori Education Trust, 1993). Thus, the ability to communicate in both languages is considered critical, and the introduction of the E Tipu E Rea trophy for the student, school, or region that attains very high competency in both recognizes and acknowledges these dual abilities. There are some schools or regions that produce speakers who consistently do well in a
particular section. However, there are exceptions to this generalization, for example Māori immersion school students entering the Māori and English sections and doing well in both areas.

**Developing other cultural competencies**

Oratory skills are not the only skills that are developed through Ngā Manu Kōrero. Other essential skills that are required for future educational and employment opportunities are also realised:

*... what happens with our young people that come through Manu Kōrero, they have developed and nurtured skills ... they’ve developed the ability to research and to perform, essentially they are taking on some of the basic skills that we require in people who become policy analysts, business analysts, researchers in all fields (T.M. Bowkett, personal communication, June 20, 2003).*

Therefore, skills in both research and writing are utilized by contestants in preparing for Ngā Manu Kōrero. Research may take the form of reading literature; conducting interviews; seeking advice from kaumātua, teachers, and whānau; observing current events; analyzing different scenarios; testing hypotheses; and dreaming of what the future holds. Once information is collected, a topic can be confirmed, and a speech can be formulated. Whilst some contestants can write their speech in a matter of hours, others may require weeks of preparation and writing time. Whatever the topic, method, or timeframe, contestants develop skills in areas that complement their educational pursuits. Through feedback from their peers, whānau, and teachers, participants are able to revise their speeches and strengthen them where necessary.

Delivery and presentation skills are encouraged through Ngā Manu Kōrero, as the ability to deliver a speech is an art form unto itself. Speakers use a range of styles—from the more conservative to the contemporary—as well as shades between the two extremes. Some speakers incorporate drama, humour, singing, poetry, dance, and other aspects of performance to enhance their speech and delivery.

The ability to persuade and entice an audience is yet another skill promoted at Ngā Manu Kōrero. Although the majority of the audience are rangatahi, contestants aim their messages to not only their own peers, but to politicians, leaders, teachers, whānau, and others. Those in attendance at Ngā Manu Kōrero can be influenced by the personalities presenting to them, as well as by the messages that are being communicated. Speakers at Ngā Manu Kōrero can have an extremely powerful and positive effect on their peers, as rangatahi are being presented as their own role models. Ngā Manu Kōrero therefore facilitates the development of oratory and skills in a number of areas, and these will be of benefit to them in the future.

**Growing Māori leadership**

The true impact that past competitors have had on the contest is unknown; however, many have reciprocated and shown their appreciation to Ngā Manu Kōrero by being involved as adjudicators, compères, organizers, tutors, or teachers that work within the schools and regions. However, there are others that are yet to offer their services. Although there are differences in relation to when and how past competitors have reciprocated and contributed to Ngā Manu Kōrero, there is no denying that many have gone on to take leading positions in society:

*We see our former participants in Manu Kōrero taking on important lead roles in social development, economic political development—some in Western society, some remain within focusing more with Māori people (T.M. Bowkett, personal communication, June 20, 2003). Ngā Manu Kōrero has been noted as an event that reaffirms and acknowledges emerging Māori leaders and encourages rangatahi to utilize the skills and abilities they possess to be future leaders of te ao Māori (Māori society). As a result, many leaders in Māori society were once participants in Ngā Manu Kōrero, and it is likely that many current competitors will emerge as future Māori leaders. However, the extent to which Ngā Manu Kōrero has influenced the lives of leaders, although understood by the three research partners, is yet to be determined.*

*There is a strong sense that leaders in society acknowledge Ngā Manu Kōrero as an event that seeks the viewpoints of rangatahi on many facets of Māori development and New Zealand society. Many leaders acknowledge Ngā Manu Kōrero as an exceptionally*
positive event, and this recognition is increasing:

I think the fact that more and more of our so-called leaders in society acknowledge that it is a huge event in terms of Māori education, in terms of the way in which people are honoured to be asked to be a part of Manu Kōrero ... I think the fact that so many of our leaders in Māoridom and ... general society ... in Aotearoa see it as one of the key events in the country (T.M. Bowkett, personal communication, June 20, 2003).

Leadership as a concept and as an exemplar are embodied in the memorial trophies at Ngā Manu Kōrero, which are awarded to those that attain the highest levels of oratory within their respective sections. Memorial trophies not only conjure up the life works and qualities of those leaders, but also act as motivators for rangatahi to take up leadership roles when they become available. Many past competitors have done just that and are now leaders in their chosen fields. In these positions of leadership, they are role models for current and future Ngā Manu Kōrero competitors. The contest is also building its own credibility and reputation amongst others in society as a uniquely Māori event that fosters not only oratory and related skills amongst the competitors, but also qualities and networks for future leaders of Māoridom and New Zealand society.

