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Social Process in Hawai'i

Women in Hawai'i: Sites, Identities, and Voices

Guest Editors
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ʻŌlelo Hoʻakāka Na Ka Luna Hoʻoponopono ʻŌlelo Hawai‘i
KAHULU PALMEIRA

Ua holomua loa mai nei ka ʻōlelo ʻōiwi o nā Kānaka Maoli ma nā makaiki he ʻumi i halo iho nei ma o ka hoʻokoikai ʻaina lā a nā keiki, nā ʻōpo, nā mākua, a me nā kūpuna Hawai‘i o kēia pae ʻaina. He loa nō naʻe ke alakehe e hele ʻia nei, no ka mea, aia wale nō a pili ke kūlana o ka ʻōlelo o ka ʻaina a like a like me ko ka ʻōlelo Pelekania, a kū hou nā Kānaka Maoli i ka moku, a laa, e pono ke ola o ka ʻōlelo a me nā Kānaka Maoli. A no laila, ʻo ke ʻano hou o ka hoʻoponopono ʻana e paneʻe aku nei, he wahi kākāʻo wale nō i like ai ke kūlana o nā ʻōlelo ʻelua, ma loko hoʻi o nā moʻolelo e paʻi ʻia ma ka ʻōlelo Pelekania. Mai noho naʻe a poina lā kākou ʻo kahi pahuhoʻpou nui e ake nei; ʻo ka laha loa ʻana aʻe o ka ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, ʻoʻole wale nōma o ka ʻōlelo a ka wahai, akā, ma o ke paʻi ʻana i nā moʻolelo a me nā puhe e kākau ʻia e nā Kānaka Maoli ma loko nō o ka ʻōlelo ʻōiwi o ka ʻaina. A no laila, ke hōʻike aku nei i kuʻu mahalo i ke kūhine hoʻokele a me ʻana pē pono nā lilo ma lilo nei no ko lākou noʻoholo riui. ʻAna mai no ka pono o ka ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi. Na ke au o ka manawa e hōʻike mai i ka pono a me ka ʻole o kēia hoʻopiʻo akā.

This volume reflects a series of continuing discussions and debates regarding the politics of language in Hawai‘i and the evolving practices in written and spoken languages here. This critical approach was possible due to the editorial considerations and insights of co-editors Joyce Chinien, Kathleen Kane and Ida Yoshinaga and the invited contributions made by Native Hawaiian Scholars Kuʻumea Aloha Gomes, Momi Kamāhele, Lilikalā Kameʻelehiwa, Noēhoe Siliva, and Sam Noʻeau Warner in the rationale and shaping of these linguistic guidelines. Having consulted with this range of expertise in current thought and practice in Hawaiian language, final decisions were made by the co-editors in collaboration with myself.

Because Hawaiian is not a foreign language in Hawai‘i, the practice of italicizing Hawaiian words within English language text is being abandoned throughout this volume, with some noted exceptions. In the same spirit, terms in Hawai‘i Creole English (HCE or Pidgin), another language born of this place, are not italicized or otherwise marked by quotation marks. In that sense, this is a groundbreaking publication that represents a changing consciousness of the sovereignty of islands, and island cultures and languages.

Hawaiian text will largely follow generally accepted guidelines of modern Hawaiian orthography using both the kahakō (macron) and ʻokina (glottal stop), to make the meaning and pronunciation of Hawaiian words in the text more readily evident to current generations of non-Native speakers of Hawaiian. Hawaiian names of famous places, chiefs, gods and other words referred to in the text are not segmented into morphological or other units through the use of hyphens, dots or other means. Although not adopted for
Foreword

KIYOSHI IKEDA, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Since its establishment by committed faculty, undergraduate Sociology majors, and staff, Social Process in Hawai`i has provided a window and a mirror to major developments, trends, and events in and around Hawai`i. Students were encouraged as direct participants to describe and reflect on their own situations, and that of their families and communities, through sympathetic introspection of others similar situated. The production and contributions of this journal's works by students, faculty, and community persons fostered diversity in backgrounds and experiences.

Throughout, women were co-producers and editors, sensitive observers, analysts, and interpreters of the social scene. Very early in this journal's development, Ah Quon (Leong) McElrath served as a key player, as a student providing its editorial direction and content. She was joined by a host of women scholar-teachers, students, and community persons, in providing descriptions and frameworks for viewing a full range of social relations and processes in Hawai`i. The status, treatment, and conditions of the women who contributed to these issues would alone make good stories to be told.

This issue on Women in Hawai`i breaks new ground, but at the same time represents continuity in journal work since the founding of Social Process in Hawai`i. The continuity is in the reflexive interpretation, by women themselves, of their own diverse situations. Additionally, through sympathetic introspection, this volume lends context and credence to the voices of other women about the developments, trends, and events, and the active participation of persons as individuals and as participants in movements in and around Hawai`i. What is special and new is that women themselves actively controlled the direction and content of the whole work. Earlier work may have significantly muted this dimension of active involvement and empowerment, by which women themselves are sharing co-partners in shaping the futures of themselves and diverse others in scholarly and other expressions.
Preface

JOYCE N. CHINE, FOR THE GUEST EDITORS

Since its inception in 1975, Social Process in Hawai‘i has occasionally featured articles by and about women. With volume 38, Women in Hawai‘i: Sites, Identities, and Voices, however, we set a precedent in devoting an entire volume to women in Hawai‘i. As our cover and internal design suggest, we honor the liberating, interdisciplinary work carried out in Women’s Studies by including poetry, art, literary criticism, and personal essays, as well as conventional social science research reports. This volume also challenges the hierarchical assumptions imbedded in the conventions of editing, editorialship, and even reading. Readers will also note that glossaries clarify indigenous Hawaiian, Hawai‘i Creole English, and foreign terms, and that Hawaiian Language Editor Kahulu Palmeira provides a discussion of the rationale and guidelines we used in addressing the language issues in this volume.

Bringing Women in Hawai‘i into being pays tribute to the organic process and quality of work performed in feminist communities. We began with a traditional division of labor: Kathleen O. Kane, Director of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM) Office for Women’s Research (OWR), was to oversee fiscal matters; Managing Editor Ida M. Yoshinaga was to coordinate the process of distributing, retrieving, and organizing the anonymously reviewed submissions; and I was to serve as Guest Editor. However, we quickly discovered the inadequacies of these separate designations. In feminist fashion, tasks merged and overlapped. Fundraising, correspondence, marketing, and editing bled into each other. We each functioned as an available ear, advice or suggestion dispenser, consultant for fundraising leads, editor, etc. With some anxieties, many a brainstorming session, a little chocolate, and lots of laughter, this volume emerged with three Co-Editors.

Co-Editor Kathleen O. Kane suggested the metaphor which organizes this volume—the islands of Hawai‘i stand separated by our Pacific waters, but remain joined as a single chain of volcanic developments moving over the subterranean hotspot (with new islands like Lō‘ihi yet to surface). Like these islands, each contribution is unique and differently situated, but also deeply connected to and complementary of the others. We see the pieces in this volume mapping the continuities and discontinuities in women’s concerns, the imposed constraints in their lives and the resistances and challenges to them over time and space. The contributions alternate between past and present sites, between the sites of what Patricia Hill Collins called the Outsider-within and (borrowing from that) the Insider-without. They speak of experiences borne of different geographical, historical, cultural and institutional locations. They reflect and express different identities and orientations—the views and voices of agency in the midst of constraints.
We begin, close, and mid-way pause with the songs of Hana'ani-Kay Trask. These selections profoundly honor her ancestors, giving voice to the consequences of colonization, and celebrate the reemerging sovereignty nation.

The works of Laurie M. Mengel and Noeoe K. Silva provide a glimpse into previous historical times, and remind us that gendered resistances of masculinity are seriously flawed. Both use hitherto unaddressed archival data to challenge the invisibility of all but the most privileged women in the historical records of Hawai'i. Mengel's piece demonstrates Japanese immigrant women's self-reliance and resistance to patriarchal abuse and neglect, through the act of divorce. She resurrects the voices of women long silenced away in divorce court documents. Silva provides new views of Kanaka Maoli struggles to retain sovereignty a century ago, revealing indigenous women's committed participation and leadership in these protest activities. By challenging "mainstream" accounts of Kanaka Maoli resistance to the Provisional Government, the Republic, and the annexation of Hawai'i by the United States, we connect these women to the strong daughters of today's Hawaiian sovereignty movement.

Candace Fujikane's work examines contemporary Hawai'i and the uneven impact that capitalist economic development makes on women and men of different ethnic groups. Through a literary analysis of Lois-Anne Yamanaka's Saturday Night at the Pahala Theater, she problematizes local identity, enabling us to see the limits and possibilities for coalition-building among progressive social and sovereignty movements.

Personal essays tell stories simultaneously unique and shared. Mediana Utarti-Miller, Donna Tsuyuko Tanigawa, and Judy Rohrer speak to their unique experiences resident "alien" from Bali, young lesbian from Waipahu, and local haole, lesbian. Through their cross-disciplinary approach combining political theory, social criticism, regional history, and autobiography, these writers supplement the old feminist adage of the "personal as political," with new expressive avenues offered by contemporary feminist cultural studies. They explore: the price exacted in occupying the socially and historically constructed positions of Insider-Without and Outsider-Within.

The institutions of family, higher education, the military, and the criminal justice system form certain economic, social, cultural contexts which differently affect women and men. Phyllis Turnbull and Kathy E. Ferguson provide a political and cultural study of the institutionalization of the colonizer's "masculine" adventuring and conquest of "feminine" Hawai'i. Susan K. Heppeistei offers data and a critical race theory perspective on the multiple experiences of ethnoviolence victims on the UHM campus. Karen Joe Laidler and Kim Marie Thorburn examine the social situations of working-class women who are involved in illicit substance abuse and/or living in prison. Joe Laidler documents the contradictory nature of the family in a site of oppression and support for working-class local women, while Thorburn focuses on the special health needs of incarcerated women in Hawai'i.

This volume is neither definitive nor representative of the diversity of situations of women in Hawai'i. Future research will better address the duality of their lived experiences. Using what Patricia Hill Collins refers to as "both/and" feminist analysis, taking into both their subjugation and their resistance to it, it will look at contemporary Kanaka Maoli women in the islands and abroad, working-class and poor women, mixed-race women, post-Vietnam War Southeast Asian refugee women, post-statehood economic immigrant women, Pacific Islander, Latina, white ethnic and African American women, female grassroots activists and political leaders, female artists and other cultural producers, older women, and others. Such research directions are especially necessary as the global political economy continually transforms the social institutions and spaces of Hawai'i. But that remains for subsequent volumes; it is the birth of this one, and the community that made it possible, that we celebrate here.

We are indebted to the UHM Office for Women's Research and Development (OWRD) staff, Shovani "M Ali" Chakravorty, Louise Kubo, and Judy Rohrer, who conceived the idea of, and provided an office for, Women in Hawai'i. Kiyoshi Ikeda and Michael Weinstein (Executive and Managing Editors of Social Process in Hawai'i), Richard Dubanoski (Dean of the UHM College of Social Sciences), and Annette Chang (Administrative Officer of the UHM College of Social Sciences) encouraged and supported this project: Ibrahim Aoudi and Jonathan Okamura shared their experiences from editing previous issues of the journal.

For almost two years, the feminist activist-scholars on our Editorial Board were our sounding board for diverse political, editorial, and production decisions; they shared a considerable pool of knowledge and contacts with us, and sat patiently through months of long meetings and e-mail exchanges. Mahalo nui loa to Media Chesney-Lind for her extensive knowledge of women and crime themes; Ku'umepalola Gomes for her sharp, grounded insights into Kanaka Maoli cultural and political issues; Ruth Y. Hsu for her understanding of diasporic cultural studies and the literatures of Hawai'i; and Kathleen O. Kane for her deep grasp of anti-colonial feminist theory, pedagogy, and process.

The Editorial Board received twenty-two submissions, each anonymously and rigorously reviewed by at least three readers—national as well as local, community resource persons as well as academicistas. With these readers' generous assistance, we agreed on the eleven selections in this volume: Nancy Aleck, Cristina Bacichieva, Colette V. Browne, Puanani Burgess, Juli Thompson Burk, Karleen Chinen, Malcolm Nizea Chung, Lynette Cruz, Ho'oipo DeCambril, Jo Desmaret, Carolyn DiPalma, Laura D. Edles, Cynthia Enloe, Howard Erlich, Suzanne Falgout, Cynthia Franklin, Ute Goldkuhle, Marie Hara, Jonathan Goldberg-Hiller, Ulik Kame'eleihiwa, J. K'auhau'i Kaua'i, Marjorie Kelly, Pamela Sachi Kido, Nanci Krediman, Doris Ladd, Rebecca Lee, Laura Lyons, Dianne McGregor, Sridevi Menon, Theresa Montini, Rodney Morales, Paula T. Tanemura Morell, Linila N. Nishigaya, Gail Nemura, Jonathan Okamura, Nahua Patmons, Kathy Phillips, Marcia Roberts-Deutsch, Susan Schultz, Jeanette Takamura, Jeff Tobi, Donald M. Topping, Neil Webdale, Elvi Whittaker, Allison K. Yap, and Kanalu G. Terry. Young: Organizing the distribution, review, and return of the submissions, the fundraising, publicity, and liaison work with our publisher, etc., was a truly Amazonian feat performed by Ida M. Yoshinaga. She also served as our social conscience; calling our attention to important political issues to address along the way.

Urung June Nam provided superb editorial assistance. Kahului Palmera minutely reviewed and re-read the manuscript, which now conforms to generally accepted.
conventions of modern Hawaiian orthography and certain new conventions which reflect a growing awareness of key sociolinguistic and political issues in the local Hawaiian-language teaching community. Her assistance, and those of Kuʻumealoha Gomes, Momi Kamahelo, Liliʻalā Kameʻeleihiwa, Noenoe Silva, and Samuel Noʻeau Warner, helped us to understand Kanaka Maoli language issues. Accordingly, our Editorial Board decided that the languages of Hawaiʻi which are unique to this place (i.e., Hawaiian and Hawaiʻi Creole English) not be italicized, except to denote creative emphasis (e.g., in Trask’s poems). We invite readers to join us in the political act of resisting the conventions through which non-Western languages and peoples are exoticized and subtly marginalized.

We are indebted to artist Gaye Chan for the extraordinary cover and the artwork articulating the themes sprinkled throughout this volume. Jasmine Au designed the exciting new textual look; Mark Nakamura took on the time-consuming task of laying out the volume, providing textual and bibliographic copy editing, and coordinating production matters with our publisher, and Lucille Aono, Collins Kawai, and Kay Kimura of the University of Hawaiʻi Press patiently worked with us on important fiscal, marketing, editorial, and production matters.

This project would not have been possible without a generous grant awarded to the OWR by the Hawaiʻi Community Foundation (HCF), which saw this project as enhancing the community; we thank Janis Reischmann and Joanne Yamada of the HCF for their encouragement and advice in the grant-writing process. We are also indebted to Ruth Dawson, Director of the UHM Women’s Studies Program and Len Goodman of the Madeleine J. Goodman Memorial Fund for their unwavering belief in the worth of this project and generous financial assistance; to Cornelia Moore, Dean of the UHM College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature (LLL), who provided both moral and financial support through an LLL publications grant; and to Kiyoshi Ikeda of Social Process in Hawaiʻi for aid from the journal’s fund. We thank the UH Commission on the Status of Women for its program and financial support, and to the many individual women and men who personally contributed to our printing pot. In this regard, we acknowledge Joan Yanagihara of the University of Hawaiʻi Foundation for advising us on fundraising strategies.

Crucial to negotiating through the UHM bureaucratic and clerical equipment mazes were Tricia Nakamura, Watson Robinson, Erik Funakoshi, and especially Sharla Horuiuchi and JoAnn Watanabe in the Women’s Studies Office, and Annette Chang, Patti Au and Leilani Tsukahara of the UHM College of Social Sciences. The audio-visual, electronic, and other communications assistance of William Puette of the UHM Center for Labor Education and Research, Pat Woods of the UHM Department of Art, and the women and men of the Pacific Women’s Network, helped us publicize this volume through multimedia and grassroots channels.

Finally, I want to thank the UHM Women’s Studies Program for providing me “a room of my own” (a space of privilege) for the year; they gave me an office which enjoys a spectacular view of Mānoa valley where I spent my early childhood years. Like many offspring of returning nisei veterans and the women who fought World War II at home, I grew up in the Mānoa Territorial Veterans Housing Project. My parents, my two sisters, and I shared a one-bedroom duplex apartment where University of Hawai‘i facilities now sit—quite a contrast to the generous space I enjoyed this year. As an Outsider-Within this year, I recall the many times when, looking up from manuscripts, I viewed distant waterfalls, peeking through the Mānoa mists drifting down the valley, and so many brilliant rainbows—like the pieces in this volume, these scenes renewed my spirit. They reminded me that the environment of the academy can change, has changed, and will continue to change because of the feminist work of committed women and men. And if the academy can change, so can the rest of our socially constructed world.
Born from the chest
of Haumea, mo’o
woman of kuapā,
lizard-tongued goddess
of Hawai‘i:
  Nāmakaokaha‘i,
sister of thunder
  and shark,
  Kānehekili,
  Kūhaimoana,
  elder of Pele,
  Pelehonuamea.

*Kino lau* on the wind,
in the yellowing ʻi,
sounds of Akua
awakening in the dawn:

Nā-maka-o-ka-ha‘i,
eyes flecked with fire,
summoning her family
from across the seas.

Sharks in the shallows,
upheaval in the heavens.

From the red rising mist
of Kahiki, the Woman of the Pit:

Pele, Pele‘a‘ohonua,
travelling the uplands,
devouring the foreigner.
Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) suffer from the erasure of their pasts, what Ranaj Guha calls "unhistorical historiography." Our ancestors, save the monarchs, are absent from our history books, though they haunt the pages in hints and footnotes.

As a Kanaka Maoli who reads our ancestors’ writings in their own language, I am constantly astounded at how their stories differ from the history books, and grieve that we do not know those who fought to save their country from annexation, while we can recite names like Dole, Thurston, and Stevens. So I tell the Kanaka Maoli story, quoting them at length because their words remained locked away for so long.

Today, as we recover our sovereignty, we need to know how eloquent, angry, and committed these men and women were, how they succeeded and how they failed. We have so much to be proud of in our past; I seek to make a little more of it known.