**Concluding comments**

This paper highlights the importance of establishing meaningful relationships with research partners. It recognizes the knowledge, skills and resources that each bring to the research collaboration. Ngā Manu Kōrero, in particular, has contributed to the number of young people who have become proficient in both the Māori and English languages. The speech contest has had a profound effect on the education of those learning Māori at secondary-school.

Ngā Manu Kōrero has had a positive effect on Māori identity amongst rangatahi; competitors choose to investigate matters of personal and tribal importance, and tribal dialects and styles are presented, reaffirming the link that this event has with promoting whānau, hapū, and iwi identities. In preparing rangatahi for roles on the marae and in Māori society, this contest also advocates fluency in English, thereby supporting participation in New Zealand society generally. It is viewed as an educational experience and training ground for emerging Māori leaders and encourages rangatahi to develop and utilize culturally appropriate skills and expertise. Many contemporary Māori leaders have participated in different ways in this competition.

Finally, the management and organization of Ngā Manu Kōrero has a strong tikanga Māori element that permeates at all levels of the competition. This, amongst other things, is what distinguishes Ngā Manu Kōrero from any other non-Māori events.

**GLOSSARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aroha</td>
<td>love</td>
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<tr>
<td>awa</td>
<td>river/s</td>
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<tr>
<td>haka</td>
<td>traditional expressive dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>hapū</td>
<td>sub-tribe/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwi</td>
<td>tribe/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kanohi-ki-te-kanoh</td>
<td>face-to-face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kapahaka</td>
<td>Māori performing arts group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaumāuta</td>
<td>elders, proficient in marae protocol</td>
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<tr>
<td>kaupapa</td>
<td>purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>kawa</td>
<td>customs of the marae</td>
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<tr>
<td>kōrero</td>
<td>discussion, talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>mahitahi</td>
<td>cooperation, collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Māoritanga</td>
<td>Māori culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>marae</td>
<td>traditional gathering place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maunga</td>
<td>mountain/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mauri</td>
<td>spiritual life-force or essence</td>
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<tr>
<td>mita</td>
<td>dialectal differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mōteatea</td>
<td>traditional song/s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>New Zealander of European descent</td>
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<tr>
<td>rangatahi</td>
<td>youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>tangata whenua</td>
<td>people of the land, hosts</td>
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<tr>
<td>tautoko</td>
<td>support</td>
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<tr>
<td>te ao Māori</td>
<td>Māori society</td>
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<tr>
<td>te reo Māori</td>
<td>Māori language</td>
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<tr>
<td>tikanga Māori</td>
<td>Māori customs and practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>tono</td>
<td>offer, bid</td>
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<tr>
<td>waiata</td>
<td>song/s</td>
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<td>canoe/s</td>
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<td>oratory</td>
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<td>whakapapa</td>
<td>genealogy</td>
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<tr>
<td>whakatauki</td>
<td>proverb/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakawhanaungatanga</td>
<td>the act of building personal relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whānau</td>
<td>family, families</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


Rangiaho, L. Letter from Lisa Rangiaho to the Māori Education Trust, extract by Lisa Yorke of Queen’s High School, Dunedin. Unpublished manuscript, Wellington.


ENDNOTE

1 The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between Māori chiefs and representatives of the British Crown. It allowed for, amongst a number of things, the establishment of a settler government.
Development of the “Indigenous Self” in Indigenous-Centered Student Services: An Examination of the Kōkua a Puni Summer Enrichment Program

Antoinette Freitas, Erin Kahunawaikaala Wright, Brandi Jean Nalani Balutski, and Pearl Wu

I argue that a necessary first step in reevaluating the failure or success of particular instruction methods used with subordinated students calls for a shift from a narrow and mechanistic view of instruction to one that is broader in scope and takes into consideration the sociohistorical and political dimensions of education (Bartolomé, 2008, p. 128).

Conventional theories of student development are often used to explain student persistence, attrition, and matriculation in education and thus, formulate the basis for student retention models. Student development theories fail to consider the diverse set of socioeconomic, cultural, and academic experiences of Indigenous peoples, in this case Hawaiians, as they interface with institutions of higher education. This examination of the Kōkua a Puni Summer Enrichment Program (SEP) will help to identify gaps in student development theory, offer an Indigenous-centered model of student services, and facilitate a discussion on how this model promotes the program goals of leadership, self-actualization, and identity exploration.

In 1986, the Ka‘u Report was released by a consortium of Hawaiian faculty and staff from throughout the University of Hawai‘i System and documented the egregious absence of Hawaiians at the University of Hawai‘i. Despite improvements in post-secondary educational representation and support from federally funded initiatives like the Native Hawaiian Education Act, Hawaiians continue to be underrepresented among college students and graduate-level professional students. According to recent surveys, Hawaiian parents have high expectations for their children’s post-secondary education (Kanaiaupuni, Malone & Ishibashi, 2005, p. 116–117). More than four out of five Hawaiian respondents expected their children to continue their studies beyond high school at either a four-year institution (62%) or a two-year college or technical institute (24.4%) (ibid.). Further, improvements were made in post-secondary Hawaiian enrollment figures over time. For example, the number of Hawaiian students enrolled in the UH System increased by 25.2%, from 4,517 in 1990 to 6,248 in 2001 (ibid, p. 120). Using special tabulations from Census 2000 data, a recent report from the University of California Asian American and Pacific Islander Policy Initiative indicates that Pacific Islanders have made modest progress in educational attainment across generations (UCAAPI Policy Initiative, 2006).

Despite modest gains in representation, Hawaiians continue to be underrepresented in postsecondary enrollment and educational attainment. A 2003 study found that for Hawaiians 25 years and older, 43.2% had received up to a high school diploma or equivalency, 6.9% had received an associate’s degree, 9.4% had received a bachelor’s degree, and 3.2% had received a graduate or professional degree (Kamehameha Schools, 2003, p. 4). An additional 22.3% (about 27,000), had completed some college, but had not received a degree, which is testament to the college retention issue facing the Hawaiian population. A study conducted in 2011 by Freitas and Balutski, “Our Voices, Our Definitions of Success,” attempted to understand how Hawaiian students navigate, persist and matriculate through UH Mānoa. They tracked the enrollment and graduation of a cohort of first-time Hawaiian freshmen to UH Mānoa in Fall 2005 and thereby analyzed different enrollment and persistence patterns over a 5.5-year period. The
results of that study showed that by the end of that time period, 49.8% of the cohort of 271 students had either graduated or were still enrolled at UH Mānoa. These preliminary findings suggest there may be a larger college retention issue facing Hawaiian students within both UH Mānoa and, perhaps, throughout the UH system as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Group description</th>
<th>Semesters enrolled</th>
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<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>Continuous completer</td>
<td>X X X X BA</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>Continuous still enrolled</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>Stop out, return, drop out</td>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B</td>
<td>Drop out, did not return</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>Stop out, return, completer</td>
<td>X X X BA</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B</td>
<td>Stop out, return, still enrolled</td>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Missing data</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Table 1: Our voices, our definitions of success cohort characteristics

Kōkua a Punī (KAP) is a federally funded five year grant initiative supported by the US Department of Education, Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Strengthening Institutions Program. In 2005, the Pūko’a Council, a system-wide council of the University of Hawai’i Native Hawaiian serving programs, identified key challenges facing Native Hawaiian students and programs: the lack of funding, cultural insensitivity by faculty and administration, increased cross-program support, student-focused mentality, and the need for additional space. Based on this information, UH Mānoa developed a successful federal grant proposal that funded KAP.

The goals of KAP are to support and provide guidance to Hawaiian students so that they graduate, foster leadership among our haumāna (student(s)), reinforce and grow our sense of Hawaiian identity at the UH Mānoa campus, include our ‘ōhāna (family, relative) and community in higher education and, most important, serve our lāhui (nation; race). Generally, KAP focuses on enrichment activities, the most intensive of which is SEP. The primary purpose of SEP is to provide an enrichment experience for community college students who are either entering UH Mānoa or are interested in attending but are not yet accepted.

Limitations of Conventional Higher Education Student Development Theories in Understanding Indigenous Students

In considering the general underrepresentation and poor success rates of Hawaiians (and other Indigenous peoples) in traditional forms of higher education, identifying possible contributing factors is a natural outcome. Moving away from the “personal-deficit approach” (Pavel, 1999), which tends to blame individual students (and their cultures and families for seemingly not valuing education) for educational underachievement, we can begin to examine and interrogate the predominant conceptual frameworks higher education employs to understand its students and, in turn, frame its student experience.

For disenfranchised populations, education is recognized as a viable means for intellectual, political, and social empowerment. Freire (1993) says that the educational process is critically important to the psychological “liberation” of the colonized. By empowering individuals, education can, in turn, transform societies. Similarly, Guardia and Evans (2008) say for American Indian students enrolled in tribal colleges, “...the impact of attending college often goes far beyond learning content knowledge and obtaining a degree...” (p. 238). For communities that value collectivity and collaboration, earning a college degree can transform an entire community.