—Noenoe K. Silva
Kū'e Hawai'ian Women's Resistance to the Annexation
NOGEOE K. SILVA

The processes of colonialism and imperialism that culminated in the United States' annexation of the Hawaiian Kingdom deprived Native Hawaiian (Kanaka Maoli) people of their sovereign nation. These processes also changed the existing social structure in ways that attempted to strip women of their traditional avenues to power. In spite of the various forces obstructing their participation in political life, Kanaka Maoli women actively fought in the struggle against annexation. In this paper, I explore some of the ways that the processes of cultural imperialism endeavored to make Kanaka Maoli women less powerful, and some of the tactics they used to resist imperialism.

According to Jocelyn Linnekin's study of women and colonialism in Hawai'i, prior to intervention:

Hawaiian women were celebrated as mothers and as sisters and were portrayed as potent beings in myth and symbolism. In politics and social organization, women played a crucial role in chiefly rank determination and in the composition of the local group (1990:5).

It is difficult to find support for the premise that Hawaiian women were considered inferior to men. "...The ideology of male dominance seems weakly developed in early Hawai'i and it is well documented that chiefly women at least were autonomous political actors with considerable personal and spiritual power (1990:5).

The efforts to deprive Native women of voice and power took place on several fronts. The first was the missionary. Patricia Grimshaw has said of the missionary wives:

They came to Hawai'i believing that Hawaiian women were sunk to the lowest place of abjection; they came to enable these women to 'lift up their heads,' and enjoy the fruits of a higher social status. In fact, mission wives attacked and undermined those very aspects of Hawaiian culture which offered Hawaiian women some measure of autonomy in their own system. Meanwhile they were powerless to recreate for Hawaiians the conditions which gave American women the degree of informal power which they themselves knew (1989:156).

After initial failures to make Natives behave like New Englanders, missionary wives felt that "the main thrust of the reform endeavor should be shaped around the family life of Hawaiians... The main reliance, then, would be upon instilling 'moral and religious culture' in the females (Grimshaw 1989:161). But of course the ali'i 'nobility' presented a problem: "The delicate balance involved in the definition of submissiveness of wife to husband almost defied explanation in terms of chiefly Hawaiians: Missionaries therefore had no choice but to accept the enormous power of chiefly women" (165). And even among commoners, "some women continued to spend time swimming and surfing, in card playing, gambling, hunting, horse riding, dancing, and traditional games of skill and chance" (167). Various media were mobilized in this effort. Richard Armstrong was a missionary who left the mission to work in the government as Minister of Public Instruction. "As a way to advance literacy and Christian-American morality, he also turned to another educating medium, newspapers" (Chapin 1996:29). In one of his government papers, Ka Hae Hawai'i, he published articles designed to domesticate Hawaiian women: One article says "O ka ka wahine hanai, o ka malama i ka Hale, a maemae" "The wife's job is to keep the house clean (March 19, 1896). It goes on to say that in "na aina naauao" enlightened lands, women work at sewing, taking care of children, cleaning, and teaching school, then life is comfortable. In the following week's edition, the ali'i Kapiolani is described as being a model woman. Her house is clean and furnished just like a fashionable European, white American 'house. Her body and her hair are also neat and clean. She attends church every Sunday as well. "Ia me ia na wahine a pau, pomaikai ka aina. If every woman were like her, the land would be blessed (March 26, 1896). Next to the article about the model woman is an editorial about why girls should be sent to school along with their brothers. It asserts that they would be able to learn English and teach their sons 'kea olelo momona' this rich language. English will spread much quicker this way, it concludes. Important in this text is that English language schools were to be used to socialize the population in baleile ways, but with the emphasis on men—women were merely to be the tool by which men would learn these ways.

In addition to churches, schools, and the newspapers, women's power was gradually usurped by the promulgation of constitutions and laws. However, Hawaiian women fought against such usurpation. Linnekin writes:

I do not dispute the fact that from the 1840s Western-inspired civil restrictions worked to abridge Hawaiian women's public status. I do suggest that Hawaiian women, both chiefly and common, resisted such pressures with some success (1990:237).

What were these forms of resistance? My hypothesis is that as women lost places from which to launch resistance or counter-ideological strategies, they relied more and more on what Michel de Certeau calls "tactics," some of which were literary. According to de Certeau:

...a strategy is the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business... can be isolated. It postulates a place that can serve as the base from which relations with an exteriority composed of targets or threats...can be managed...a tactic is a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power (1985:36-37).
Newspapers in the Hawaiian language, especially since 1861 when the first Hawaiian newspaper was published independent of missionary control, served as the primary site of Kanaka Maoli resistance to colonialism. Kanaka Maoli papers published legends, songs, chants, genealogies, etc., from the Native oral tradition, in opposition to the missionary and establishment presses (Chapin 1984).

The legends in the papers are important because, as de Certeau says:

they are deployed, like games, in a space outside of and isolated from daily competition, that of the past, the marvelous, the original. In that space can thus be revealed, dressed as gods or heroes, the models of good or bad ways that can be used every day (1986:27).

The legends contain strong female role models in opposition to what missionaries tried to advance to Kanaka Maoli as proper behavior for women. For example, thirteen versions of the legend of Hi‘iakaikapalolele (Hi‘iaka) were published between 1861 and 1930 (Meyer 1997). Hi‘iaka is the youngest sister and favorite of Pele, the volcano goddess. Both, but especially Hi‘iaka, are patron goddesses of the hula. In the legend, Pele sends Hi‘iaka from the most eastern point in the islands, Hā‘ena, Hawai‘i, to the most western point of the large islands, Hā‘ena, Kaua‘i, to fetch a lover she met while in a trance or dream state. Hi‘iaka’s mission is to bring the handsome Lo‘ih‘au to Pele without succumbing to temptation along the way. Pele promises that after she has had Lo‘ih‘au for five days, Hi‘iaka may then take him for a lover as well, but not before then.

This is a women-centered tale. When Pele awakens from her dream, for example, Hi‘iaka is at Hā‘ena surfing and dancing hula with her intimate friend, Hōpoe. Hōpoe is both a young woman and the name of a forest grove where the young woman picks lehua flowers for lei. Hi‘iaka does not want to leave her friend; she exacts a promise from Pele that, while she is gone, Pele will not harm her friend, nor her beloved forest grove. Pele also endows Hi‘iaka with a magical skirt, which she can use as a weapon. Shortly after Hi‘iaka sets out, she comes upon a woman, Wahine‘ōma‘o, who is on her way to offer a sacrifice to Pele. Wahine‘ōma‘o is immediately taken with Hi‘iaka, and asks to accompany her on the journey. Another young woman companion appears in the story at times: the supernatural Pi‘i‘opala‘a, who, with her own magical skirt, can become the ferns of the forest when necessary. Together these two or three young women walk and hitch rides on canoes all the way across the island chain by a northern route to Kaua‘i, and back along a southern route. Along the way, they are threatened by various kinds of mo‘o, which are evil spirits which appear in different forms, many times as beautiful young women. Hi‘iaka often kills the mo‘o with her magic “lightning” skirt. She also cleverly thwarts a would-be rapist, and tricks canoe-owners out of the sexual favors they had expected for giving the women transport. She shows her godly nature by punishing with death those men who dare to insult her by not paying her proper homage. She kills a shark, performs several daring rescues, has a love affair, and heals people of various illnesses along the way. When the women arrive in Kaua‘i, Lo‘ih‘au is deranged, and his spirit has been taken by mo‘o women who had also desired him as a lover. Hi‘iaka battles and defeats the mo‘o, captures his spirit, restores his body, and nurses him back to health (Kapilhenui 1861; Hoooolumahihe 1905-1906, anonymous 1908-1910).

This picture of womanhood is quite different from the one that the Reverend Armstrong was trying to promote. Pele, for example, is demanding, jealous, angry, unpredictable, and vengeful. She destroys both Hōpoe and the grove when she thinks Hi‘iaka has taken too long. The young women travelers engage in meaningful and pleasurable activities: they light off evils; they outsmart rapists; they chant and dance hula; they surf; they practice medicine and religion (one and the same at times); they love and have prolonged relationships, especially with each other. They are not cooking, cleaning house, nor worrying about husbands. They are not domesticated; rather, they are adventurous. The legend instructs a different moral code. For Hi‘iaka, it is perfectly all right to have a brief love affair during her journey, as long as both parties are willing. She is attracted to the man for his physical beauty, his generosity, and his sense of humor. She weeps with affection for him when she must continue her journey (Hoooolumahihe 1905-1906); however, she is independent of men. She also punishes a man for hitting his wife. Clearly, blind wifey submission to husbands is not part of the code. Here, kāndiwat “laws” instead have to do with proper preparation and eating of food (e.g., none must be left uneaten); hospitality; and proper religious observances.

The Hi‘iaka epic is just one of many legends that serve to counter and delay American attempts at hegemony. Another example is the Kamapua‘a epic, which was also published several times during the nineteenth century. An excellent translation into English which is faithful to the tone of the Hawaiian versions was recently made available (Kame‘elehiwa 1996). The Kamapua‘a legend also contains depictions of women who are strong, unruly, and independent.

Through these legends, Kanaka Maoli people, both men and women of the nineteenth century and of today, have constructed and reconstituted their unique cultural identity. Legends such as these were published in the opposition newspapers, while the versions published in establishment or government newspapers tended to be more palatable to the missionary-influenced American establishment. I contend that the Kanaka Maoli women of the anti-annexation struggle undoubtedly took inspiration from both these and other Native literary and language forms. Let us turn now to their story.

Hui Aloha ‘Aina o Nā Wāhine

In January 1893, the Hawaiian monarchy, embodied in the person of Queen Lili‘uokalani, was overthrown by a conspiracy of (mainly) American-identified sugar planters and a contingent of the United States Marines. The businessmen established what they called a Provisional Government, and immediately sent an envoy to the United States seeking recognition and support for the annexation of Hawai‘i to the United States. President Grover Cleveland at the same time sent James Blount to Hawai‘i to conduct an investigation of the overthrow.

Mobilization of Hawaiian resistance to the Provisional government was swift and organized. By March 9, the Hui Aloha Aina—the Hawaiian Patriotic League—had adopted a constitution (U. S. Congress 1895:93). By July, they described themselves in a letter to President Cleveland as:
a political association; with branches in every district of the Kingdom; representing, together with a large following of foreigners. Over 7,500 native-born Hawaiian qualified voters... and to which is annexed a woman's branch of over 11,000 members. (Emphasis supplied! U.S. Congress 1895:911.)

The women announced their mass meetings in the Hawaiian language newspapers. One of the first was on March 27, 1893. The announcement reads, in part:

Ua makemake i na wahine oia'i, na ui me i na maka'uhine o ka Lahui Hawai'i, e hiki ae ma keia halawai, no ke kuka ana no na manao aloha aina, me ka hipo'ana i ke kuokoa mau o keia Pae Aina.

He hana o ke kela'ela keia a na wahine Hawai'i, e hana ai no ka maka'ee ana i ka Aina, kona Ha'e, a me keia-kuokoa mau. (Kā Leo o ka Lahui 1893)

Adolescent women, young adult women, and mature women (mothers) of the Hawaiian Nation are wanted to come to this meeting to discuss patriotic convictions and the caring for (or tending to) the continued independence of this Archipelago.

This is a most excellent thing that Hawaiian women should do out of love for the land, its flag, and its permanent independence.¹

I have translated 'aloha aina as 'patriotic' here, which is how the Hui itself translated its name: Hui Hawai'i Aloha Aina as Hawaiian Patriotic League. However, like many sayings in Hawaiian, aloha 'aina has a multitude of layers of meaning, and the word 'patriotic' is not an exact fit. One important difference is that 'aloha 'aina, literally, 'love for the land,' has no gendered root as does patriot (from pater 'father'). These aloha 'aina convictions are not merely feelings of love or pride; they also require action, as can be seen in the next phrase, me ka hipo'ana i ke kuokoa mau o keia Pae Aina. The word hipo'ana means 'to tend, feed, cherish, as a child' (Fuku & Elbert 1986). In other words, the women plan to 'tend to' the continued independence of their nation. Their responsibility to do so also is linked to the cosmogony of Papanahaumoku, who gave birth to the islands. The metaphor of a woman giving birth to the land attributes to our physical environment a process in which only women can engage. This is a powerful image of women as a life source, and as a source of stability for society, including the nation. It also confers upon women the responsibility for caring for the land (and home land) as they care for their children.

Subsequently in the announcement, the women of this Aloha Aina remind the readers that Queen Elizabeth of England, in a time of war, had said:

E Kuu Lahui, ke ike mai la oukou he kano wahine Ko'u, ake nae; o Kuu puuwai, ka puuwai ia o ke kanaka ko'a wiwo ole!

My dear Nation, you all know that I have the body of a woman, but my heart is the heart of a brave soldier! (Kā Leo o ka Lahui March 27, 1893).³

They also speak of the brave actions of both Queen Lili'uokalani and Princess Victoria Ka'iulani as examples for women to follow. The Hui exhorts women to:

work bravely for the benefit of your native land; do not retreat, do not be undecided, do not be ashamed of working for the things which will benefit your land; this is a very honorable thing for women, for mothers who are the ones to increase the Race living upon Hawai'i.

This language reveals not only that the women felt restricted by the imposed gender roles of the day, but also that they were engaged in working against it. In these papers they appeal to the British queen, first of all, to legitimize their actions, then to the Hawaiian Queen and Princess who were the highest ranking all of the time. They reassured women that doing this political work was nothing to be ashamed of; this was necessary because, in the American social code, a woman working in the political arena was supposed to be a shameful thing.

The column next to this announcement contains an interesting paragraph titled "Mahalo":

Nui ko makou mahalo [i] ka ike ana i ka papa iopo a o na Lele i komo i ka Hui Hawai'i Aloha Aina a na Lele. O ka pae makahahono-no a pau i mara i na kanu haole, kekahi i komo pu mai he hookahi wale no wahine i kanalia mai, o a kona Kaiuakana no ho i kekah e lole lua neat.

- We were grateful to see the list of names of Ladies who joined the Hui Hawai'i Aloha Aina for Ladies, Of all of the distinguished people who are married to haole men, who came together; only one woman was doubtful, and also her older sister was ambivalent.

This "Mahalo" shows that the women's Hui was not a 'wives' auxiliary of a men's political club, because even Hawaiian women who were married to haole men had joined. The tone implies that the haole husbands may have been on the annexationists' side. It therefore shows that Hawaiian women had their own aloha 'aina convictions, separate from their husbands' politics. I suspect that these convictions were rooted in that deep-seated cultural and national identity which continued to be reinforced by the telling, writing, and reading of ancient legends, the speaking of the mother tongue, and the secret practice of hula and Native medicine.

One of the first activities of the women of Hui Hawai'i Aloha Aina was to draft and submit a letter to President Cleveland's Commissioner Blount stating their opposition to annexation. It read, in part:

We believe that, in the light of recent events, the peace, welfare, and honor of both America and Hawaii will be better served, for the present, if the Government of the great American Republic does not countenance the illegal conduct and interference of its representatives here and the rash wish of a minority of foreigners for annexation.
Therefore, we respectfully, but earnestly pray that Hawaii may be granted the preservation of its independent autonomy and the restoration of its legitimate native monarchy... (U.S. Congress 1893:493).

Commissioner Blount's impression of the women who delivered the letter to him was that "they were evidently persons of intelligence, and refined in their deportment" (U.S. Congress 1893:492). In reference to this event, the historian William Russ recounts what the Star, an annexationist newspaper, said:

> The women, said the editor with considerable sarcasm, would give a "hookupu." "It is the firm belief of the promoters of this feminine scheme that if the seductive influences of a hookupu are added to their own blandishments, the Commission will grant any boon they may ask... (Russ 1961:183)."

It is noteworthy that the representation of the women is in sexual terms ("seductive"), and the ridicule based on their gender ("feminine scheme"). This is one of the discursive strategies that the annexationists used to minimize the importance and seriousness of the Native women's political work. The women also sent petitions to the President of the United States (Ke Aloha Aina November 23, 1893).

We get a glimpse into the activities of the women again in July 1894. In the meantime, Commissioner Blount had compiled his over-1,000 page report and returned to Washington. On the basis of this report, and in light of other political considerations, President Cleveland concluded that the overthrow had been illegal, and refused to support the annexation. He could not, or would not, however, assist Hawaii militarily in regaining sovereignty. The Provisional Government (P.G.) set about lobbying Congress and the President for annexation. Since these efforts did not succeed quickly enough, the P.G. declared itself a republic.

> They chose the fourth of July, 1894, to do so. This was seen as a terrible and sad irony and an insult by the Hawaiians whose editorials spoke of their respect for the American ideals of freedom, democracy, and self-determination (Ka Leo o ka Lahui 1894; Ka Makaaaina 1894).

The po'e aloha 'aina, 'the resistance,' learned about the planned July fourth announcement only a few days beforehand. They called for a hālāwai maka'a'iana, literally, a commoners' meeting or mass protest rally, on July second. On the morning of the second, the rally was announced in several newspapers, and bills were apparently posted for the rally that was to be held that very evening. Accounts vary, but it was reported that between 5,000 to 7,000 people attended the protest that evening. In the newspaper, Ka Leo o ka Lahui, on July fifth, the officers of Hui Hawai'i Aloha Aina credited women for bringing the public together for the rally: "the nation thanks the officers of the women's executive committee of the Hui Aloha Aina...the publication of the notices and the newspapers were late, but the spreading of the announcement by means of the women was swift as a telegraph wire" (Ka Leo o ka Lahui July 5, 1894).

The women also drafted and sent a protest resolution to the foreign ministers of the U.S., Great Britain, France, Japan, Germany, and Portugal. It reads, in part:

> We, the women of Hawaii, whose only homes are here, and whose happiness and the prosperity of our families depend on the peaceful and rightful government of our native Islands, which we cannot expect out of a tyrannical oligarchy of foreigners,—We solemnly protest against the action of the Provisional Government in proclaiming a new constitution and a so-called permanent Republic on the authority of only one-fifth of the legal voters; and, as our Nation appears to be the victim of the procrastination of the American Senate, we hereby apply again to America and also make a formal appeal to other Foreign Nations for protection and help...for preventing the injustice of the peaceful law-abiding Hawaiian People to be saddled with a despotic usurping government, republican only in name, when our only fault has been to rely on American honor and justice (Henriques 1894).

Despite such mass protest, the Republic was proclaimed, its constitution voted on by "delegates," a majority of whom had been appointed by the Provisional Government (and in fact, were the Provisional Government) (Russ 1961:25-26). The remainder of the delegates were elected, but since potential voters had to swear not to support the monarchy before being granted the franchise, the number of voters was small, as the women had noted above (Russ 1961:25-26). Despite the recognition by the Cleveland administration that the overthrow had been illegal, and its previous recommendation that the native government be restored, the U.S. formally recognized the new republic. As U.S. expansionist aspirations ascended, diplomatic relations between Hawai'i and the United States were turning in a direction favoring the annexationists. However, the po'e aloha 'aina, determined to have their nation back, began to plan an armed overthrow.