Hawaiians value education in much the same way: it provides a means for individual and community empowerment. The idea of education as empowerment is especially evident in the rise of pre-Kindergarten through 12 Hawaiian culturally-centered community-based schools like Pūnana Leo Family-Based Language Nests, Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai’i (The Hawaiian Language Immersion Program), and Hawaiian culturally-based public charter schools over the last two decades. In these educational contexts, which consciously support and reinforce Hawaiian identity, we see positive movement for Hawaiian youth in the form of slightly better performance on standardized tests on which, traditionally, Hawaiian students have not done well (Tibbetts, March 2005). Although more research needs to be conducted to make stronger correlations between culturally-based education and
provide a very useful taxonomy. It highlights principal student development theories used in higher education and provides a detailed explanation for each prevailing typology: psychosocial (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Ortiz, 1999), cognitive complexity / cognitive structure (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Perry, 1968; Piaget, 1964), typological (Heath, 1960, 1974; Meyers, 1980; and Cross, 1971, 1981; Helms, 1995 all as cited in Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 36–38) and person-environment (Astin, 1984/1999; Pace, 1979; Tinto, 1975, 1987). It is imperative to note that these typologies house numerous theories and models. Among these typologies, the one which student affairs draws heavily upon is psychosocial, an area developed by educational researcher Arthur W. Chickering (ibid.; Ortiz, 1999). Psychosocial theories view development as a succession of stages: thinking, feeling, behaving, valuing, and relationships with others and to oneself. In his “Seven Vectors of Student Development,” he provides a framework for understanding student change on various levels but focuses on the idea of “identity development” and how college influences that development.

In turn, these theories have also been used to explain student persistence, attrition, matriculation, and achievement across diverse populations (Grayson & Grayson, 2003). Thus, understanding student development theory is integral to understanding the broader context of higher education in the US, especially if we hope to create educational environments that are more conducive to understanding and facilitating Indigenous students’ access and success.

Despite the enormity and weight of student development theory literature, there are several gaps, especially with regards to the experiences of Indigenous students in higher education. Although the pitfalls of applying traditional student development theories to underrepresented populations are well documented (Bloland et al., 1994; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Taylor, 2008), it is still important to reiterate the primary inadequacies.

The bulk of student development theory was developed around the experiences of “traditional” college students from the 1960s through 1980s. These students were predominantly white, typically college-aged, and mostly male. Obviously, these traditional
theories do not include developmental processes of other groups of people, for example, women, adult learners, and Indigenous peoples, which would provide a much different view of “student development.”

The theoretical constructs undergirding student development theory, such as “cognitive complexity,” “cognitive structure” and “development” are largely western. Indigenous epistemologies embody different, oftentimes antithetical, ideas of what constitutes knowledge, cognition, competency, and development. Moreover, there is an absence of research examining the applicability of these theories specifically as they relate to Indigenous students. Consequently, given that student development theories are used to organize and operate higher education, it is not surprising that many Indigenous students find they do not resonate with these institutions.

Related to this, there is also a general failure among institutions of higher education to utilize a “cultural lens” when examining theory and research as it applies to Indigenous students (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Smith, 1999). Culture is integral to the lives of Indigenous peoples and, in turn, integral to understanding their experiences in higher education. Consequently, it is crucial that we use a more complex, culturally appropriate means of understanding the developmental processes of Indigenous students in higher education to promote empowerment, access, success, and achievement in culturally significant ways.

**Indigenous Ways of Understanding Indigenous Students**

There is a growing body of literature examining the experiences of Indigenous students in higher education that is culturally appropriate, culturally relevant, and largely conducted by Indigenous scholars (Battiste, 2008; Bartolomé, 2008; Benham & Heck, 1998; Benham & Stein, 2003; HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002; Ortiz & HeavyRunner, 2003; Pavel, 1999, 2007; Kanaiaupuni & Malone, 2006; White Shield, 2004–2005). In the US, much of this work centers on the experiences of American Indian and Alaska Native students, with a growing body of research on Hawaiian students as well.

What this work offers to the field of education, in general, are different perspectives on the challenges facing Indigenous students based on a culturally based understanding of the issues. For example, Pavel (1999) links the poor representation of American Indians in higher education to the challenging K through 12 educational environments and social contexts many American Indians encounter. He argues that, “. . . college test scores and academic criteria, such as high school GPA, are not powerful predictors of college success . . .” (p. 242). Rather, educators and researchers should “broaden our scope to include appropriate attributes . . . better indicators of success would be school and environmental attributes that determine the quality of schooling American Indians receive throughout their K [through] 12 experience . . .” citing that many American Indian students live in poor, isolated rural settings and attend schools with little or no college preparation courses (ibid.).

White Shield (2004–2005) and Benham and Heck (1998) also help to redefine the challenges American Indian and Hawaiian students face in higher education by discussing the sociohistorical context, including the impact of federal policies on these populations. In particular, White Shield (ibid.) states that the past shapes the current reality for American Indian students. She terms this collective experience as “historical trauma,” a reference to the cumulative wounding across generations as well as during one’s lifespan. Bartolomé (2008) writes that understanding the sociohistorical context of students’ “lived experiences” is imperative to understanding the academic performance of Indigenous students (p. 127).

Also central to this understanding is culture and spirituality. White Shield (ibid.) and Ortiz and HeavyRunner (2003) discuss the concept of “cultural discontinuity” which asserts that Indigenous peoples experience reality in a completely different way from the dominant culture even as it is signifies and expressed in higher education institutions. Battiste (2008) writes, “To effect reform, educators need to make a conscious decision to nurture Indigenous Knowledge, its dignity, identity, and integrity by
making a direct change in school philosophy, policy, pedagogy, and practice..." (p. 89). This change would help bridge the cultural disconnect and reinforce Indigenous Knowledge.

Part of this body of work is offering recommendations for enhancing educational experiences for Indigenous students based on these redefined perspectives. Collectively, the recommendations provide us with, as Bartolomé (2008) writes, “... a shift from a narrow and mechanistic view... to one that is broader in scope in the way we reconceptualize Indigenous education...” (p. 128). The following ideas are common themes and promising practices identified throughout the literature for creating meaningful educational experiences, which, for our purposes, we extend to the field of student affairs.

As referenced at the outset, an influential theme is integrating, reaffirming, and supporting the cultures of Indigenous students. HeavyRunner and DeCelles (2002) offer the “Family Education Model” (FEM) for higher education. In a closer examination of factors impacting higher education, the authors found that retention among American Indian students centered on replicating the extended family structure in the institution. Creating a mirror of the extended family in higher education provides American Indian students with a greater sense of belonging through engaging family members and community support networks in the educational process and, on a related note, providing structures embedded within the institution to support the student and her/his family.

Another theme evident in the literature is creating culturally relevant learning environments. In a study conducted by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators in 2006, culturally relevant learning environments, like cultural centers, contribute to American Indian students’ participation and persistence (Capriccioso, 2006).

Building institutional capacity is also important to supporting Indigenous students. On one level, increasing the number of Indigenous faculty and staff provides role modeling and mentoring for Indigenous students. On another, providing professional opportunities to build knowledge on Indigenous peoples and students, in particular, is important to creating an environment for Indigenous student success.

**The Transcultured Student: Using Indigenous Identity as Educational Empowerment in Hawaiian Student Services**

Perhaps the most influential theoretical framework that affected the design of the Kōkua a Puni Summer Enrichment Program (SEP) is the “transculturation hypothesis” discussed by Huffman (2001). Huffman conducted a five-year longitudinal study of 69 Indigenous students who enrolled in a Mid-Western university to explore personal perspectives and academic experiences.

One key finding was the identification of “transcultured” students who used their ethnic identity as a “firm social-psychological anchor, where these students displayed a confidence and sense of security that emerged from their American Indian ‘ethnicity’” as well as possessing a “strong identification from traditional American Indian culture and did not aspire to assimilation” (p. 9).

In opposition to “traditional Indigenous students,” who were estranged from the university experience and had significant-to-extreme difficulty, “transcultured” students found the strength in their Indigenous identity, cultural values, and spirituality to persist towards degree completion. They acquired the necessary confidence, self-worth as an Indigenous person, and sense of purpose to succeed in the higher education experience. In general, experiences of self-discovery moved students into the realignment and participatory stages that taught them to relate to Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures simultaneously as the situations they encountered demanded. Consequently, Huffman provides a helpful framework to meaningfully integrate and encourage Indigenous identity in creating our Hawaiian student support program.

As will be discussed, SEP represents an attempt to retool the way a higher education student services program is designed, using Indigenous ways of understanding Indigenous students as a result of the gaps in conventional student development theory and the growing body of literature in Indigenous education.
Developing the “Indigenous Self” and “Student” in the Summer Enrichment Program (SEP)

My life was without direction, I didn’t realize it at the time, but like most situations, where you’re stuck somewhere and understanding it is impossible, I was oblivious to my potential. I yearned to be Hawaiian, to live the ways of our ancestors, yet to understand this seemed a dream at best. I was perplexed by the sheer nature of Western ways and blinded by its influences. My intended future was one wrought with complication, with no real destination. I knew the unknown, the vastness of campus, the breadth of the student body, the many workers bees that make the place run. It was all so foreign me. (personal communication, SEP 2010).