It is not clear what role the Hui played in this plot, but its president, Joseph Nawai, was arrested in December, 1894, along with many other political activists and newspaper editors. Women were apparently not arrested, but they took an active role while the men were in jail. Their activities included the symbolic, "dressing in black and white striped gowns, echoing the prison garb of their men" (Morris 1995:27), as well as the practical. The women of the Hui formed the Hui Koku Aloha, the Benevolent Assistance League. This organization provided food and clothing for the families of the political prisoners (Ke Aloha Aina June 8, 1895). Some of these families were apparently homeless and were living at the immigrant worker landing site in Honolulu (Ke Aloha Aina June 8, 1895).

When Nawai was released from jail, he established the newspaper Ke Aloha Aina, in "a husband-wife team with Emma l'A'īmal Nawai" (Chapin 1984:72). Ke Aloha Aina encouraged all the included women to fight. "Ke Kaua wahine ma Bolabola" is a story reprinted from Ka Nonanona (another Hawaiian paper), July 23, 1894:

> I kekahi kaua o na kanaka maoli a me ko Farani poe koa mahalaha, hele pa aku la he, mau wahine eha, e kokua i na ka' e ala:oon ma-ke-kaua, a hele me ka pu, a me ka
Hawaiian girls received education. The organization was formed in 1886 by then-Princess Liliʻuokalani along with other women. It lasted until 1912, when it finally disbanded (Liliʻuokalani papers n.d.).

Conclusion

Despite encroaching colonialism and imperialism, Kanaka Maoli women of the late nineteenth century managed to create political spaces in which to act. Native literary and oral traditions in the mother tongue which represented women as strong, independent, intelligent, resourceful, and unruly, were at the very least an inspiration and a relief from the tensions and demands associated with trying to live an alien and restrictive lifestyle. They provided a way for Kanaka Maoli women to reaffirm their alternative (Native) identity. Rather than identifying with the Americans who considered themselves superior, Hawaiian women were able to form and reinforce a separate Kanaka Maoli identity. This identity was also reinforced in practicing the dance, speaking the Native language, and in creating and recreating relationships with each other and with Kanaka Maoli men.

This process may be similar to that noted by Judith Rollins in a study of African-American domestic workers. She discovered that the domestics did not internalize racism through identification with their employers, as has sometimes been assumed. Instead, they constructed their separate, positive identities through family, church, organizations, and place in the community (1996:230). The results of this study are especially relevant to understanding of the actions of aliʻi women who were married to haole men. While their husbands were likely to have supported annexation, these women did not. For the aliʻi, this strong sense of Kanaka Maoli identity, separate from the haole "masters," may explain in part how Kanaka Maoli women were able to take part in anti-annexationist political activities even while married to haole men.

I am certain that the legends, especially those published in newspapers, were read and interpreted differently by aliʻi and makaʻainana (all Kanaka Maoli other than aliʻi) women. I suspect that aliʻi women, especially the large landholders who were more likely to have been married to haole men, were subjected to greater social pressure to conform to haole standards of behavior. On the other hand, the histories which were published regularly in Hawaiian-language newspapers during this period provided them with images of real and powerful aliʻi women of the past, women with whom they could identify. It is not surprising that the executive committees of the organized resistance were aliʻi, for these histories and legends, along with chants, songs and genealogies, were part of their education from an early age. In short, knowledge of their powerful mothers' and grandmothers' past part and parcel of their consciousness of who they were, and surely gave them strength for the fight.
Combined subordination on the basis of race, gender, and class means that we know little about the maka'ainana women. However, I suspect that these indigenous representations of powerful women have had a lasting effect on how maka'ainana view themselves, and how they raise their daughters. It is likely that maka'ainana women also inherited these sustaining strong images from their mothers and grandmothers (and fathers and grandfathers who were storytellers), alongside the haole images of submissiveness. The current sovereignty movement, for example, is full of women, both in leadership positions and in the rank and file. It is evident that, one hundred years later, Kanaka Maoli women of both classes are still resisting domestication.

Notes

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1. Newspaper articles are quoted as they appeared, i.e., without diacriticals.

2. All translations are my own.

3. My translation, not Queen Elizabeth's original words.

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Newspapers


My great-grandfather arrived with Hawaii's first wave of Japanese contract laborers in 1886; my great-grandmother was born in Kaua'i in 1887.

Although I can reconstruct my great-grandfather's history, I find it frustrating to do the same for my great-grandmother.

Social restrictions and male-centered scholarship negate not only her life, but the lives of countless other minority immigrant women, which are rendered one-dimensional, carved out of pre-existing stereotypes.

I hope to pay tribute to these women by returning their voices to them and to their daughters and grand-daughters. Through these voices, we see strong, creative, multi-faceted women whose lives are much more than model minority cut-outs.

—Laurie M. Mengel
Issei women are most commonly represented as passive, hard working women dutifully accepting and adhering to their designated roles of wife and mother. As such, they have been defined according to their marital status, based on a vague notion of "tradition." Female Japanese immigrants who did not conform to this model are routinely dismissed as deviant or as exceptions to the norm. Although social custom and legal restriction attempt to mold people into a single "prototype" (Nakano 1990:24), real lives do not always conform to the stereotype imposed upon them. In this study, I focus on the migration of women from Japan to Hawai‘i during 1885-1908. This article critically explores the existing representations of the early Japanese female immigrants and of marital relations in Japan, and dispels the notion that all Japanese women at the turn of the century lived only to be "good wives and wise mothers." It subsequently examines Hawai‘i Circuit Court divorce records from 1885 to 1908 to show a picture that is more complex than the standard representations allow. This article, based on preliminary findings of research on divorce patterns in progress, reveals people, both women and men, with various histories, facing different sets of opportunities, and making different choices. Some were like the imposed representations; others, lives were quite different. The testimonies in these divorce records contain personal accounts given by issei women which not only add to our understanding of early Japanese immigration, but also give voice to the personal lives of women who migrated from Japan.

Evolution of a Stereotype

The first migratory wave of people from Japan to Hawai‘i began in February 1885. Most were contract laborers for the sugar plantations. While the majority of the immigrants were male, women also came as single workers, laborers under their husbands’ contracts, wives and daughters. These immigrants came from rural, farming prefectures such as Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Fukuoka and Kumamoto. Two years after the 1898 United States annexation of Hawai‘i, the Organic Acts were passed, applying all federal laws of the United States to the territory. This overturned the Masters and Servants Act of 1850 and rendered contract labor illegal. Freed from their contracts, Japanese laborers left the plantations and headed for the continental United States, fueling anti-Asian agitation and culminating in a new immigration law. This Gentlemen’s Agreement between Japan and the United States in 1907 eliminated the migration of unskilled labor from Japan, and halted Japanese people from traveling freely between Hawai‘i and the continental United States. However, it contained a clause permitting family reunification. That is, immigrants could send for, and immigration was permissible for, close family members.

This period became known as the yobiyose, or summoning period, when parents, children and wives were summoned and migrated. Some of the women who migrated were known as "picture brides." These women were married in Japan by proxy, their names added to the husband’s koseki, or family register, and they came to Hawai‘i, often without meeting their husbands until arrival. In the 1920s, increasing anti-Asian sentiments in the United States resulted in further restrictions on migration, eliminating the family reunification clause. The National Origins Act of 1924 established a quota system of immigration that virtually halted all migration from Asia to Hawai‘i and the continental United States for the next 40 years. Although she represents a minority of the women who immigrated from Japan to Hawai‘i between 1885 and 1924, the "picture bride" has become the stereotypical representation of all Japanese female immigrants—passive, dutiful and subservient.

Tendency to designate categories of subservience to immigrant women is not relegated to Japanese women alone. Mirjana Morokvski accurately points out that immigrant women in general are described as, "dependents, migrants’ wives or mothers, unproductive, illiterate, isolated, secluded from the outside world and bearers of many children...These characteristics are usually attributed to...the women’s alleged ‘cultural backgrounds’ and commonly labeled as ‘tradition’” (1981:3). This representation justifies a view of Western superiority by viewing immigrant women as oppressed and subject to the whims of their mates and reproductive organs in the ‘old country,’ in contrast to the view of liberated and enlightened women in the West. Immigrant women are viewed en masse, while Western women are given individuality.

While much has been written on the picture brides as a group, almost nothing has been written on the women that came before the yobiyose period. Issei women are represented as a uniform generational group coming from a homogeneous culture with identical values and ideas (Kita 1976:13). They are seen as “cut off from normal channels of social interaction and support because they were not only separated from their kinfolk, but were strangers, for the most part, to their husbands.” They were “hindered by their inability to speak English, by confinement to home and children, by lack of relatives or any network of social organizations or friends, and by barriers of racism and discrimination” (Okuhira 1993:3-32). In this commonly presented portrait, they appear as clinging to the old ways and unable to cross boundaries of race, class or gender. working hard, caring for their family, and living their lives only to provide a better future for their children.

The other representation of issei women is that of the prostitute. When a woman’s life does not fall within the carefully defined and morally acceptable boundaries exemplified by the picture bride, she is dismissed as fallen or deviant. Such women are presented as “ignorant...bumpkins” who were kidnapped, tricked; coerced, or sold for sexual slavery (Ichikawa 1977:9). The stories of the prostitutes end once they lapse into
oblivion in the dark, forbidden world of those who toil not. They seemingly disappear, dismissed as meeting ignominious demise (Ichikawa 1977:7). Prostitutes cannot later marry, have children or grow old with a family, that would imply that they could be somebody’s grandmother—an inconceivable picture, given the two roles of ‘issue women’.

The juxtaposition of picture bride and prostitute roles creates a bipolarity of ‘good’ issue woman (subservient and dutiful mother) and ‘bad’ issue woman (tragic, manipulated whore). Both representations are socially objective to women as ‘wombs’ or ‘museums’ (both consign Japanese immigrant women to the same stereotype of gender-based submission). They reinforce the notion that women’s roles are dictated by their reproductive organs and their marital status. While the married quality of the picture bride is to be admired and revered, the tragic image of the whore is to be pitied and dismissed. Neither representation is given a past history, save for a vague notion of traditional Japanese values. Neither she picture bride nor the whore are, in these representations, able to control her destiny, but allow themselves to be forced, either physically or through the law of filial piety, into sexual servitude (in marriage or prostitution). They are viewed as oppressed and manipulated by the expectations of others, unable to break out of their isolation by their hardship and become anything but stagnant bearers of a backwards, traditional culture.

Divorce in Rural Japan

Tokugawa law and samurai teachings dictated that women were to be sexually pure before marriage. Criminal penalties of adultery applied to women only, while men were allowed to take concubines. Only husbands could terminate marriages by either leaving their wives’ baggage outside the door, or copying three and a half prescribed lines telling them to leave. Women were subjected to representations found in Goryo Daigaku (Greater Learning for Women) which ruled:

Woman has the quality of yin (passiveness), Yin is of the nature of the night and is dark. Hence, because compared to a man, she is foolish, she does not understand her obvious duties. She has two blameworthiness in her nature. She is disobedient; inclined to anger, slanderous, envious, stupid. Of every two women, seven or eight will have these failings... In everything she must submit to her husband (Sievers 1981:9).

The Confucian idea of the system of inheritance in which males took precedence over females and age over youth, prevailed in Japan through the Tokugawa and Meiji eras. But, as Kathleen Uno points out, there were realities only for middle-class: urban and samurai, Japanese women. Clearly defined gender roles, with women solely responsible for reproductive work, and submissive to their fathers, husbands and sons, were less applicable to rural farming families.

The laws and social restrictions that applied to urban middle-class and samurai women had little practical application in the lives of peasant farming communities. Uno states that, “among the farmers’ who made up roughly 80 percent of the population, peasant mothers in poor and middling households spent more time at productive than reproductive labor.” This led to a more equitable division of household chores, farm or trade/work (in the fields or in the silk cottage industry), and child raising, within the family structure. Women participated in cultivating, weeding, and harvesting crops, raising silkworms, weaving cloth for market as well as laundry, meal preparation, and household chores. Men, in addition to productive work, took an active role in reproductive work. They worked with their children in the fields and educated them in trade and social obligations. In-laws and extended family members aided in child-raising, freeing both parents for productive work. The Confucian idea of marriage was followed in theory, but its patriarchal nature was diminished by the combined cooperation of all family members in productive and reproductive work.

This created conflicting gender systems that produced interesting results in the family lives of Japanese women. Unlike middle-class urban and samurai women, sexual purity was not an absolute requirement for marriage or social standing. Anne Walthall’s essay, “The Life Cycle of Tokugawa Women,” documents some interactions between boys and girls in yokai, or night visits. Whereas parents were previously able to monitor these encounters, greater mobility through education and wage labor led to unsupervised relationships. After an evening of socialization and work, boys and girls would pair off for the night. Should the pair decide to marry, the boy would then inform his parents of his intentions. Unsupervised premarital sexual behavior was also condoned within some communities, the norm of intimacy without commitment was so commonly acknowledged that those who did not engage in premarital sex were ridiculed. One historian notes that in Nagoya in the 18th century, not more than 2 percent of the unmarried females were virgins (Walthall 1993:53). While the methodology used here is not clear, the study does suggest that a wide spectrum of social standards applied to Japanese women.

In rural districts both husbands and wives initiated divorce. Both daughters-in-law and sons-in-law were subjected to family scrutiny. In cases where no male heirs were available to inherit the family business, families could adopt a son by marrying him to their daughter. In this practice, the son would move in with the daughter’s family and be registered in their kokotai or family register. Should the son prove deficient in some way, the family could have him ousted. Although legally only the husband could register a divorce, in practice, wives also initiated divorces. Recent research of the “three and one-half lines” reveals that many divorces were filed by husbands at their wives’ insistence. If a woman desiring a divorce was met with an uncooperative husband, she could take measures into her own hands. One way was for her to travel to an enkindera, or divorce court.
In the latter part of the Tokugawa period, over two thousand women terminated marital attachments in this way (Tsurumi 1990:17). Women also used Buddhist temple officials to extort divorce from protesting husbands. At the wife’s request, the priest would force the husband to file for divorce by camping out at his village until an agreement was reached. In many cases, the mere threat of the impending visit by the priest would be enough to persuade a husband to cooperate. Fathers of bridegrooms sometimes paid their sons-in-law to file for divorce should the bride find the marriage unfulfilling in some way. The propensity of peasant families to divorce reached high enough proportions to warrant Walthall’s reference to marital relationships as “serial marriages.” She locates a village near Osaka where the divorce rate was at least 5% (Walthall 1990:60). This is further supported by Alice Mabel-Bacon, a traveler to Japan in the late 1800’s who observed, “Until very recently, the marriage relation in Japan was, by no means, a permanent one... It was not an unusual occurrence for a man to marry and divorce several wives in succession, and for a woman to marry well a second or even a third time” (1999:56).

In 1871, five years after the Meiji Restoration (and the beginning of the end of the samurai system), wife-initiated divorce was legally recognized, permitting wives to divorce their husbands upon mutual consent. However, the law was repealed in 1898 with the enactment of the Meiji Civil Code. Married women were then legally placed in a category similar to those who were “deformed and mentally incompetent,” with no legal rights to bring suit, manage business affairs, or file for divorce (Siewers 1989:110). Between these two legal acts, however, the divorce rate in Japan was quite astonishing. Yuzama Yashiko in “The Actual Situation of Divorce in Japan” found that the divorce rate was consistently between 2.6 and 3.5 percent of the entire married population of Japan for each year from 1882 to 1898. (This is particularly interesting, as it includes samurai and middle-class urban women.) In 1898, the year of the Civil Code enactment, the rate dropped to nearly one percent and declined thereafter. This does not imply, however, that rural wives stopped/leaving their husbands, nor that husbands stopped being coerced into divorce by their wives.

Hence, the economic and physical necessity of female labor seemed to provide a more egalitarian family system that overrode the Tokugawa and Meiji dictum of “good wife and wise mother.” The patriarchal ideal of ie was in place; and later codified into law, but it affected women in different classes and in different geographical regions in different ways. In many ways, women from lower social classes benefited from greater choices in their marital obligations. It is difficult, from these examples, to truly assume from which “traditional” background rural women migrating to Hawaiʻi came.

### Research Methodology: Divorce Records in Hawaiʻi

A more complex picture of the lives of Japanese immigrants in general, and these women in particular, can be found in the divorce records of the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi and later, the Territory of Hawaiʻi. From the oral histories which I conducted in Hawaiʻi and California in 1994-96, I found that many plantation couples initiated and ended romantic and marital unions without legal or religious ceremony. Most of these personal stories on private matters are not publicly documented. In addition, while criminal court in Hawaiʻi considered spousal desertion and adultery crimes, the commission of these acts did not necessarily lead to family court. Spouses could prosecute the offending party for the crimes, but they were not compelled to file for divorce. Conversely, charges of adultery could not be used as cause in divorce proceedings if the act was over one year old, or had, at some point, been forgiven by the injured spouse. The law of Hawaiʻi also recognized different kinds of spousal detachment. One type of divorce granted was complete marital dissolution. Another was simply divorce from bed and board. Women’s rights, particularly property rights and contractual rights, were different in each type of case. A spouse could also file for annulment or separation. All types of disunions, save complete marital dissolution, would not appear in divorce records. It can be assumed, then, that the histories and patterns revealed within the court records are representative of a larger phenomenon occurring for people who did not have access to the legal system or chose other means of ending the marriage.

The divorce records were located through indices in the Hawaiʻi State Archives at ‘Iolani Palace and the Hawaiʻi State Circuit Court in Honolulu. Cases were identified by Japanese names. In some cases, the full names of both parties are used in the indices, with the symbol “(w)” (the Hawaiian word for “woman” is wahine) or “(m)” (for kane, the Hawaiian word for “man”) identifying the wife or husband; for example, “Afu so, Nui (w) vs Afuso, Bunji.” In this record, it is easy to identify which name is the surname, the personal name, the husband and the wife.

In other cases, just the family name is presented, as with “Yoshida K v. C Yoshida,” Japanese custom presents the family name first and the personal name last—reversing the American custom. In the Hawaiian records, however, both customs can be employed within the same case. For example, a case may be listed as “Dou Masu v. Hideko Doi.” In many cases, the husband’s family name is given, while only the wife’s first name is used, such as with “Mineko w (jap) v. Nakamur ı (jap)” Whether some spouses kept their maiden names at times, or reverted back to them during the divorce, is also unclear. However, the records reveal spouses with different personal and family names such as “Ideta, Yošio ad. Shimoda, Chiyo (w).”