Ortiz and HeavyRunner (2003) note several factors that are relevant to the design of the Kōkua a Puni SEP: affording students opportunities to connect early with people who can help them negotiate the larger, more complex institution; surrounding students with people who encourage them to succeed; recognizing that faculty play a critical role in their lives as students; and assisting with the development of strong bonds among peers and faculty (Taylor, 2001 as cited in Ortiz & HeavyRunner). SEP was created to provide culturally grounded academic enrichment to Hawaiian students entering UH Mānoa from system community colleges. The program’s blueprint drew from three main design elements: academic preparedness, sociocultural integration, and community engagement, elements that KAP found essential for a successful Hawaiian enrichment program. Ortiz and HeavyRunner (ibid.) discuss the “system approach” which attends to learners’ academic needs and the multiple responsibilities a learner may encounter during their educational journey, for instance tending to needs of family or community. Accordingly, the goal is to be synchronous. Aside from these design elements, an overarching “holistically Hawaiian” theme guided the overall program implementation to support the development of transcultured students. That is, Hawaiian knowledge was interwoven into the program design to further demonstrate the presence and relevance of Hawaiian culture and people in higher education. The academic coursework was infused with Hawaiian subject matter and perspectives. The orientation activities introduced students to Hawaiian individuals and campus programs so they could begin to recognize that UH Mānoa can be a place of Hawaiian learning. The community activities provided a valuable exposure to Hawaiian community-based initiatives and a way for them to connect their classroom learning to the broader Hawai‘i context.

In July 2008, Kōkua a Puni accepted its first SEP cohort; a total of nine students, eight of whom completed the program. Since 2008, Kōkua a Puni has accepted two cohorts, seven students during the summer of 2010 and ten students during the summer of 2011. Despite the small number of program participants, there are extremely valuable insights and lessons learned from SEP. Throughout the tailored four-week programs, several evaluations were conducted with students. These qualitative assessments allowed us to better understand student needs and its relationship to program design. Several assessment tools were used, including in-depth student-derived surveys, student reflections, and interviews. Part of our assessment design was to offer students a range of ways in which to express their own learning using, for example, multimedia or performance. Program staff also engaged in program reviews to collectively debrief on each SEP.

Academic Preparedness

All SEP cohorts were enrolled in a four-week academic program designed to develop critical thinking, writing, and reading skills at the baccalaureate level of instruction. The classes were taught by UH Mānoa instructors who specifically tailored their regular semester-long classes to fit the SEP time period and format. Classes varied and included topics such as Hawaiian Literature & Political Thought, Hawaiian Geography, Hana No’eau Mā’awe Hawai‘i (Introduction to Hawaiian Fiber Arts), and Lāʻau Lapaʻau (traditional Hawaiian medicine).

Sociocultural Integration

Throughout the program, KAP arranged “Meet and Greet” sessions where Hawaiian scholars and community leaders shared their ‘ike (knowledge; insight). All of the Hawaiian scholars invited had
doctorate degrees in fields like psychology, ethnic studies, education, political science, anthropology and geography, and most of them were current faculty within the UH System. The community leaders also provided valuable contributions to SEP, as they shared their experience with various community initiatives that strengthen and bring vitality to the lāhui.

Additionally, SEP students participated in enrichment workshops and on-campus orientations and tours that helped familiarize students with the campus and, in particular, different on-campus services and departments like the libraries, tutoring, and financial aid.

For the duration of the program, SEP students also had the opportunity to experience UH Mānoa residential life. We included this design element so the cohort was able to connect with one another, and to the program overall, during the four weeks. Students could study together, socialize and share experiences, and, generally, get to know one another well since they lived together. Students also benefited from this experience to see if residence life was right for them during the academic year.

Community Engagement

Huaka’i kaiaulu, or community excursions, were also integrated into the SEP curriculum to introduce students to Hawaiian community initiatives. They met members of the broader Hawaiian community, learned about community-based activities, and provided hands-on kōkua (help). The students visited Paepae o He’eia Loko I’a, Ke Kuleana o Ioleka’a, Kaho’olawe island, Papahana Kuaola, and Nā Kamakai He’e’enalu at Waikīkī. Students’ experience at Paepae o He’eia Loko I’a and Ke Kuleana o Ioleka’a allowed them to interact with ongoing community enterprises that attempt to preserve ancestral fishponds and revive sustainable mechanisms of land stewardship on a family kuleana (small piece of property, as within an ahupua’a: Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 179). Their visit to Kaho’olawe helped them understand the importance of political activism in defending Hawaiian rights, including caring for and protecting sacred sites. Students learned about Nā Kamakai He’e’enalu, a nonprofit organization that empowers Hawaiian youth through ocean awareness by teaching the traditional values of stewardship and reciprocity with the environment.

Overall, SEP attempted to further develop our students’ academic and social preparedness for UH Mānoa through a culturally-based and culturally-validating learning environment.

Supporting Hawaiian Student Success

Considering success factors discussed by Ortiz and HeavyRunner and the literature on Indigenous ways of understanding Indigenous students, three broad themes emerged which resonated with SEP: supporting the culture of Hawaiian students, creating a sense of place through culturally-relevant learning environments, and role modeling.

Supporting the Culture of Hawaiian Students

One way in which we attempted to support the culture of Hawaiian students was through what HeavyRunner and DeCelles (2002) term the “Family Education Model” (FEM), which addresses the need for family-based education in higher education. In a closer examination of factors impacting higher education, the authors found that creating a mirror of the extended family in higher education provides American Indian students with a greater sense of belonging through engaging family members and community support networks in the educational process and, on a related note, providing structures embedded within the institution to support the student and her/his family.