Moreover, the indices are arranged alphabetically rather than by ethnic group. This means that sometimes ethnicity is not given. For example, consider a case identified only as “Kane, Haole.” As “haole” at the time meant “foreigner” but not necessarily “European,” this shows that the process of identification by ethnic name is certainly not foolproof. Since the process was subject to such errors, some methodological concerns are the inclusion of divorces by people who were not Japanese, and the exclusion of those who were.

The lack of data on Japanese interracial marriage can also be a problem in using this method of identification. Sufficient research has not been done to ascertain the frequency of such cases, and I suspect the rate of interracial unions of Japanese immigrants and others is much higher than previously assumed.

I have located 833 cases of divorce filed by people of Japanese ancestry in Hawaiʻi between 1885 and 1908. Since people moved to and from Japan and from Hawaiʻi to the mainland, an exact accounting is impossible. Using Joan Hori’s (1982:217) accounting of the married population of Japanese female immigrants in Hawaiʻi as 3,226 (the figure in the 1896
That wives consistently filed for divorce at a higher rate than husbands is not surprising; most divorces in America are filed by women. But although American divorce law evolved primarily out of a popular desire to settle family properties (Friedman 1973, 163), this desire does not seem to be a factor in the cases filed in this study. Low plantation wages and other reasons, to be discussed later, indicate that property was not an issue. I have not yet located any discussion of property to be divided, and in only two of the cases in the testimonies do women even petition for support.

"That wives consistently filed for divorce at a higher rate than husbands is not surprising; most divorces in America are filed by women.

In Hawaii, however, these women not only initiated legal proceedings to obtain divorces from their husbands, but also fought for and were awarded child custody.

Children were mentioned in only nine of the cases in this sample, and in only one was custody at issue. The fact that the mother retained custody in this case is significant in that laws and social custom in Japan still viewed children as property, which, like other assets resulting from the marriage, belonged to the father. In Hawaii, however, these women not only initiated legal proceedings to obtain divorces from their husbands, but also fought for and were awarded child custody.

With little property to divide, and with child custody not at issue, why did these women go through the financial and emotional costs of obtaining counsel and interpreters to file for legal marital dissolution? Lawrence Friedman (1973) discusses divorce law as two-tiered. He explains that property division is most often the cause of divorce proceedings for the wealthy. For the poor, divorce is to absolve oneself of wrongdoing, to present oneself as virtuous and grossly aggrieved, to maintain dignity, and to escape social ostracism. It appears that the latter may have been an impetus for these women.

That extreme social ostracism was inflicted upon runaway wives is well documented in Japanese language newspapers. Notices, called kakeochi stories, were published describing the fallen women, and such stories took on a kind of pulp serial fascination (Glenn 1986; Ichioka 1988; Kent 1988; Tamura 1994). Used as a means of social control, the notices described the women as "immoral hussies" and offered rewards for their capture (Ichioka 1988: 170). The threat of public exposure and social ostracism may have been factors in the women's extraordinary leap from the plantation society to the circuit courts. That a woman's virtue was at stake was demonstrated in the testimonies contained in the divorce records. In many of the cases, the woman's attorney extols her integrity, claiming she "demeaned herself properly," or that she "conducted herself as a faithful [sic] and obedient wife.

The reader of these divorce records should remember, then, that perhaps a woman had to portray herself as a victim. If a divorce was merely mutually and amicably agreed upon, it would not be granted by the courts. To spare a woman's reputation, she must appear victimized. In addition, in many cases, the woman's words were filtered through

Figure 1. Divorce Case by Gender of Complainant (110 total cases)
lawyers and interpreters, who may have embellished their clients' stories. This is not to
discount the women's testimony however. The women's stories give great insight into
plantation life in Hawai'i and are no less valuable than court records given by men or
people from different countries of origin.

The three legal causes for divorce were desertion, adultery and extreme cruelty. In
addition to noting the causes, I made note of the perceived severity and duration of
cause: interpersonance, a husband's failure to provide for his wife, violence, and threats of
spousal murder for the cause of cruelty, and illegitimate children and prostitution for
the cause of adultery. More than one reason for divorce may be listed in the complaint.
(See Figures II and III.)

Figure II. Grounds for Divorce Filed by Husband

![Bar chart showing grounds for divorce filed by husband]

No. of cases

0  2  4  6  8  10  12  14  16  18

Adultery  Cruelty  Drinking  Gambling  Illeg. Kids  Threat to kill  Failure to provide  Desertion  Violence  Prostitution

Figure III. Grounds for Divorce Filed by Wife

![Bar chart showing grounds for divorce filed by wife]

No. of cases

0  10  20  30  40  50  60

Adultery  Cruelty  Drinking  Gambling  Illeg. Kids  Threat to kill  Failure to provide  Desertion  Violence  Prostitution

Since a woman would have to go through extraordinary measures to legally divorce and
if property, child custody or social standing were not at issue, the most cost-effective
means for separation would be to simply run away. As has been well documented in the
literature, many issei women did just that. This is demonstrated by the high rate of
desertion charges filed by the husbands. The most common reason for a husband to
petition for divorce was abandonment by his wife; sixty-five percent of men filing for
divorce did so because their wives had deserted them. Robert Griswold points out that
white women practiced desertion of their husbands in California during the same time
period. He contends that "desertion was the major way in which women escaped an
intolerable situation in which husbands had the preponderance of physical and economic
power. While husbands might turn to cruelty, 'drink or general indolence to vent their
frustrations, women more often simply abandoned the home when the marriage soured" (1992:246).

The difference between men and women with regard to the time interval between their
spouse's desertion and when they filed for dissolution is fascinating. Women tended to
file for divorce within two years of being deserted by their husbands, while the men
waited three to five years before legally dissolving the marriage. (See Table I.)

Table I. Intervals Between Desertion and Petition for Divorce, by Gender of
Complainant (1885–1907)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N&gt;1 year</th>
<th>1-2 years</th>
<th>3-5 years</th>
<th>&gt;5 years</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This trend is demonstrated by a dramatic increase of male petitioners around 1907 that
coincides with a drop in female-initiated divorce shortly after. (As demonstrated in Figure
1.) Why this switch in the divorce trend? Why did the men suddenly decide to incur the
trouble and expense of legal divorce after years of desertion? Why did divorces initiated
by women decrease in this year? The answer probably lies in the changing immigration
laws.

The Organic Act of 1900 made the American constitution and laws applicable in Hawai'i.
Freed from their slave-like contracts, many Japanese migrated to the West Coast. During
this period of free migration (1900-1907) more than 35,000 journeyed from Hawai'i to
the mainland United States (Kent 1988:4). The rise in Japanese immigration fueled a
strong anti-Japanese movement which, in turn, resulted in the Gentlemen's Agreement
of 1907-1908. This agreement between Japan and the United States limited Japanese
immigration to wives and children of residents of the United States and Hawai'i. Men
who had been deserted by their wives and wanted new Japanese wives were likely to
seek legal termination of the marriage. Since the 1900 census shows that the population of Japanese women was only 28 percent that of Japanese men, the pool of eligibles was limited. The doors to migration were also closing. The United States had imposed similar restrictions on Chinese migration in 1875 and then halted immigration from China altogether in 1882. Therefore, if a deserted man planned to marry another Japanese woman, he could wait no longer. He would have to obtain a legal divorce in order to remarry and bring over another wife from Japan.

Why did divorces filed by women dip at about the same time? In several divorce petitions, the woman testified that she was threatened with deportation if she refused to comply with the man's wishes, beatings, or even matrimonial proposals. One woman's divorce proceedings, in Hilo in 1899, documents that,

The libellant [wife] was coerced into said marriage by the libellee by threats that if she did not go and have the marriage ceremony performed that he, the libellee, would cause her to be arrested and prosecuted with a view of sending her back to Japan, and by reason of such threats and believing that the libellee would carry them into effect if libellant did not consent, she did then and there consent to have the marriage ceremony performed.

As Japanese women were singled out in the 1897 immigration law and threats of exclusion grew, did these women fear that their divorced or non-married status would make them candidates for deportation? They may have been aware of the Page Law of 1875, which specifically excluded certain Chinese women from immigration to the United States. Presumably constructed to prevent importation of "potential prostitutes," the Page Law called for an interrogation of the morality of Chinese women, using these women's marital status to determine their ability to migrate (Pepper 1986:32). While this law did not apply to Japanese women, the fear of deportation due to marital status may explain the drop in female-initiated divorce at the time of the Gentleman's Agreement.

Prior to the enactment of the Gentleman's Agreement, however, almost half of the wives left their husbands within one year of migration (See Table II).

Table II. Intervals Between Migration and Desertion (1885-1907), By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-1 year</th>
<th>1-2 years</th>
<th>3-5 years</th>
<th>&gt;5 years</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is likely that some of the women used marriage as passports to migration. On March 1, 1894, an act was passed by the Republic of Hawai'i that restricted the migration of people who did not come with contracts in hand. The "Act Relating to the Landing of Aliens in the Hawaiian Islands" prohibited entry of all immigrants who could not demonstrate sufficient "means of support." This proviso could be satisfied by an employment contract, the "bona fide possession" of fifty dollars, or marriage to a man bound by contract (Moriyama 1985:112). Since marriage would provide a woman with the opportunity for free migration, it would release her from the stringent and prohibitive monetary requirement, and give her free passage (paid by the holder of her husband's contract). That many women in Japan married, migrated, and then promptly deserted their husbands seems to indicate that their intentions in marrying were to migrate and strike out on their own, rather than to migrate because of marital obligations.

Nancy Cott argues that an increase in the women's divorce rate is related to their rise in status. In her study of divorce in eighteenth-century Massachusetts, she observes that women's rising expectations in marriage had a direct effect on their propensity to file for divorce (Cott 1976:20-43). Marta Tienda and Karen Booth (1988) point out that migration plays a great factor in women's reconstitution of their designated gender roles and provides a distinct set of opportunities to challenge and redefine themselves. This idea seems to be applicable to Japanese women whether they married to migrate or reconstructed their views of marriage after migration. Mei Nakano, for example, located a woman who listed her reason for migration as "fear of mother-in-law" (Nakano 1990:26). A wife in a family adhering to the Japanese family structure may have been in more family rank, following her husband, son, and mother-in-law. The mother-in-law was often most oppressive when she gained this power in the family structure. By escaping the mother-in-law through migration and entering a rural community where all hands were needed, a woman would find herself in a more egalitarian family structure. As demonstrated, this can be equated with a rise in status. Likewise, without a mother-in-law to enforce subservience to her husband, a woman could expect more out of her marriage. When such expectations rise or tolerance for abuse lowers, divorces can be expected to increase.

"Both men and women left Japan to remake themselves and redefine their futures. The rising divorce rate indicates that each member of the couple had higher expectations of their marriage than resigning themselves to duties based on notions of 'tradition' and filial piety."

The rising divorce rate indicates that each member of the couple had higher expectations of their marriage than resigning themselves to duties based on notions of 'tradition' and filial piety.
imposed burdens which outweighed the obligations of matrimony. In any case, both men and women had greater expectations of their marriages, lives, and futures in the new land and refused to be constrained by "traditional" obligations.

Among spouses left behind, husbands waited almost twice as long as wives before legally dissolving their marriages, whereas women took action much more quickly—just over two years after being left by their husbands. There are two possible explanations for this. It may have been necessary for a wife to file for divorce as soon as it was clear that reconciliation was impossible in order to present herself as a victim and absolve herself of the social stigma attached to divorce. With her husband gone and a decree of divorce awarded in her favor, she could present herself as an abandoned and aggrieved party. She could escape gossip and social ostracism, and gain community support in rebuilding her life. Due to the sex ratio disparity, women had more opportunity than men to remarry another of Japanese ancestry. While the testimonies do not disclose whether or not the petition was filed on the brink of remarriage, I suspect this may have been another motivation for the action. If her husband had left the area, she would have to bear the full financial burden of the divorce. Unlike other aggrieved wives, she could not petition the court to order costs from the respondent. Given the lower rate of pay for women, it would be extravagant for them to legally divorce; unless there was a good reason such as social redemption, a new marriage, or assistance with legal expenses.

Some took a new spouse without the benefit of a legal ceremony or, for that matter, a legal divorce. This led to charges of adultery filed against them in divorce proceedings. Both men and women charged their spouses with adultery. In Japan, concubines of men and the children who resulted were legitimized as dependents and beneficiaries. Adultery for women, however, was a criminal act. The male practice of keeping primary- and secondary wives carried over from Japan to Hawaii. In 1909 Taro Kimura informally married his second wife, Michiko Nakagawa, in Honolulu, Hawaii. His first wife, distractingly devoted to the death of their son, had returned to her family in Japan. After Michiko bore him a daughter and another son, his first wife returned to Hawaii. Thereupon Michiko was forced to leave the house and her children, now two and four years old, relinquishing her place and her children to the first wife. Some women rejected this double standard. In 1901 Take Jidaya petitioned for annulment from her husband, Eizo Itoen, on grounds of bigamy. Having left his first wife and child in Japan, Eizo had married Take in a legal ceremony in Hawaii in 1900. After two years of marriage, Take discovered the existence of the first wife and promptly left him, taking him to court in January 1903. Not only did she reject the traditional custom of marriage in Japan, but she exerted herself through the court system and defined her expectation of marriage. In Hawaii, not only was a woman less likely to tolerate her husband's indiscretions, but she was also more likely to take a lover of her own or to leave her husband for a better prospect, given the opportunity to do so by an unbalanced sex ratio.

One witness in 1904 details a wife's refusal to return to her husband after taking up with another man.

I had an interview with the defendant Ritsuko [wife] in this case before Osamu [husband] brought this action. I went up to Ola'a and, as she is my friend, I made call on Ritsuko. I saw she was living with one Hiroaka and that is all I saw. and came back on Saturday. I told her, ask her whether she is willing to go back to her husband. She will not.

In another case in 1903 a Hilo man and his attorney; in an effort to humiliate and punish the wife for her betrayal, called two witnesses to testify in painfully explicit detail. After following her wife to another man's house, the husband discovered the affair and summoned the two other men as witnesses. In the court proceedings, his first witness testified: 'I saw them sleeping together.'

The attorney asked, "What were they doing, were they asleep?"

They were doubled up.

The attorney pressed further, "What were they doing?"

Moving the waists.

"Were they having sexual intercourse at that time?"

"Yes, sir."

The next witness provided almost identical testimony of the same event. After this witness stated they were "doubled up having sexual intercourse," the attorney made sure there was no question about what had occurred. He asked for clarification: "What do you mean by 'doubled up,' were they on top of each other?" The man had confronted his wife after the event, and she promptly left him. This would indicate grounds for desertion, but in an effort to penalize both his wife and her lover, the husband had them both jailed and called his witnesses to testify, repeatedly detailing the crime, and emphasizing her betrayal by exposing her sexually. The woman in this case, however, rejected his husband for another and refused his advances for reconciliation. She refused to remain the faithful and dutiful wife, even when confronted with public humiliation and arrest.

From these cases, we can see that these women had higher expectations of marriage than previously thought. They were unwilling to act submissively as their social roles prescribed. Instead, they acted independently of their husbands' wishes and resisted the conventional gendered role of wife. Not all the women who ran away or divorced were entirely independent spirits, however. Some acted out of desperation and fear. In 12 percent of the cases, extreme violence is documented as a cause for separation. Knives, guns, sticks, and other objects were used as weapons against the women. That the Japanese men sought relief from their troubles through drinking and gambling is frequently mentioned in the literature on the Japanese in Hawaii. A young nisei recalls, 'Father was a lover of liquor... Every day he invited several friends to a saloon and there they drank to their hearts content.' Often alcohol was blamed for the violence, as it was when one a husband would get drunk and chase his wife "with a loaded pistol" (Tamura 1943). What is rarely revealed in the literature is how these addictions affected the men's work and their wives. In many of the divorce cases I examined, the men appeared unable to work due to alcoholism.
The image of the subservient issei woman suggests that these women stood idly by while the men drank to excess and beat them. The divorce records reveal that many women found outside employment. This often led to more beatings as the men attempted to extort their pay. Shizu Kamura of Hilo in 1898 filed for divorce against her husband, Kametare.

My name is Shizu, my husband's name is Kamura...my husband does not support me at all; I was married about two years and a half ago; I work as a servant to earn a living; he also takes that money away from me, he is able to work but he always drinks sake; he comes and demands money from me, and if I don't give it to him he beats me; I have no children and no property; over two years he has never supported me, and has always taken everything I have earned; he has only left me five months, but for two years he never did any work at all, I had 45¢. Saved to go back to my friends in Japan, in charge of Mr. Goodman, and one night he came and beat me, I had to give the money to him; there are two witnesses here who saw that.

Ebisu, a Japanese male, testified on Shizu's behalf.

My name is Ebisu; I know Shizu and Kamura...he never supported her at all; he is healthy and able to work; he is always drunk and doesn't work; I have seen him beat the woman with his hands.

Her employer, Mr. Goodman, testified.

I know Shizu and Kamura...she has come crying to me and said her husband beat her; I never saw him beat her; I know he has taken money from her, drinks sake and gambles; he is a healthy able-bodied Jap; she demeans herself properly; she supports herself, her husband is a regular vag on the road there; she asked me one time to keep her salary for her, that she wanted to save up and go to Japan, I finally kept it; she saved 45¢ at one time she came to me for ten dollars and at another time for ten dollars; finally it was getting low, and she came to me crying saying he had beaten her and taken every cent from her, and had stuffed the towel down her throat to keep her from swallowing.

Her third witness, another Japanese man named Saito, swore:

He never supported her at all to my knowledge and takes all her money from her; I saw him beat her with my own eyes about six times; he beat her because she would not give him money; he is a healthy fellow and able to work; he is fond of sake and gambling; I saw him beating her on Mr. Goodman's plantation.

Shizu was apparently supporting herself and her vagrant, alcoholic husband. When her husband ceased to support her, she located a position in private employment with Mr. Goodman. For Shizu, as with many of the cases, domestic service was not demeaning work taken only because racism had left no other alternative. Domestic service instead was emancipation for the women. They did not need to find another man to take care of them. They became self-reliant and economically self-sufficient. They had housing, a job, and people around them—all valuable resources when one is being beaten. Shizu managed to save $4; hoping to escape from her husband and return to her friends in Japan. That the contract labor rate at the time for Japanese women was six dollars a month proves this to be not an insignificant amount, especially in light of her husband's unemployment.

Shizu called three witnesses to testify in her behalf. All three were men. Here, the general perception—that immigrant women were confined to "traditional" gender roles, isolated, and unable to create community with anyone outside their own ethnic and gender status—is not apparent. The person who seemed to know Shizu best, whom she found most trustworthy, both in finances and in personal confidences, was her white male employer, Mr. Goodman. She had him hold her money and keep it away from her husband. In doing so she confided in him about the beatings. Shizu, in spite of being a minority woman, a beaten wife, and an immigrant in a strange land, built around herself a social and economic community crossing borders of race, class, and gender.

Another woman's story is worth repeating in her own words. When she tells her story, she emerges as a young woman learning to control and orchestrate her life. Misako Isobe was a seventeen-year-old woman in Ka'u, Hawai'i, when in 1900 she filed for annulment against her husband, Tomimoto. Her testimony follows:

I live at Ka'u; I last lived at Olaa with Tomimoto; we were married in Hilo; on this year by Judge Hapa; I know Isobe Mitsuho of Olaa; I was married to him in Japan; he is still living. My husband Isobe told me; I have received money from Tomimoto so you better go, $22.50. I went to Hilo with Tomimoto; we lived at Olaa when married; we both worked at Olaa, and my husband licked me, so I went to Volcano House and worked for Mrs. Wallace about 12 or 13 days, then a police officer arrested me and took me to Hilo to jail, and I got out in nine days; Tomimoto then had me arrested on the charge of polygamy, to which I pleading guilty, Tomimoto came to me and told me to pay him $20 dollars or he would send me to a whorehouse in Honolulu; he went to one of my friends and got a hundred dollars; I also gave him a hundred dollars; I gave him a note for $20, paid one hundred and a hundred fifty balance; Tomimoto and I did not have any children.

Misako's friend, Mr. W. S. Wise, Esq. testified in her behalf.

I was employed by Mrs. Wallace to defend this woman on a charge of deserting her husband Tomimoto; I cleared her, Tomimoto then brought charge of polygamy against her; she pleaded guilty and was fined fifty dollars and costs; she went to jail three days, friends raised the money and got her out. I then began this proceeding. I was informed a few days after Tomimoto demanded money of her and threatened her. I went for her and found he demanded from her $250 or he would put her in a...
house of prostitution in Honolulu. Her friends paid one hundred dollars for her, and a man named Abe gave a mortgage on his team and stage for $50, due in one month. Tomimoto said that was a fact, he gave the mortgage to me, went to get the one hundred dollars, but did not return; he took a sailing vessel for the coast. I gave the mortgage to the man who gave it.

Misako initially appeared passive. She was sold by her first husband, Isobe, for two hundred thirteen dollars in marriage to Tomimoto. She went, recognizing the debt and disgracing should she refuse. However, Tomimoto’s beatings caused her to take control and leave, finding employment in domestic service with Mrs. Wallace. Again we see a woman finding shelter and emancipation in domestic service. Subsequently, Tomimoto had her jailed for desertion. He threatened to sell her to a bordello if she did not reimburse him for the money he paid for her. Although she was imprisoned and fined; she stood up to her attacker and continued to build a livelihood and community for herself. It is at this point we see what a strong network Misako built for herself.

Misako Isobe, Shizu Kamura and other issei women apparently came to Hawai‘i to marry Japanese men. But they were no passive picture brides; neither were they prostitutes. They were active authors of their own immigrant lives, resisting male domination and constructing networks across lines of race, class, and gender as they sought to remake themselves in Hawai‘i.

Conclusion

The lives of immigrant women are only beginning to be considered in scholarship. Rather than seeing migration as a continuum of people moving between sending and receiving countries, immigrant women are presented as already born upon the new soil, inherently unable to adjust to new ways, exploited, oppressed and confined, clinging to their spouses and children. The new scholarship on immigrant women challenges this. In a patriarchal and racist society, women of color tend to operate in ways that others do not. They find other resources and unexpected avenues to patchwork their lives together when traditional methods fail. Yet we have been unaware of these rich, creative, and inspiring stories. When women do not cling to idealized notions of purity and subservience that society expects of them, they are ostracized and deemed to be harlots. It is no wonder that—in over a hundred years—the records or stories of these women have never been brought to light.

In refusing to include these women in our scholarship and in our own families, we are losing inspiring stories of strength, cunning, and individualism; we continue the ostracism of those deemed “other.” That issei women—hitherto presented as isolated and clinging to traditional culture—were able to cross political and geographical boundaries, suggests their capacity to cross social borders as well. Japanese women came from a largely patriarchal society and they entered plantation society, for the most part, economically tied to the men. The breaking of their marital vows was perhaps the boldest expression of independence for a woman in a patriarchal society. Were they resisting a patriarchal system in Japan? Did they continue resisting the patriarchy in Hawai‘i? Were they simply adhering to a system of egalitarianism from rural Japan? Whatever the case, the reality of Japanese immigrant women, illuminated by the divorce records, was far different and more complex than that of the binary picture-bride/whore stereotypes.

Both men and women acted as immigrants choosing paths of migration. Some were single, some married. Both men and women filed for divorce. The abandonment of marital attachment by issei women did not represent a leap into deviance, nor did perseverance in marriage mean candidacy for sainthood. As issei women encountered different obstacles and opportunities, they made different choices. Many of those choices show them operating outside the boundaries of the carefully constructed boxes into which historical and sociological literature has forced Japanese immigrant women. Over 70,000 women migrated from Japan to Hawai‘i and the United States between 1885 and 1942. Some were picture brides to be sure. Some were prostitutes. Some fell partly within one or another of those categories. Some fell outside such categories entirely.

Notes

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1. Japanese immigrants to Hawai‘i and the United States are called issei. They are referred to as the first generation. The second generation, or first U.S. born, are called nisei, the third, sansei.
2. Barbara Kawakami's work on jisei women further complicates the picture bride stereotype. She reveals a phenomenon called kari fujo, or borrowed spouse. Through oral histories, she locates women who married for the sole purpose of being able to migrate, and then abandoned their spouses upon entry into the new land (Kawakami 1993:12). Not only does this suggest that jisei women had more personal motivation in migration than previously thought, but also further diminishes the statistical count of women who migrated under the category of picture brides.

3. During the Tokugawa era, Japanese women were thought of only as producers of “sons for the Emperor.” They were referred to as “borrowed wombs.” (See von Hassell 1977:77-79.)

4. The prostitute was objectified as mokago, an oval-shaped, wooden drum with a slit at its top, a reference to her genitalia (Ichikawa 1977:12).

5. The feudal Tokugawa era lasted from 1600 to 1868. The samurai system was overthrown in 1868. This period of reconstruction was called the Meiji Restoration, and lasted until 1912.


7. All the names in this article are pseudonyms.

8. I refer to “spouse” rather than wife in keeping or relinquishing married names, as is American custom. In Japanese custom, if there are no male descendants to carry on the family name, the daughter's husband relinquishes his “maiden” name to take on the name of his spouse's family. This practice continued throughout the period of Japanese immigration to Hawai‘i.

9. While women did have access to wage labor in the cotton and silk mills in Japan, their wages were confiscated by their families, leaving them with no control over the fruits of their labor. Even if a woman were able to possess some of her wages, it is unlikely that she would have been able to accumulate fifty dollars. The silk mills, in an effort to increase profits and expand in a growing industrial age, drove wages as low as possible. The salaried for the men who worked in the factories, were based on the per capita consumption of rice, while the women’s wages were set at half that. In addition, deductions from their wages were made for employment infractions, time off and miscellaneous expenses. A woman could complete her three-year contract owing money to the factory. It is, therefore, highly unlikely that a woman would be in possession of fifty dollars. See Tsurumi (1990:40-41, 42-43).

10. Oral history as told to the author, Hawai‘i 1994 (interviewees asked that they remain anonymous).

11. I gratefully borrow this term from Nazi Kibria's excellent volume on Vietnamese immigrants, Family Tightrope (1993).

12. Women entered the plantation society of Hawai‘i with an unequal rate of pay. In the labor contracts, women’s wages were considerably less than that of their male counterparts for the same work. In a standard 1885 agreement for Chika Saka, her husband, Shohichi Saka, and their two children, the adults were required to work “twenty-six days of ten (10) hours each in the field, or twelve hours each in the sugar house” to constitute one month's labor for three years. However, the pay awarded was nine dollars a month for Shohichi and six dollars a month for Chika. The monthly food allowances provided were six dollars for Shohichi, four dollars for Chika and one dollar for each child. The Japanese government also stipulated that 25 percent of the wages would be held in trust to assure the return of their citizens once prosperity had been achieved (Moriyama 1989; Odo & Sinoto 1986; Takaki 1989). This system of pay inequity dictated that the women would be unable to subsist economically without being tied to their husbands.

References


As a local Japanese woman, I ask myself, why do we claim a local identity? What purpose does that identity serve?

I keep coming back to the position that to claim an identity involves responsibility. In my own work, I locate local narrative strategies that I think can help mobilize support for the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, narrative strategies that teach us about Hawaii's struggles in progress.

—Candace Fujikane
Reimagining Development and the Local in
Lois-Ann Yamanaka’s Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre
CANDACE FUJIKANE

A reflection on "development" has to take into account those things which have stood in opposition to it, those irreducible differences which in the final analysis may be the only way out of the present development bind. In examining historiography, criminality, epidemics and popular movements, one has only begun to reflect upon those crucial moments when the state, or the historian, or whoever occupies the site of the dominant centres, performs a cutting operation; remembering/furthering that which it deems meaningful for its concept of development, and forgetting/suppressing the dissident, disorderly, irrational, archaic, and subversive.

—Reynaldo Ileto, “Outlines of a Non-Linear Employment of Philippine History”

I’d like to open up this essay by evoking ambivalent memories of growing up local Japanese on Maui. In 1976, I was in the third grade at Kahului Elementary School. It was the year of the bicentennial, and our teachers tried to instill within us a pride in the fact that we were all Americans and could claim and celebrate as our own the American revolution for freedom from British tyranny. Yet this land upon which we based our identities as “Americans” was inscribed with Hawaiian heiau and burial sites, as well as with the Hawaiian stories generated by these and other sacred sites—stories about the Night Marchers, the White Lady of Makamaka’ole, the mo’o of Mā’alaea and Mākena. Even the new subdivision in Puakalani my family had just moved into was haunted by Hawaiian ghosts, Kalialini Gulch rumored as a site for Hawaiian burials. Looking back, I can map out other traces of contradictions that shaped my own understanding of land and local identity at that time—stories I had heard about Hawaiian struggles in the Protect Kaho’olawe ‘Ohana (PKO), conflicts between Wayne Nishiki’s anti-development politics and the construction and tourism industries, and the resistance to development that later had more direct effects on my family when my stepfather, a construction worker for Associated Steel, was laid off during slumps in the construction industry. These stories of Hawaiian spirits, however, reached back further into the past than the ghost stories of obake told in my Japanese / Filipino family, and they were compelling reminders that there was a longer Hawaiian history to the land than the claims made by my own immigrant-descended family. Native Hawaiians were also engaged in efforts to reclaim that land, as evidenced by the persistent struggles of the PKO against the U. S. Navy’s bombing of the island of Kaho’olawe, which had been used for target practice since WWII. These stories of indigenous and immigrant place and displacement, woven together by narratives of development, brought me to an uneasy understanding of what it means to be a non-Hawaiian local in Hawai’i.

I want to unravel some of these contradictory impressions that speak to us about the complexities of local identity. For many people in Hawai’i, local identity is based on having a history on this land and a commitment to the peoples and cultures of this place. With the important gains made by the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, however, locals who claim Hawai’i as homeland often do not understand Native Hawaiian nationalists who claim Hawai’i as homeland, and as non-Hawaiian locals, we need to ask ourselves what our commitment to Hawai’i and its peoples really means. While many people support the state’s plans for continued economic development based on tourism and foreign investment, others share concerns regarding overdevelopment and its devastating effects. Opposition to the state’s definition of “development,” then, forms common ground upon which non-Hawaiians can support Hawaiian struggles for self-determination.

Ileto writes:

I believe that development—whether in the form of blueprints for state economic development, colonial accounts of “underdeveloped” nations or political movements, or definitions of the aesthetic “maturity” or “immaturity” of art produced in different cultures—play an important role in the way we imagine and construct local identity, and we need to reexamine the narratives underlying these ideas of development. Narratives, the verbal forms we use to explain abstract ideas, are stories we tell to explain our understanding of the world, and as such stories, narratives of development can tell us much about the investments we have in recording events in a particular way. In the quote I take as my epigraph, Reynaldo Ileto explains that narratives of development can be made to serve different purposes, depending on the motives of those who construct these narratives: they can be used either to maintain existing structures of power or to help us to envision alternative forms of political organization. For example, these narratives can support “economic” development that benefits a few at the expense of large segments of the population, or “community” development that improves economic and living conditions for a broader range of peoples, particularly those who are most in need. We need to reexamine these narratives of development if we are to reassess the continuing significance of local identity in relation to Hawaiian struggles to regain control over the economic future of Hawai’i.

Accounts of development have proved to be particularly dangerous for minority or colonized peoples, who are often assigned to the infantilized, “immature” end of a developmental narrative that privileges the “maturity” of the dominant or colonizing group. Such narratives of development have often been utilized in “civilizing” missions serving colonial purposes, and colonized peoples are expected to forsake their own cultures and histories in order to conform to the colonizer’s definition of “maturity.” Consequently, peoples familiar with histories of imperialism are often skeptical of developmental narratives.
Most sensitive thinkers today regard the concept of "development" not as universal but as historically conditioned, arising from social, economic, and ideological trends in eighteenth-century Europe. The idea of progress—the belief that growth of knowledge, capabilities and material production make human existence better—placed science at the summit of knowledge. It gave birth to high imperialism, as the West identified progress with civilization and set out to dominate the rest of the world (1988:130).

Although Ili‘i’s work is specifically focused on developmental narratives that underlie Philippine historiography, we can see how his arguments can help us to analyze historical representations of Hawai‘i as "underdeveloped" that were used to justify American intervention into Hawaiian governance. In 1898, the year Hawai‘i was "annexed" as an American territory, Spain signed the Treaty of Paris and ceded other nation-territories to the United States without the consent of those governed, and in political cartoons of that period, a paternalistic Uncle Sam scolds the recalcitrant "children" under his tutelage. Queen Lili‘uokalani from Hawai‘i, Emilio Aguinaldo from the Philippines, and two little boys representing Cuba and Puerto Rico. These cartoons illustrate the belief that Hawai‘i’s "infantile" monarchy and other "underdeveloped" nations required the political guardianship of the United States in order to "grow into" the "maturity" of American democracy.

A hundred years later, Hawai‘i continues to be feminized as an object of foreign desire, or infantilized in postcards as a playground for illustrations of Hawaiian children known as the "Dole Kids," evocative, not ironically for those familiar with the story of Hawai‘i, of American businessman Sanford Dole’s role as president of the provisional government that seized control of Hawai‘i after illegally overthrowing Queen Lili‘uokalani. These infantilizing representations are tactically used to justify continued U.S. military occupation of this "strategic" site in the Pacific, even as economic development dependent on tourism yields disastrous results for many residents of Hawai‘i. In 1992, the state’s economy ranked by some accounts as the worst in the nation (Okamura 1994a:68). Must narratives of development occur at such a high price, or are there other ways of imagining development? Who produces these narratives of development, and to what ends?

Must narratives of development occur at such a high price, or are there other ways of imagining development?

Who produces these narratives of development, and to what ends?

Given these problems of economic development that people in Hawai‘i continue to face, we need to reexamine conceptualizations of "the local"—which encompasses peoples, communities, histories, cultures, places—the ways ideas of the local function in changing historical and economic conditions, as well as the ways they have the potential to mobilize changes in those conditions. I do not mean to suggest that the local is in any way homogenous or monolithic since "local" means different things to different people, and this essay is necessarily my own exploration of what local means to me.

As part of this analysis, I'd like to turn to Eric Yamamoto’s analysis of the significance the term acquired in relationship to development in Hawai‘i so that we can link the emergence of local identity in community control struggles of the 1970s with its potential for supporting current struggles in the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. In his article, "The Significance of Local" (1979), Yamamoto prefaches his arguments by pointing out that sociologist Andrew W. Lind locates the emergence of the term "local" in the Massie trial of 1969, when Hawai‘i-born residents of Hawai‘i were allied in opposition to continental power represented by military servicemen. Yamamoto’s own analysis, however, focuses on the way the term gained a particular force after 1965, when many people in Hawai‘i came to perceive the local as a "symbol of self-determination."

Changes in social structure, the sense of loss of community, a decline in the quality of life, and the accompanying concern, worry, and desperation, have given rise to a movement by people self-defined as belonging to Hawai‘i’s (local people) towards regaining control of Hawai‘i and its economic, political, and cultural future (142).

Community control struggles in the 1970s at Kalama Valley, Waiale-Waikane Valleys, and Opa‘a Camp were sites of resistance from which people in Hawai‘i sought to challenge their forced eviction from lands slated for development. Newspaper photographs of locals in front of the Wai‘oli Poi Factory with arms linked in a human blockade across Kamehameha Highway against police-enforced eviction provided people in Hawai‘i with visually powerful images of local strength and unity.

More recently, however, the idea of the local seems to have lost the cohesiveness and urgency generated by those struggles against development. Jonathan Okamura, who has written extensively on local identity in Hawai‘i, observes that although "Palaka Power" local advocacy at the 1978 State Constitutional Convention signaled a desire to promote local interests, "it never developed into an organized social movement" (1984:172), and we need to consider this argument in light of the ways that concerns for indigenous rights have, by contrast, led to a strong Hawaiian sovereignty movement. Increasingly, the local seems to serve less as a catalyst for change than as a device for maintaining racial hierarchies in Hawai‘i. In his essay, "The Illusion of Paradise: Privileging Multiculturalism in Hawai‘i" (1994b), Okamura writes, "As Halotes (whites), Chinese and Japanese continue to maintain their dominant positions in the social stratification order in Hawai‘i, less viable avenues and means for both individual and group mobility are available for subordinate ethnic minorities," which include Native Hawaiian, Filipino, and Samoan groups (1994b:8). Thus, while people in Hawai‘i involved in community struggles of the 1970s were successful in allying themselves on the basis of shared working-class interests, class and racial privilege have come to divide racial groups located at
different points in the stratification Okamura describes. Moreover, many locals have
come to support the very interests of capital and urban development that those early
community struggles opposed, while others perceive no alternatives to the tourism and
development industries that employ them, and we need to confront our own differing
degrees of complicity with current systems of economic power. Because of these and
other historical changes, it would be difficult to return to the class-based strategies that
were successful in the 1970s, particularly since we need to recognize the primacy of
Hawaiian struggles and the important distinctions between indigenous and immigrant
peoples. Many people in Hawai‘i, however, do share concerns over issues of economic
control that are important to the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, suggesting possibilities
for increased local support for Hawaiian sovereignty.