In replicating the ‘ohana (extended family) structure, SEP provided opportunities for students to develop strong support networks within their cohort and with SEP staff and kumu (teacher) through residence life and a highly intensive schedule. Although the intention of our design was to create a strong relationship between the students, it was difficult to foresee how strong the bonds between the students would become and the unique “family” dynamics that would occur within each cohort. When asked about the purpose of the program, one student answered, “. . . definitely to get us together and make us strong together so we can have this giant support group if ever we need anything, or if we feel lonely, or if we just wanna meet up for lunch, or talk kinda thing . . .”
(personal communication, SEP 2011). In another cohort, a student compared their relationship with their peers to an ‘ohana.

Our first week seemed to drag on much longer than the others that followed. Time somehow slowed down just enough for us to let our guards down, and get used to each other. After that, things didn’t know how to slow down, and we rocketed through the final weeks with unnerving ease. It all became a blur. Multiple memories and experiences, all crammed together in a tightly bound schedule . . . . Our adventures together forced us to become a family. We experienced the entire spectrum of human emotions during those short four weeks: Happiness, joy, exuberance, pain, loss, frustration. (personal communication, SEP 2010).

As reflected in HeavyRunner and Ortiz (2002), creating relationships between the students and key people on campus was another way in which SEP supported students. Connecting students to these programs early was important so that students would have the support of an extended family structure on campus before they transferred regardless of when they decided to transfer.

Creating a Sense of Place through Culturally-Relevant Learning Environments

The literature also supports the need for culturally-relevant learning environments (Capriccioso, 2006). The SEP students as a hui (group) participated in a host of campus tours to places like libraries and student services offices, and experienced on-campus living and dining. Students also took advantage of academic advising well in advance of the start of their first semester on campus. As such, “culturally-relevant” in this sense meant helping students to familiarize themselves with the campus like kama’aina, a term used for individuals who are intimately familiar with a particular place. For example, when asked how connecting them early to resources on campus changed their perceptions of Mānoa, students responded in this way:

- “Mānoa’s not so scary after you get to know it.”
- “It made me more comfortable with the university environment.”

- “I do feel comfortable now here, you know, being introduced to a lot of other programs and some of the teachers and people here. So, in some ways, yeah, it has changed where I just feel more comfortable.”
- “So like this program...unlocked the potential in people. Definitely. Like for me...it helped me realize that I wasn’t alone” (personal communications, SEP 2011).

The point of connecting students early was an intentional process of making the campus and its resources familiar and less intimidating. Not surprisingly, this helped students “think differently” and realize “how personal the campus can get...” (personal communication, SEP 2011). Ultimately, this newly perceived familiar and personal campus helps to create a more culturally relevant learning environment—perhaps the foundation of a truly Hawaiian place of learning.

We also created culturally-relevant learning environments in more overt ways. The content of the program was culturally grounded and aimed to also help students recognize the possibilities of linking their academic journey with their culture. One of the benefits of working directly with instructors to develop coursework for SEP was the flexibility to adapt the curriculum to fit the needs of the students and to also explore ways to make the courses more culturally-focused. This flexibility allowed more room to undo the “culture discontinuity” described by White Shield (ibid.) and Ortiz and HeavyRunner (2002). In interviews, students discussed how SEP helped them see the possibilities of having their academic interests grounded in culture.

The purpose . . . I would say, just to give us options of what is out there for Hawaiian students . . . because they incorporated so much about Hawaiian culture and all our scholars were for [sic] the Hawaiian community, it was pretty much just seeing the options of what could happen if you have that solid foundation of your culture, and being able to network out into anything that you are passionate about. (personal communication, SEP 2011).

Additionally, students were asked at the end of the program to rate the degree to which they felt the
classes were relevant to the major they wish to pursue, intellectually challenging, and interesting. In all instances program participants indicated the highest degree of satisfaction. Students recognized that culture (Hawaiian knowledge) and education (“academics”) were not separate and, in fact, SEP helped students recognize the connection culture had to their higher educational aspirations.

Another way in which the program fostered culturally-relevant learning environments was by connecting the university experience with the community. Huaka’i kaiāulu were designed to create linkages between classroom learning and community issues. In this way, the relevance of the subject matter and the value of education are imbued with meaning beyond the academy. Generally, students’ introduction to these initiatives helped provide them an understanding of how many people in the Hawaiian community are involved in preserving, perpetuating, and innovating aspects of our Hawaiian past that serve to inform and influence future generations. Students were asked to rate the degree to which the individual evening speakers would be beneficial to their college success. Students indicated the highest level of benefit. Program staff observed that each student understood and empathized with the challenges and rewards of being introduced to the lo’i and other places where we got to connect to the ‘āina, that’s where the success comes from, you know? It comes with the individual. It’s like finding that purpose and that passion you have for whatever it is” (personal communication, SEP 2011). Students were able to successfully connect multiple culturally-based learning experiences (in multiple environments) with their goals in higher education.