In order for non-Hawaiian locals to envision alternatives to overdevelopment, we need
to reimagine developmental narratives themselves, the forms they take and the functions
they serve. In calling for a more self-critical look at our usage of developmental narratives,
I am not arguing for a nostalgic return to a romanticized, preindustrial past. Instead, I
want to question the ways in which developmental narratives are produced and
reproduced. A critical approach to development should attend carefully to people’s
ideas excluded from narratives of development, to memories that evoke the forgotten,
the suppressed, and in Iteo’s words, the “dissonant, disorderly, irrational, archaic, and
subversive,” in order to recuperate other sites of resistance, other conceptions of
development that can offer us alternatives to exclusionary scripts of progress. Such an
approach asks us to question our assumptions about developmental narratives and to
devise strategies that will challenge those assumptions.

As a point of entry into these questions about development, I want to begin with an
examination of Lois-Ann Yamanaka’s collection of poetic novellas, Saturday Night at the
Pahala Theatre (1993), which has been phenomenal both for the critical acclaim it has
received and the controversy it has generated in Hawai‘i and on the continent. As a text
widely taught at the University of Hawai‘i, the collection demands our attention for the
ways it can be used to bring about change in popular conceptions of local identity. In my
own English courses, I ask students to analyze the collection’s critique of the patriarchal
and developmental ideologies that undergird local identity. The collection enables us to
question the epistemological grounding for discourses of development; in other words, it
asks us how we know what we know about being local and how narratives of
development help to define the local. While we cannot escape from these developmental
narratives that structure our perceptions of the world, we can be critical of the purposes
for which these narratives are used, and we can strategically make use of the currents of
movement inherent in developmental narratives to mobilize social change. Yamanaka’s
text, I argue, usefully deploys and simultaneously dismantles developmental versions of
local and feminist narratives. In analyzing the usefulness of Yamanaka’s text, however,
my students and I also attend to the messy ambiguities of the local and the fact that
Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre has also been highly controversial for its local
Japanese representations of local Filipinos and Hawaiians. Since local Japanese in Hawai‘i
occupy a relatively privileged position in relation to those groups, interrogating the
collection’s representations of ethnic stereotypes can help us to locate power struggles
often concealed by popular definitions of the local.

To unpack the consequences different developmental narratives have for various peoples
in Hawai‘i, 1 extend my analysis of Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre to consider how
the current movement to establish a Native Hawaiian nation. Although Saturday Night at
the Pahala Theatre focuses on gendered narratives of development in local communities,
the collection can help us to be more self-critical as we analyze other developmental
narratives that shape local perceptions of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement.

“Your Guys Ain’t Developed Yet”:
Narrative “Development” in Lois-Ann Yamanaka’s Poetic Novellas

It is difficult to quote these poems partially. All are organized into a tight, coherent
emotional pattern. Advice: Take two Advil, read from page one to 141 in that order
and you will be taken on an inexplicable, but emotional journey.

—review of Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre in the International Examiner

Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre engages questions of development through a
gendered exploration of the narratives we use to define local identity. In claiming that
identity, we often find that we must contend with developmental narratives that seek to
erase gender, race, and class differences between locals for the sake of cultural unity.
Reclaiming local culture, then, is not libidinal and in and of itself, and for women, such an
act involves a struggle against masculine constructions of local identity. Ideas about
development, for example, take on gendered dimensions for the adolescent speakers in
the collection whose bodies and sexualities are regulated by narratives of what constitutes
a “normal” local feminine body, patriarchal narratives that seek to contain and control
feminine bodies. Adolescent girls are enlisted in the disciplining of their own
bodies through publicly circulated narratives of orderly physical development mapped
out in such “guidebooks” as Judy Blume’s novel, Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret
(1970), a book in circulation during the time frame in which events in Yamanaka’s collection
occurred.

Since developmental narratives have often been used in the service of colonial and
patriarchal ideologies, what I find to be very peculiar about Yamanaka’s text is the
developmental narrative structure she uses to repudiate these gendered “lessons.” The
different voices in the collection are brought together in a way that can seem to suggest
the maturation of a central character. It is possible to read the collection as achieving a
resolution through a developmental narrative that unifies different speakers by holding
up the final speaker/writer Lucy as a model figure of local feminist resistance, the end
product of a developmental narrative that privileges a local girl’s reclamation of writing
in Pidgin. The problem with such a reading, however, is that it challenges masculine
narratives of local identity only to resurrect a developmental model of feminist
individualism in its place, a model that diminishes the other speakers in the collection
who do not find liberation in written self-representation. Instead, my own reading of
the text recognizes the importance of the various speakers and the multiple narrative strategies they use as Yamanaka negotiates the problems raised by ideas of "development."

I’d like to begin by tracing first the developmental narrative suggested by the collection. Divided into four sections, the collection begins in Part One with a series of gendered instructions passed on from adolescent girls to their friends: As this first section fleshes out narratives that construct "local woman," it also asks us to question the purposes served by these "lessons." In the opening poem, "Kala Gave Me Anykone Advice Especially About Filipinos When I Moved to Pahala," the speaker cites Kala’s prohibitions: "No whistle in the dark / or you call the Filipino man / from the old folks home across your house... / He going drag you to his house; / tie you to the vinyl chair; / the one he sit on outside all day, / and smile at you with his yellow teeth / and cut off your bi-lot with the cane knife. / He going fry um in Crisco for dinner" (10). The specter of the Filipino man cutting off and eating a girl’s vagina is a residual product of history: the fact that the Filipino man lives in "an old folks home" alludes to a history of bachelor camps of Filipino plantation laborers and the vilification of Filipino men as sexual threats. Kala tries to reconcile the image of a woman’s body being eaten figured forth in metaphors of cannibalizing with stereotypes of Filipino men, and her advice exemplifies women’s collision with the racist stereotypes recycled in their "education."

Critics have argued that Yamanaka perpetuates racist stereotypes of Filipinos and Hawaiians, and this is a very important problem to which I will return. Here, I’d like to offer a reading of the first poem that unravels the poem’s concern with collaborations between the patriarchal and racist systems of power. The threat the stereotype of the elderly Filipino man poses is strategically undermined by several details the naive speaker unknowingly buries in the poem. The fact that the Filipino man lives in a retirement home already ironizes the physical threat he poses, but what is more materially alarming are the two actual rapes that occur at the heart of the poem. The speaker continues: "And no wear tight jeans or / Felix going follow you home with his blue Valiant. / ... / Kala said he rape our classmate Abby already / and our classmate Nancy" (16). Here, the poem reveals that the stereotype of the older Filipino man is used to divert attention away from Felix and the real instances of rape that take place in the poem; and in light of this function the stereotype is made to serve, it becomes significant that Felix’s father is a cop. Felix is further protected by the law. Although I will later discuss the implications of the ways audiences racially identify Felix as Filipino and Jimmyboy as Hawaiian, these characters are not racially marked by Yamanaka, and by the end of the Kala series, it is Jimmyboy, not Felix, who rapes Kala.

The rapes are further submerged in the text by the young speaker’s preoccupation with the word, "cremation." She tells her listener: "Kala told me / to tell nobody the words she tell me. / Nobody: Especially the word she told me today. / Okay. Okay. The word is cremation. / The graveyard man he sew all the holes / on your body shut with dental floss. / Kala said; / your eyes, your nose, your mouth; / your belly button, your okeole hole, / and yeah, even your bi-lot so the gas / cannot escape when he shove you in the brick oven" (16). To the child narrator, what is even more horrific than rape or the stereotype of the old Filipino man is the idea of being entombed in her own body; by sewing shut the orifices in her body, the patriarchal "graveyard man" silences her voice, her sexuality, and her desires. Indeed, the speaker’s fear of being sewn shut frames the collection by calling our attention to local patriarchal prohibitions that seek to sew women’s bodies shut for them.

If we try to locate a trajectory moving from Part One to Part Four, we can read the poem "Parts" in Part Two as marking a turning point at which the speaker tries to see for herself who she is. In contrast to the ways the mother’s voice simultaneously cuts the girl’s body into patterned pieces and attempts to sew shut her sexuality for her, the fourteen-year-old friend who speaks at the end of this poem describes the girl’s decision to use a needle to undo those seams, to "cut" herself open, to see what is inside of herself (79). The poems in Part Three can then be read as an extension of this moment of self-discovery as other girls figuratively cut themselves open and begin to look at themselves and each other in different ways. In "Glass," for example, the speaker, a young girl abused by her mother, finds a small glass floater, "light blue and cool in the shade of the naupaka bushes. / I hold um gentle in my hands. / I no can even see my fingers. / I see the clouds, the sky moving. / I see my eyes" (107). Here, the speaker discovers herself as a subject gazing before a shifting backdrop of limitless possibilities. Part Four then gains particular weight as the final section of the collection detailing a young girl’s revisions of Pidgin’s patriarchal idioms. It is in "Empty Heart" that Lucy tells her lover Willy Joe, "One day / I going write / about you" (139), and in the last poem, "Name Me Is," Lucy names herself in a language of her own as she concludes, "I is. / Ain’t nobody / tell me / otherwise" (140).

If a local or feminist reading seeks to find a resolution in writing as an act of local women’s resistance, it can find that resolution in the illusion suggested by the text of linear movement toward a single writer/speaker, Lucy. One assumption my students make is that the first speaker in the collection is Lucy, and we can try to identify the investments that motivate such a reading. Although Lucy could be the first speaker in the collection, we can ask the question, does she need to be? To argue that Kala’s listener and Lucy are the same character bespeaks a problematic need to unify the text’s multiple speakers to secure a convenient resolution at the end of the collection, and the multiple young women are conflated by a developmental narrative into a single protagonist who comes to writing. The collection, however, counters important identifications with critical moments of disidentification: familial details, names, events, and circumstances are repeated with a difference for each character.

"Instead of identifying speakers who do not represent themselves in writing as "underdeveloped," we can be attentive to the different forms narratives take, otherwise, we, too, can come to homogenize women’s voices and experiences."

Writing does not have to be the only form of self-representation we use to narrate ourselves and our histories. While many of the characters do write—blood writings on sidewalks, name carvings in the flesh, kiawe charcoal obituaries on garage walls—the
collection also presents us with characters who choose other modes of self-representation, and such narrative strategies map out for us the pressures each speaker faces. The narrative forms they allow her. A character like Kala, for example, can only close her eyes to signify her refusal (24, 27), and although this can seem like a futile act of resistance, it is important for the reader to know that she does not accept the conditions forced upon her. Instead, of identifying speakers who do not represent themselves in writing as "underdeveloped," we can be attentive to the different forms and experiences that we, too, can come to homogenize women's voices and experiences.

Developmental narratives do serve an important function: they often work as catalysts for change. In Hawai'i, Hawaiians have suffered from the genocidal devastation brought about by American colonization, and other examples of violence include the banning of the Hawaiian language from public schools (1896-1896) and the destruction of land and historical and ceremonial sites. Local experiences of marginalization do not compare with Hawaiian experiences of genocides. This is a point that cannot be overemphasized; for locals, the devastation of Hawai'i's Creole English, or "Pidgin," through the state's establishment of English standard schools (1920-1940), urban development, and its erasure of plantation camps, rural and low-income housing communities, and other blocks of history from local popular memory have resulted in different kinds of losses. Against these historical ruptures, we often use developmental narratives to construct linear histories that help to promote community solidarity and to consolidate and mobilize resistance to American colonialism and continental standards within our different communities. Given the political usefulness of developmental narratives, however, these narratives often become cemented in ways that cannot sustain the fluid movements of political struggle, and I find that Yamanaka is attentive to the multiplicity of women's voices and histories that exceed beyond the scope of local and feminist developmental narratives.

"Yamanaka's poetic novellas move us towards local women's reclamation of writing even as that single developmental movement is splintered to reveal the multiple strategies of self-representation used by the different speakers in the text."

What I'd like to emphasize here is that Yamanaka responds on multiple registers to various political pressures. I argue that Yamanaka's text implements a doubled strategy: while the ordering of the "parts" of the collection provides the reader with a politically mobilizing developmental narrative moving toward local women's self-representation in a language of our own, the text's presentation of its multiple speakers refuses our desire for the promise of resolution held out at the end of developmental narratives. In other words, Yamanaka's poetic novellas move us towards local women's reclamation of writing even as that single developmental movement is splintered open to reveal the multiple strategies of self-representation used by the different speakers in the text. In reordering Yamanaka's seemingly linear narrative, my arguments here will consider two moments at which the poems offer us multiple sites of different kinds of movement. First, I consider the ways a speaker like Tita forestalls the linear movement in the collection through the powerful excesses she produces, extravagant excesses that cannot be contained by narratives of unified progression. Second, I suggest that Pidgin offers no easy resolution at the end of the collection, despite the power of Lucy's final assertion: "I Is."

Tita, like many of the other speakers, is complicitous with the continental and patriarchal standards that oppress her. Her character is particularly compelling, however, for while she represents the desire for assimilation, emphasizing that her listener is a failed example of femininity because, as Tita tells her, "you just dunno how for please," her listener takes pleasure in listening to the transgressive power of Tita's voice. At different moments in her narrative, Tita demands, "You was there, eh? / Well, you seen this then? / Why you always gotta act dumb? / Eh, what's your trip? / Just like you like hear me talk" (32). While the lessons in the text seek to contain the local feminine body within the restraints of "standard" English, Pidgin enables Tita's voice to bring her bodily excesses back into that text. In "Tita: On Fat," these bodily excesses become the sign of a hungry body, a desire body, and Tita's body proliferates uncontrollably beyond the thin bodily outline constructed to confine her. In order to recuperate her body within a developmental narrative, Tita tells her listener, "Eh, what you trying for say? / That I one fat cow? Well, fuck you. / I ain't fat, I just more mature than you guys. / You gonna aint developed yet. / I bet you never even get your rags yet. / All you guys a bunch of small shit Japs" (36), the kind of "Jap," Tita emphasizes, she is not (39). Ironically, Tita uses her own developmental narrative to infantilize her listener: "development" is a rhetorical device she uses to transform excess into "maturity." Yet "fat" resists development, and Tita's flesh refuses to be assimilated to standards that attempt to homogenize gendered and cultural identity. By the end of the poem, Tita tells her listener, "I dunno, I too fuckin' fat. / Eh, no say I not fat, when I know you think I fat, / 'cause that only makes me mo / fuckin' mad" (40). And it is precisely Tita's excesses—her Pidgin, her rage, her "fat"—her irreducible differences that make her such a powerful character who colludes with and resists developmental narratives that demand assimilation.

Lucy's own reclamation of Pidgin does not present an easy answer to her struggle to define herself. She continues to push at the limits of a language that does not give her words to describe her own body, a language that gives her no immediately viable name for her vagina. Lucy's description of her vagina as "over there" (29) underscores the ways that she reclaims Pidgin only to find that in the world of the collection, Pidgin disfigures the vagina as a "crack" (37), a sign of lack or damage, or a "cho-cho" (38), a Japanese term for "butterfly" popularized by Puccini's "Cio-Cio San" in his libretto Madama Butterfly and recirculated by American servicemen stationed in Hawai'i during WWII in reference to Asian prostitutes. That Lucy does not choose any of these words and refers to her vagina as an absence suggests the need for sustained struggle at the site of Pidgin itself.

To further that struggle, Lucy and Willy Joe work toward constructing a new language out of Pidgin. In "Name Me Is," Lucy describes her desire: "I touch his shoulder blades, light / fingers first. They broad and brown smooth, / feeling good, good, see / him shiver when I heat / the sparkler tip red / and ribbon it in the black night, / [i]e know what I want to do / bring it down on his skin, burn / the first line" (37). Lucy begins literally to construct a language of her own, the word "brown smooth" being neither of Pidgin nor of "standard"
English. What is important here is that the collection ends with Lucy and Willy’s struggle against the conceptual limits of Pidgin, a language that registers political struggles that emerge along the divisive lines that cut across the local.

Multiple Sites of the Local and Questions of Power

A desire to read, Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre as a developmental narrative culminating in a resolution is further interrupted by the unresolved racial divisions evoked by the collection. Here, I want to split open my analysis to consider other assessments of the collection. I have offered a reading of Yamane’s powerful, local, feminist critique of the developmental narratives we use to claim certain identities. Critics argue that her racialized, privileged local Japanese representations of Filipino and Hawaiian ethnic groups reinforce racist stereotypes of those groups. Rodney Morales, a professor at the University of Hawai’i’s Department of English, argues in his article, “Literature in Hawai’i: A Contentious Multiculturalism,” that “a major concern is whether the author’s strengths are enough to counter her penchant to cast certain ethnic groups (again at risk) group one-dimensionally. While the jury may still be out on this one, one has to be wary of patterns of representation of an oppressed group by one that is more dominant” (forthcoming). Although the text presents stereotypes of different ethnic groups, some representations are more damaging than others, and Filipino/a and Hawaiian communities are most vulnerable to stereotypes of violence because of discriminatory practices in Hawai’i that we cannot ignore.

The collection has elicited powerful responses from different communities, and these responses allow us to unravel these communities’ concerns over the material effects that literature can have on people’s lives. It is crucial that we give equal weight both to the collection’s gendered critique and to the ways that the collection’s critique occurs at the expense of racial groups. These gender-based and race-based analytical frameworks ‘come to compete with each other’ as some narrative strategies work to expose certain operations of power, they sometimes conceal or reproduce others. These critical frameworks impinge upon each other, become inextricable, and our analyses must engage these multiple frameworks and concerns if we are to understand the complexity of the ways we live at the intersections of race, gender, and class differences. To dismiss either framework invalidates important reader responses in ways that maintain existing conditions of oppression, whether they are gendered or racial.

I’d like to begin by looking at the criticisms that different communities have generated in response to the collection. On January 9, 1994, The Hawaii Herald, Lanai’s Japanese American newspaper featured an article on Yamane’s poetry and a reprinting of the poems “Kala Gave Me Anykine Advice Especially About Filipinos When I Moved to Pahala” and “Boss of the Food.” The publication of the first poem offended many in the local Filipino/a and Japanese communities, and in March of that year, Benittie Evangelista responded with an article in The Fil-Am Courier evaluating the poem and the controversy surrounding it. Looking back at that article she had written, Evangelista later wrote, “the poem evoked racial tensions and perpetuated stereotypes about Hawai’i’s Filipinos that are better off buried. My article tried to be fair, even as I sought academic opinions on why artistic freedom should be treasured and held sacred. I personally thought this one crossed the boundary of decency. A lot of Fil-Am Courier readers agreed” (1994b:9). In the article, Evangelista interviewed Belinda Aquino, Director of the Center for Philippine Studies at the University of Hawai’i, and Nestor Garcia, a public relations executive, who both found the representations of Filipinos in the poem offensive, but they also agreed that an article could not be censored. Garcia and Theresa Danau, a medical doctor, recast the question as one of editorial responsibility and whether or not the poems should have appeared in a newspaper intended for general audiences. Danau argues, “I have no problems with poems like this in the context of art. I think it was very well-written. But I think it was a mistake to print it in a publication like The Hawaii Herald.”