Role modeling for Indigenous students

Developing strong bonds to the people in higher education has traditionally been viewed as a strategy that supports student success. Particularly important was role modeling by Hawaiian scholars, community leaders, and instructors.

SEP included opportunities for our students to actively engage with Hawaiian scholars and community leaders through guest lectures, huaka’i and the SEP courses. Students were asked to rate the degree to which the individual evening speakers would be beneficial to their college success. Students indicated the highest level of benefit. Program staff observed that each student understood and empathized with the challenges and rewards of being introduced to the lo’i and other places where we got to connect to the ‘āina, that’s where the success comes from, you know? It comes with the individual. It’s like finding that purpose and that passion you have for whatever it is” (personal communication, SEP 2011). Students were able to successfully connect multiple culturally-based learning experiences (in multiple environments) with their goals in higher education.

For a student in another cohort, an emphasis was placed on sharing their experience during huaka’i kaiāulu with their family. “The experience we had with going to help out at these lo’is [taro terraces] and places, it just kinda made me wanna really, not so much just for the community service hours, but just to help out and learn and grow and gain information, and pass that on to my friends, my family, so that they can get involved and get the rest of the community involved” (personal communication, SEP 2011).

SEP instructors also played a critical role in the lives of students especially since they had the most regular interaction with students. In the classroom, the instructors created the educational environment for students, from seating to curriculum to pedagogy. All classes used Hawaiian subject matter and a variety of content that was relevant to the major they wish to pursue, intellectually challenging, and interesting. In all instances program participants indicated the highest degree of satisfaction. Students recognized that culture (Hawaiian knowledge) and education (“academics”) were not separate and, in fact, SEP helped students recognize the connection culture had to their higher educational aspirations.
of instructional methods, such as labs and excursions, to help improve academic skills and enhance student learning. Given the nature of the classes, instructors served as role models through their scholarship and teaching as well as through the mentoring they provided to our students around assignments and classroom interaction.

Role modeling also occurred during guest lectures. Students had the opportunity to attend lectures by Hawaiian scholars, such as RaeDeen Keahiolalo-Karusuda, Ty Tengan, and Kalei Nuʻuhiwa, who are recognized for their scholarship and strong relationship with the community. The small cohort size also allowed students the opportunity to meaningfully engage with them. For example, one student described, “not one of the scholars after they were done talking to us . . . didn’t give us their contact information. And then like, all the while, if you ever need anything, anything at all, just wanna talk to someone, like if you’re feeling low, someone to get you [to] work, keep you inspired and keep you going, just e-mail us. Call us at any time, we’ll get back to you and we’ll help you out and we’ll be there for you” (personal communication, SEP 2011).

Students also appreciated the willingness of the guest speakers to mentor them in their academic journey. One student described the powerful impact mentors and role models can have, “It was just such a good feeling to know that people that you aspire to be like are there willing to help you get to their level. So that’s just exciting for us.” (personal communication, SEP 2011)

Thus, the overall positive self-reported evaluations by students and the observations by staff indicate how the short-term outcomes of a tailored enrichment program approach has the potential to influence participants’ ability to become transcultured students. The most instructive short-term outcome from SEP is illustrated by one SEP instructor who wrote,

The students grew a lot personally, formed lasting and meaningful relationships, and in a way, showed a need for such a program . . . To this day, whenever I see any of them around campus there are always warm hello’s and lots of aloha (personal communication, SEP 2008).

Conclusion

Currently, the educational literature as it relates to Hawaiian students in higher education is sparse. It is clear there is a need for new areas of research and inquiry to both inform practice and to be informed by current practice. In fact, there are many effective educational models currently in place throughout the Hawaiian community that could lend themselves to informing inquiry and building a body of Hawaiian student development theory in higher education. As Bartolomé suggested at the outset of this piece, in creating educational interventions and extending this line of inquiry, we must also broaden our perspectives of design and efficacy to include sociohistorical and sociopolitical contextual factors. For KAP, these broader considerations contributed to the design, implementation, and assessment of the retention program employing a more culturally-based student support initiative. KAP challenges western epistemologies of student development, success, and achievement. In its first year, participant feedback illustrates that KAP was successful in achieving its programmatic goals of fostering leadership, self-actualization and identity exploration among students engaged in SEP. The SEP program may serve as a preliminary testing ground for higher education professionals who deem it necessary to reframe student success models and, furthermore, to develop lasting and relevant educational structures that resonate deeply with the daily lives, struggles, intellectual curiosity, and dreams of our students.

REFERENCES


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