Other critics argue that the collection perpetuates racist stereotypes of Hawaiians. At the 1996 Association for Asian American Studies regional conference on “The Pacific Diaspora: Indigenous and Immigrant Communities” held in Honolulu, Leilahoa Afo Perkins presented a paper entitled “The Presence and Non-Presence of Hawaiians in Asian American Narratives, Poetry, and Criticism—And the Non-Presence of Hawaiians in Publishing.” Apo Perkins, a professor of Hawaiian and English literature at the University of Hawai’i—West O’ahu, points out that the name “Kala” in the opening series in the collection suggests that it is a Hawaiian girl who lives in a violent and abusive family and is the object of rape. She also cites textual evidence supporting a reading of Jimmboy, the rapist, as a Hawaiian character. The actual violence that does occur in the collection, she argues, is inflicted on and by Hawaiian characters, and both Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians, particularly local Asians, must be held accountable for their representations of Hawaiians.

“The controversy provoked by the collection arises out of its ambiguity: since characters are not always racially identified, the collection can be read as both a perpetuation of stereotypes and a critique of those stereotypes.”
The controversy provoked by the collection arises out of its ambiguity: since characters are not always racially identified, the collection can be read as both a perpetuation of stereotypes and a critique of those stereotypes. Ambiguity itself can be a valuable narrative strategy, that represents the indeterminacy of our lives, and it can teach us about ourselves and the ways that we construct meaning from texts, but ambiguity can also lead to interpretations that work against the author’s intentions. In her article, Evangelista also interviewed Karleen Chin, editor of the Hawaii Herald, who explained that the poems had been published in hopes of challenging stereotypes, and instead, they came to illustrate a more fundamental problem regarding the gap between the intentions of artists and the interpretations generated by audiences: “This controversy reflects a need to narrow that gap by having the literary community explain their art. I believe poems such as these may be a first step in the right direction for all Asian Americans. But the poem by itself may be judged wrongly. It has to be accompanied by an interview so its context can be explained” (99a:6).

We can take an analysis of the ambiguity of the text even further by thinking about the ways the collection aims to deliver a social critique of the processes by which patriarchal and racist narratives are circulated in local communities. In the context of these concerns, what are the effects of narrative ambiguity? To map out these effects, we can return to the poem “Kula Gave Me Anykine Advice Especially About Filipinos When I Moved to Pahala.” For many people, the poem is too successful in recreating the stereotype of the elderly Filipino man, and the stereotype itself takes on a life of its own that overpowers the critique. What is perhaps even more disturbing, however, is that the title of the poem makes it possible to identify the “real” rapist Felix as Filipino, and what ends up happening is that the stereotype of the old Filipino man is replaced by the “reality” of young Filipino rapist, which is itself a pervasive stereotype that has ever more damaging consequences for Filipino communities. If we identify Felix as Filipino, the collection’s affirmation of the young Filipino rapist as “the real” upholds the very mechanisms of power it seeks to critique. It is important that Felix and Jimmyboy are not racially identified and this particular ambiguity can enable us to question our own construction of racial identities for the characters. But because readers can and do imagine racial identities for these characters, ambiguous representations can actually reinforce entrenched stereotypes. The price of the collection’s narrative ambiguity is one that its particular social critique cannot afford at this time: identifications of Felix as Filipino and Jimmyboy as Hawaiian can have the devastating effect of exacerbating discriminatory conditions for Filipinos and Hawaiian communities struggling against racism in Hawaii.

Ironically, the collection’s feminist critique also raises problems regarding its representations of Filipinas in the text. Darlene Ebanet, in “Kula Gave Me Anykine Advice, Especially About Filipinos When I Moved to Pahala,” whose Filipino identity is suggested by her surname, reclines her body and her desires through masturbation but is disfigured in gossip as a sexually monstrous madwoman: “No sleep with your hair wet, / Kula said, or you going be like Darlene Ebanet / who run around her house nak-ed / and nobody can stop her when she like that. / She take her two fingers / and put um up her bi-lot. / That what you not supposed to do, Kula said, / the Bible said so that’s why” (15:16). Masturbation gives women the power to control their own pleasure, which threatens a patriarchal privileging of the penis as a signifier for power, and Darlene Ebanet provokes masculine anxieties about replacement and displacement. None of the speakers in the collection are clearly identified as Filipina, however, which reduces the complexity of this critique, and the significance of the fact that Darlene is Filipina is not clearly explained.

The ambiguity of the collection’s critique is further complicated by the way Yamanaka limits the perspectives presented in the collection to those of the naïve twelve-year-old speakers. Although readers can see what the young characters cannot, the Filipino/a characters do not effectively challenge the stereotype themselves. In the poem, “Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre,” the Filipino men do speak, but they are not heard: Kula, preoccupied with her own position at the r-rated movie, imagines that she is the subject of their discussion: “All the old man sit in the last row. / I smell the tobacco they spit on the floor. / They laugh when I walk past / and say some words in Filipino. / I know they talking about me” (22). The poem reveals that although Filipino characters speak, Kula cannot understand what they are saying. Because of the inadequate structures of knowledge produced and reproduced in local communities, the Filipino/a characters are not heard. In criticizing racism in non-Filipino/a communities, Yamanaka does not at first seem to speak “for” Filipinos, but because the Filipino/a characters are not presented with an interiority, the audience and the adolescent characters are not forced to confront the problem of racism that the text raises. While the characters do observe contradictions between their own lives and the gendered standards that oppress them as local girls, they do not see the contradictions between racist stereotypes of Filipino/as and “real” Filipino/a characters.

These are serious problems raised by Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre, and while this essay focuses on that text, Yamanaka’s subsequent novels, Wild Meat and the Bully Burgers (1995) and Blu’s Hanging (1997) have also been criticized for presenting increasingly disturbing representations of Filipinos. The problems posed by Yamanaka’s texts are intensified by an interlocking problem involving the need for Hawai’i publications, which have been dominated by local Japanese and Chinese writers and editors, to provide more literary space for Filipino/a and Hawaiian writers. Criticisms have been most recently directed toward Bamboo Ridge Press, founded in 1975 by Eric Chock and Darrell Lum. While the press has played a foundational role in providing writers with a space to share their work, it has recently been the subject of criticism for publishing a disproportionately small number of writings by Filipino/as and Hawaiians. Although others address that controversy in greater detail elsewhere, here we can reexamine the criteria that publishers in Hawai’i use to determine the aesthetic value of a work. In his account of the history of Bamboo Ridge Press, “The Neocolonialization of Bamboo Ridge: Repositioning Bamboo Ridge and Local Literature in the 1990s,” Chock makes several highly problematic arguments about contemporary Hawaiian literature, but ends the essay with an important self-critical point: “It is the job of editors to select what they see fit; we want to be open to diversity, but we’d like to publish only the best of that diversity. We also want to be open to suggestions. Perhaps we need your essays to educate us on our aesthetics, because, ultimately, the aesthetics of the editors define a magazine” (1996:25). The category of the aesthetic—our conceptions of what is “beautiful” or “ugly,” “good” or “bad”—is always political. As I’ve tried to illustrate in my arguments about Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre, we need to be attentive to narrative forms or voices that are not recognizable to us. It is our ignorance regarding other cultural
narrative traditions and forms—for example, Hawaiian mo'olelo—that makes it possible for us to misunderstand these narratives as examples of 'underdeveloped' or 'bad' writing. These problems remind us that we need to reexamine the developmental narratives we use to define aesthetic criteria if we are to learn from the narrative forms Hawai'i writers generate out of the historical and cultural specificities of this place.

My exploration of community responses to Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre places more responsibility on artists and critics than was believed necessary in the past, and this is a result of changing historical conditions that have increased the responsibilities involved in claiming a local identity. It is crucial, however, for all of us to acknowledge ongoing gendered, racial and class struggles within local communities and the competing analytical frameworks we use to assess these struggles. Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre offers us strategies for reimagining developmental narratives underpinning gendered definitions of the local at the same time the collection alerts us to the ways that even the usefulness of the local must be constantly interrogated, its operations of power carefully recorded and contested.

The Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement: Redefining the Stakes for the Local

Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre does not directly address problems of economic development, but it does illustrate the ways we find the narrative structure of development to be very seductive. These narratives permeate our lives, and we can return to issues of economic development by considering the ways that developmental narratives are used to maintain existing political and economic structures. For example, opponents of Hawaiian sovereignty employ a developmental narrative in a common, ill-informed argument that there is too much "in-fighting" among Hawaiians, and Hawaiians will never achieve sovereignty because they can never agree. This demand for a single, unitary voice from Hawaiians, however, reproduces colonial ideologies that seek to homogenize Hawaiians as a peoples and criminalize the multiple voices that make up any strong political movement. As Ka'ahuna Mihilani Trask, governor of the Native nation ka Lūhui Hawai'i, has argued,

"We cannot ignore the injustices Hawaiians have suffered; to do so and to claim a local identity is to promote non-Hawaiian self-interests at the expense of Hawaiians in a way that empties the local of any meaning."

In the development narrative operating in the editorial, the sovereignty movement is an outdated anachronism that threatens our "enlightened" spirit of aloha. As Okamura argues, however, to ignore Hawaiian struggles for the sake of local unity only exacerbates the racial divisions that already exist. Sovereignty leaders make it clear that what is at stake for the sovereignty movement is self-determination for Hawaiians as a nation that will enable them to combat the genocidal effects of American imperialism, which include unemployment, poverty, homelessness, high rates of illiteracy and incarceration, and the poorest health conditions in the United States (Trask, M. 1993).

We can think about the ways that the term "local" emerged in order to account for peoples in Hawai'i who are not "Native," and that its roots lie in a recognition of that crucial distinction between immigrant and indigenous groups. We can ask the question, how can non-Hawaiians claim a local identity and a commitment to the peoples of this place without supporting indigenous struggles in Hawai'i? There are political responsibilities to claiming any identity, and although other locals may define the stakes behind claiming a local identity differently, my own personal position is that in the context of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, the only way the idea of the local can continue to be used responsibly and meaningfully is if we educate ourselves about the Hawaiian sovereignty movement and support Hawaiian nationalist efforts to regain self-determination. I am not saying that whether or not one is local depends on
one's support of sovereignty; I am more concerned about the ways local identity is often used as a means of self-legitimation at the expense of peoples who face ongoing political struggles in Hawai‘i. We cannot ignore the injustices Hawaiians have suffered; to do so and to claim a local identity is to promote non-Hawaiian self-interests at the expense of Hawaiians in a way that empties the local of any meaning. And although Hawaiians alone can determine the objectives and strategies for the sovereignty movement, we need to organize support for the movement in our own non-Hawaiian communities. We have to work on educating our own local communities about our own racism. As Haunani-Kay Trask, Director of the Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai‘i, argues, there are important differences between immigrant and indigenous peoples: "Immigrants to Hawai‘i, including both haole (white) and Asians, cannot truly understand this cultural value of mālama 'āina 'even when they feel some affection for Hawai‘i. Two thousand years of practicing a careful husbandry of the land and regarding it as a mother can never be and should never be claimed by recent arrivals to any Native shores. Such a claim amounts to an arrogation of Native status" (1993:248).

In redefining the stakes behind claiming a local identity, I have focused on political conflicts in Hawai‘i; but ultimately, an analysis that acknowledges antagonisms can lead to stronger political alliances. These narratives of conflict remind us that maintaining the usefulness of the local involves political responsibility and ongoing struggle. A reexamination of developmental narratives that undergird local identity, representations of the sovereignty movement, and the economic future of Hawai‘i is crucial if people in Hawai‘i are to envision a Hawaiian Nation that is an alternative to present structures of American governance, an alternative that just might challenge what Ileto refers to as the "present development bind."

Glossary

heiau  Pre-Christian place of worship
mo‘o  Lizard, reptile of any kind, dragon, serpent, water spirit
mo‘olelo  Story, tale, myth, history, tradition, literature, legend, journal, log, yarn, fable, essay, chronic, record, article
obake  Japanese noun or adjective, Ghost, spirit

(Source: Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, Hawaiian Dictionary, Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.)

Notes

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In this essay, I use the terms "Hawaiian" and "Native Hawaiian" to refer to peoples of Hawaiian ancestry, regardless of federal definitions based on blood quantum.

1. I am local Japanese; my stepfather and half-brothers are local Japanese/Filipino. I do not claim to understand what it means to be Filipino, but I want to point to the ways that there are important divisions between ethnic groups at the same time there are problematic stereotypes about the ways racial groups are segregated.

2. For discussions of developmental narratives, see Lourd (1993), Wong (1994), and Lowe (1996).

3. See "School Begins" by Dalrymple (1899), Hamilton (1897) and Hamilton (n.d.).


5. For definitions of "local," see Chang (1996) and Okamura (1994a).


7. I'd like to thank my mother, Eloise Yamashita Saranillo, for explaining to me her understanding of the etymology of the word, "cho-cho."

8. While the critiques are based on ethnic divisions, I refer to "race-based" analytical frameworks to foreground the ways in which ethnic groups are racialized differently.


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Is "my name is" necessary?
If so, my name is Donna Tsonyko Tanigawa and I am a young, lesbian of Japanese ancestry from Wapakoneta.

My paper is a provisional piece, a collection of fragments.
As a writer, I am interested in the ways that language, memory, and the body give shape to and refashion our sense of identity. People have commented that my work is brave and authentic, perhaps because of its content.

I write for myself, to keep sane. I share my work for the same reasons that I think many of us do so that others might write themselves.

—Donna Tsonyko Tanigawa
The Plecing Work

I am taking a long time to finish the project. Knots need to be tied. Threads cut. The patching work is not pau yet. My task—to take the materialities of my life, language, memory, and body, and create a textual piece—is still in progress. I am working on a prosed, Japanese crazy quilt, a yosegire, in words.

I use the yosegire, literally, the sewing together of fragments, as a pattern. I want to design a local-style work. I want to wrap something around myself. I collect snippets of left over fabric and remnants from past literary wreckage, projects started but never finished. My goal is to make an artistic but useful item from my repository of knowledge.

"My task—to take the materialities of my life, language, memory, and body, and create a textual piece—is still in progress."

I use articulations of memory for the yosegire work. They are like stored boxes with keepsakes, mementos, childhood photos, and comfort foods. Oballian’s aloha print blanket. Chicken hekka with a distinctive shoyu-sugar flavor. A picture of a five-year-old me clinging onto Grandpa near his 1969 Dodge sedan. I also use mappings of personal and collective narratives. My mother tongue of pidgin English stitches the work. I rely upon spoons and spools of thread given to me throughout my life. Sugar plantation pidgin and Japanese "broken" English. Waipahu-kine dialect. Near Standard American English. These are my strands of experience and memory.

The Language Fragments: Trying Fo’ Write Donna

For years, I envied (mostly haole) people who wrote in good-kine English. I combed through my work with a sorely creased copy of Merriss and Griswold’s A Composition Handbook. I tried to correct syntax and punctuation before my reader did. In graduate school I struggled to write Standard American English. I labored over academic prose. An instructor told me, "Say what you want to say." Implicit in his comment was, "Say it in the 'correct' manner." If I did say what I wanted to say, it would have been in a language that failed to meet academic expectations.

In 1991 I wrote a seminar paper on lesbian feminist theory titled "The Persistence of Reified Theories in the Academy: Working Towards a Theory à la Tanigawa." My lover said that the seductive postmodern language drowned out my voice. She suggested that I create a theory in my language, then translate the ideas into intelligible (read: haole) prose.

I was faced with a crucial question: What was my language? After all, I spoke what I thought was English. I was educated in an American school system. So I was ashamed to speak, much less write, in my mother tongue of pidgin English. Pidgin fo’ talk story, not fo’ write down. I acted haolefied: As far back as fourth grade at August Ahrens Elementary School, I wanted to speak good-kine English.

This is the curse:

My father cannot spell.

I make him a chart with the numbers O-N-E through T-W-E-N-T-Y-E-N.

He needs the correct spelling to write checks to Kiso’s Lumber Store.

"T-h-r-e-e, not t-r-e-e, Dad."

I blame his so-called learning disability on his haole teacher at Kaumakani Camp.

She made him repeat first grade, and her words, the following year.

I was unable to write. I was afraid my work stank. I decided to use the metaphor of a takuan, a pungent, pickled Japanese turnip, to begin my theory. I modeled my thoughts after Miss Takuan, the yellow misfit in Akiko Masuda’s fable. Like my mentor, I was "not A grade, or B grade, but ‘off-grade.’" (Emphasis supplied) (1989). As Masuda recounts, Miss Takuan tried her best and studied hard, but school was difficult. It made her feel contempt for respect.

For my 1992 New Year’s resolution I wrote an autobiographical essay, "Pau Trying Fo’ Be Like One Haole Dyke" (Tanigawa 1992:8-10). This work did not suit academe. So what? After so many years, I found my chastised tongue and painfully returned to the language of my childhood. Pidgin fo’ everything. Haunani-Kay Trask helped chart the path: think in my cultural referents, imagine in my world view, disagree and eventually oppose the dominant ideology (1993:54). "No mo’ talk hybolic. Remember wea you wea come from."

The Memory Fragments: Trying Fo’ Tink Donna

How do I begin to locate myself? Where am I as a local yonsei/lesbian of Japanese ancestry? I stay trying fo’ rememmab. In 1967 my father and his workers built our home on Kahualii Place. We were the first family to live on this dead-end street located on the mauka side of Waipahu, later to become a large suburb. My home was a solitary wooden structure surrounded by brick-red dirt and sugar-cane fields. Inside was the presence of Okabe Grandpa’s black lacquer butsudan. He spoke "I’m here" each time I walked through the living room. His spirit lived in a wooden, kanji-inscribed stick. I lit senko and offered food such as gohan and fresh water in the evening.
My home is no longer there. The house was sold to a Filipino extended family after my parents divorced. The structure is now painted Royal Hawaiian pink and the jalousie windows are adorned with wrought iron bars. Kalamungay trees grow where there were once jabon fruits.

I need to find the fragments of my geographic self. The physical landscape—my home, my neighborhood, parts of town—has changed. There are few familiar landmarks. The pole where I wiped my sticky hanabata. The empty sugar mill. Is memory my only tool? I take a vicarious trip through Tanigawa Grandpa’s stories told with plenty papa and Primo-brand beer.

I stay talking wit’ myself now.
I like grind.

I like eat senbei cookies from Nii Superette.

I like one bento box from Hamada’s Okazuya.
‘Ono da shoyu pork.

I like suck ice cake wit’ prune mui from Kawano Store.

You know wot, but? No stay anymore.
‘Da places I wen grow up wit’. All change now.

Get K-Mart and Eagle Hardware in da middle of town.

Ass why hard fo’ go back to my small kid days.
Only can talk story.
Maybe ass’ why I like fill my mouth wit’ local food.

Make me feel full like I stay back home.

The Body Fragments: Trying Fo’ Feel Donna

Can I look to myself while I sew the quilt? Can I go from fragments of language and memory to the intimate region of my physical body? Is it possible to use parts of my four-foot, eleven-inch frame for the project? My body, marked with ethnic, gendered, and sexual inscriptions, shall become part of the prosed work.

I decide to stitch the surfaces. I mark my Asian features. What colors do I use? What shapes? Black for my hair and yellow for my skin. I permit myself to use blue for my names Tsuyako and Tanigawa, literally, Rain-on-the-Road and River-in-the-Valley. I appliquéd roasted almonds for my slanted eyes. I flick my work with brown lentigo spots aged in the sun. I take off, at last, the thin strips of Scotch Tape for double eyes.

Eight years ago I enrolled in an undergraduate course, “The Japanese-American Experience.” The class made my skin crawl. I realize that my discomfort grew from my futile efforts to move out of my Japanese skin. The instructor showed a slide of a topless Bophaole woman. The image, he told us, was an “ethnic joke” on flat-chested Japanese women. I felt guilty, because I couldn’t identify with the woman on the screen. I take one almost-A. Gezz, I like decent size chi-chis. As I stared at the image, I also coveted her eyelids. Each was as broad as a lychee leaf. Plenty room fo’ put eye makeup. I did not want to be known by my ethnic markings.

I converted to Roman Catholicism in my early twenties. Although I was born in a Soto Buddhist household, my sansei parents felt it best that I choose my religion. My spiritual quest took me from the Waiahulu Hongwanji Temple to baptism at Saint Alban’s Episcopal Chapel, to yet another baptism “in the Holy Spirit” at Our Lady of the Assumption, to confirmation classes at the Jesuit Newman Center. I was drawn to contemplative prayer and was to begin a prenovitiate program at a Benedictine Monastery in Saint Louis, Missouri. But my fascination with religion was, in large part, a desire to transcend my female body. It seemed I had again found a way to crawl out of my skin. Yet today, I am comfortable with my ethnic and gendered markings.

“My body, marked with ethnic, gendered, and sexual inscriptions, shall become part of the prosed work.”

There are other parts of my yosegire work that I fear are unattractive, indeed hideous. I deliberate over the discarded fragments, the items that I wished would be blown away like sugar cane ash. These are the “forgotten” memories, the ruins of something I tried so hard to burn and destroy. The blocked childhood incidents. I locate myself as wreckage of sexual abuse. Sites of incest and rape, I want to include these markings.

don’t like showers.

water on my face feel drowning.
can’t breathe.

“don’t get too close to me,” I tell my lover.
the body doesn’t forget.

the “nasty” followed by rushing water on my two-year old face.

phobia to saliva.
can’t watch myself brush my teeth.
not like it on my hands, my face, my arms.

my mouth a receptacle for peters and parts.

I continue to remember and put into words. I resist the urge to pick at my skin with its numerous scars. I stop from adding homemade “tattoos” crafted with a curling iron and styled with a butter knife. Self-mutilation. How do I join these pieces?

The Fragments: Trying Fo’ Pau the Yosegire

The patching work is not pau yet. My Japanese crazy quilt in words is taking a long time. I have only a few completed panels. At first I was disappointed that my project is incomplete. A gentle consolation came when I was at a viewing of the AIDS Quilt sponsored
by our local chapter of the Names Project. It did not matter that I was seeing only several of the thousands of panels. What mattered were those quilts at that exhibit. Life quilts, I conclude, are always in progress.

I sit with fragments of the work. It feels good to have something to wrap around myself. I sit on Obâan’s zabuton and cover myself with the patchwork. My fingers run over the surface. Several threads are uncut. Some are double-knotted. Pieces of natto from a past meal are stuck to the seams. There are also snatches of dried and crusted blood. In the frenzy of my sewing I have stitched fragments of language and memory to my skin. I am marked by the quilt. I notice the open sores, the scars that I inadvertently picked open. Some of them have bled onto the fabric. The quilt becomes marked by my body. The project is not pau yet. There will be more sections and more seams. And there will be a quilt.

Glossary

anykiné any sort of, any kind of
butsudan Buddhist altar
chi-chis female breasts
good-kine proper, correct
gohan steamed white rice
hanabata nasal mucus, "snout"
haoie Causasian; white, Hawaiian for "foreigner"
hekka Japanese stew
hybolic hyperbolic, exaggerated for effect
jabon a citrus fruit
kalamungay edible green leaves
kanji Chinese-based written character
lentigo frecklelike mark
local style in the style or manner of contemporary local customs
lychee fruit of the litchi tree
mauka in the direction of the mountains
natto fermented soy beans
Obâan grandmother; affectionate term for female elder
okazuya delicatessen
‘ono delicious, tasty
pau finished, complete
Prista local Hawai’i beer
prune mui Chinese preserved prunes
pûpû hors d’oeuvres
sansei third-generation Japanese-immigrant descendant
senbei Japanese tea cookies
senko joss sticks; religious incense
shoyu soy sauce
takuan pickled turnip
talk story to converse, a conversation
yonsei fourth-generation Japanese-immigrant descendant
yosegire crazy quilt
zabuton cushion, throw pillow

Notes

I would like to thank Ida Yoshinaga, Ruth Hsu, Kathleen Kane, Joyce Chinen, and the three anonymous reviewers of Social Process in Hawai’i for helping me to make something of my words. I would also like to thank Lee-Ann Matsumoto for helping to give me the words.

1. See also Thiango (1986).

2. Local Japanese adolescent girls place thin strips of tape over the epicanthic fold of their eyelids to make their eyes appear more round and mimic Caucasian eyes/appearance. The availability of plastic surgery has reduced this practice somewhat.

References


I began studying ethnoviolence to address a tremendous gap in the existing literature: many victims I worked with at the University of Hawai‘i described harassment involving two or more "types" of discrimination—such as sex and race; or sex, race, and sexual orientation.

Yet the literature did not reflect the multi-dimensional nature of violence against women, instead collapsing victims' experiences within dyadic frameworks taken from law.

My research helps me resist that practice and give others evidence of an expanded framework for understanding ethnoviolence.

—Susan K. Hippensteele
Toward a ‘Shared Reality’ of Campus Ethnoviolence: 
Data as a Tool for Combating Victim Isolation

SUSAN K. HIPPENSTEEL

Introduction

Recent political events throughout the world reveal that ethnocentrism and intolerance are often used successfully to gain public support for excluding ‘outsiders’ or denying them entry into traditionally elite institutions. Well-established members of such institutions may defend their ‘rights’ to them by playing on the fears of others and invoking principles that legitimate their own authority while denying ‘outsiders’ their basic civil rights (Marcus, Sullivan, Theiss-Morse & Wood 1995). At the University of Hawai’i there have been several recent examples of the ‘scapegoating’ phenomenon used to denigrate ‘outsiders’ (in these cases women from different racial, class, and national origin backgrounds) who challenged the traditions of the academy as an institution. Maiyan Lam, who sued the William S. Richardson School of Law for race and sex discrimination in hiring. Haunani-Kay Trask, who charged the University administration with racism against Native Hawaiians; and Michelle Greitzinger, who sued the University and religious professor Randas Lamb for sexual harassment, publicly voiced their objections to the discrimination they endured as ‘outsiders’ within the University. Each has been subjected to vicious personal attacks to her credibility, professional and private life in the media, on campus, and throughout the state. These attacks serve notice to others tempted to challenge discriminatory hiring practices, exploitation and suppression of indigenous land and cultural rights, sexual harassment, homophobia, and other oppressive practices that exclude and even expel women and minorities from the ‘ivory tower’ of academe.

For many in Hawaii, the stories of Lam, Trask, Greitzinger, and other women’s experiences are the salient, recognized and remembered examples of the struggle for civil rights by ‘outsiders’ at the University. These are also stories of campus ethnoviolence. The isolation of these stories and the isolating experiences of the women who shared them, confirms for many their belief that oppression, discrimination, and violence on campus are rare, discreet phenomena—best left unchallenged, or better yet, unspoken.

David Welchman Gego (1991) suggests that although universities in the U.S. are touted as bastions of liberalism and rational thought, they readily reproduce the colonialism and racism of the larger society through bureaucratic and academic structures. Gego further argues that the ‘ethnic and gender composition of the faculty, the types of knowledge generated, and how this knowledge is (or is not) transmitted, are further indicators of institutional practices that “close out” dissent, alternatives and, ultimately, diversity on a university campus. When the oppression, discrimination, and violence experienced by women and oppressed minority ‘outsiders’ remain hidden, their knowledge is repressed.” Delgado and Yun (1993) point out that the language and practice of oppression are deeply rooted in a central paradigm woven into a thousand scripts, stories, and rules. “(1993: 297)” The thoughts and emotions that produce and are products of oppression are deeply bound to a set of social practices normalized as social order. So, to speak against oppression is to seem “incoherent and irresponsible” (Delgado & Yun 1993: 297).

Studies of harassment of women and racial and sexual minorities show that, contrary to popular belief, ethnoviolence is not an isolated phenomenon on college campuses, but a problem of epidemic proportions. Increasing conflict between racial and ethnic groups on campuses throughout the U.S. and in Canada has concerned researchers for a number of years (Cage 1993; Ehrlich 1985; Magner 1980; Weiss 1990). Studies show that between 12-52% of students identifying as racial or sexual minority group experience some form of verbal harassment and/or intimidation while at school (Cage, Trevino, & Wingard 1988; Coker & Dickson 1988; Ehrlich 1985; McBay 1986; Yeskel 1985). Some researchers estimate as many as 90% of gay, lesbian or bisexual students experience discrimination or violence because of their sexual orientation (Obear 1990). Sexual harassment: a strikingly common type of campus ethnoviolence, continues to affect millions of students each year (P palp & Banchmar 2000). Since the early 1980s, an enormous body of literature in the social sciences has documented dramatic rates of women students’ experiences of sexual harassment ranging from 15-65% (Bond 1997; Drench & Weiner 1995; Glaser & Thorpe 1986; Hippensteel 1990). A phenomenon that has been termed “reverse development” is the rise in reports of a new kind of violence against faculty and students—sexual harassment by administration, trustees, and students.

The most common forms of ethnoviolence reported in most studies are name-calling, insulting, and other forms of verbally aggressive behavior. Much of the harassment students experience on campuses in the U.S. is directed at them by their peers. However, a stunning 50% of students responding to a Minnesota study and 88% of students responding to a University of Colorado at Colorado Springs study said that a faculty member was the perpetrator of overt racism they experienced at school (Coker & Dickson 1988).

While most researchers agree that campus ethnoviolence should be a major concern for educators and campus officials, experts are divided on its causes and approaches to managing the problem. Some argue for enactment and enforcement of stronger antidiscrimination rules and practices; others argue for increasing resources going toward violence prevention education and diversity awareness. Still others advocate a “reverse enforcement,” arguing that “the free marketplace of ideas” which stills neither traditionalists nor dissenters is key to egalitarian social progress on campus (Haiman 1993; Delgado & Yun 1993).
Sparked by heated public debate over issues of racism, colonialism, and suppression of speech at the University of Hawai‘i, public forums were organized in 1991 by the Spark M. Matsunaga Institute for Peace on the topic of “ethnic peace” to facilitate discussion and generate solutions to rising campus tensions. Faculty, administrators, and a small number of students were invited to contribute their ideas about the etiology of ethnic conflict on campus—many spoke of academic theories and moral imperatives. A common theme was the need for curriculum and policy reform. Not surprisingly, positions on the problem and the relative complexity of proposed solutions split along lines of race, color, and class.

Few educational reforms come about without major struggle and significant pressure from students who are often the most vocal and effective proponents for change (Horowitz 1988, as cited in Ehrlich 1995). After moderating a panel addressing the topic of “The University’s Responsibility Toward Students,” assistant professor of philosophy Mary Tiles (1991) noted that this panel differed from the others in that the speakers were all students who, rather than speaking about solutions, felt compelled to identify the etiology of the conflicts as an essential precondition to working toward ethnic peace. Tiles went on to say:

“Since this forum was held, more than one person has commented that it was the first occasion they could remember on which such a cross-section of the student population had been heard...to have expressed their deep alienation from the university as an institution. The experiences giving rise to this attitude varied with the situations of the speakers—Hawaiian, international, female, graduate, undergraduate.”

Tiles went on to suggest that if the forum’s public discussion of grievances was not a rare occurrence and the attitudes expressed took people by surprise, then student discontent is not currently being heard or being allowed to play its crucial positive role.

Tiles and others suggested that the dramatic public response to the student, women, and racial minority voices of dissent heard at the forum series made clear the urgent need for open dialogue and information about the oppression these groups experience at the University of Hawai‘i.

Marcus et al. (1999) suggest that within large and diverse communities, individuals must develop a shared understanding of the community that transcends their own experience within it. At the University of Hawai‘i, enrollment figures consistently reveal a campus population composed of eight primary ethnic groups with no distinct ethnic majority (see, for example, University of Hawai‘i IRO 1992; 1993). Socio-cultural values facilitate cooperation within and between members of some racial and ethnic groups in Hawai‘i (Mokuau 1999) helping to maintain an outward appearance of ethnic peace. At the same time, these values may serve to mask harassment and discrimination that women and sexual, racial, and other minority group members throughout the state experience.

Overt prejudice and bigotry may not be as visible in Hawai‘i as in other cosmopolitan cities. However, the tensions that exist clearly have a significant impact on the quality of life for members of certain ethnic groups on the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa campus.

Incidents with overtones of sex, sexual orientation, race, or ethnic bias are common and students at the University are reporting certain incidents of harassment and discrimination they experience while at school in growing numbers (University of Hawai‘i GVPEVC 1996). These reports, however, continue to reflect a very small proportion (2-5%) of the estimated number of incidents students experience each year—a finding consistent with the low ethnocrimes reporting rates among college students throughout the U.S. (Ehrlich 1995). So it appears that, despite an environment of tremendous intercultural exchange, the multicultural diversity found at the University of Hawai‘i does not insulate students from experiences of ethnocrimes. Nor do the cultural and societal values that encourage cooperation between groups in Hawai‘i facilitate reporting of these experiences. Instead, these values may actually increase the difficulty and exclusion that can so effectively silence victims.

The socio-cultural influences discouraging open dialogue regarding ethnocrimes in Hawai‘i are compounded by traditional academic cultural norms which serve to perpetuate and maintain the status quo within large university bureaucracies. The resulting silence surrounding individuals’ experiences with campus ethnocrimes has limited efforts to understand and prevent this disturbing social problem. Researchers have consistently documented that “telling the story” often increases rather than decreases the trauma of ethnocrimes (Estrich 1989; Bourassa & Shipton 1991; Schneider 1995)—particularly for women victims. Clearly, victims will continue to be hesitant to “come out” and publicly share their experiences of violence and discrimination on campus as long as doing so increases their vulnerability to additional abuse.

**Background of the Project**

Critical tasks for ethnocrime researchers throughout the U.S. are to accurately describe and document the incidence (annual) and prevalence (lifetime) rates of ethnocrimes within a broad and diverse range of communities. Doing so serves at least four important purposes. First, the application of specific language describing the parameters of campus ethnocrimes can lead to developing common language, definitions, and increased public consciousness of the problem. Second, site-specific data provide the means for campus officials to develop more effective responses and remedies. Third, recognizing the range and scope of the problem within a particular community can help breakdown individual resistance to accepting newly heard stories of victims as “real.” And finally, concrete prevalence figures permit victims to locate their own experience within the broader context of the problem of campus ethnocrimes, reducing feelings of isolation and increasing the likelihood that the social narratives of individual victims will be shared.

Marcus et al. (1999) argue that while individuals possess a ‘range of tolerance,’ such judgments are modified through the receipt of new information and based on contextual
The University of Hawai’i Harassment Research Project (UHHRP) was developed in 1992 as a means to contribute to the shared understanding of campus ethnoviolence within the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa community and to fill an important gap in the emerging picture of ethnoviolence as an international phenomenon. Meda Chesney-Lind, Rosemary Venegas, and I adopted the conceptual approach to intergroup hostility taken by Howard Ehrlich (1973; 1990; 1992) to make distinctions among prejudice, discrimination and ethnoviolence. We hoped that doing so would enable researchers and concerned students, faculty and staff on our campus to more effectively develop a shared understanding of the experiences of victims whose social realities we hope to understand and transform. Because campus climate is important both as a corollary to and mitigating factor in responses to ethnoviolence, we gathered data reflecting patterns of students’ direct experiences and patterns of co-victimization.

The data reported in this chapter describe a broad range of women’s experiences of ethnoviolence at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa (UHM). Following Bem (1993), I present these data with those gathered from male participants, because the relationship between women’s and men’s experiences of discrimination and violence are in many ways inseparable. Because common language interpretations of the seriousness of actual incidents of ethnoviolence have historically been understood through men’s experiences, it is important to note the similarities and differences in rates of women’s and men’s experiences with various forms of ethnoviolence. In doing so, I hope to challenge some of the factors that contribute to the masquerades of privacy, invisibility, shame, and exclusion that restrict and silence women victims of campus ethnoviolence at the University of Hawai’i.

**Method**

A significant problem for researchers studying campus ethnoviolence has been generating data which reflect the co-existing experiences of multiple forms of discrimination and violence. The primary methodological contribution of this study was the development of a sex-neutral survey instrument which can be easily modified for use on other campuses and is sensitive to demographic diversity. This instrument permits researchers to effectively assess the correlates to and interactions among various forms of harassment and discrimination, and introduces a “greatest impact” incident measure that highlights the complexity of students’ experiences with multiple forms of oppression. Portions of this instrument have since been modified and used to assess faculty experiences with campus ethnoviolence throughout the University of Hawai’i system, as well.

Many campus ethnoviolence investigations reflect researchers’ concerns with the policy implications of their data. This study was no exception. Yet, while prevalence (lifetime) rate studies produce the numbers needed to satisfy the “Who?”, “Where?” and “How much will it cost to fix?” policy questions (Bart, Miller, Moran & Stanko 1986), and are presumed by many researchers to more accurately represent the enormity of the problem of ethnoviolence in their communities, we gathered data reflecting incidence (annual) rates using multiple measures for three reasons. First, we were interested in the methodological implications of comparing reporting rates using different measures at different points in a survey format. Second, by controlling the time frame, these data permit us to more accurately control for and compare by age, length of time on campus, etc.—comparisons which lose their relevance when lifetime incidence rates are obtained. Third, we felt that incidence data on co-victimization would be far more manageable than prevalence data—the size of lifetime rates may well negate the impact of the data itself.

Questions about students’ direct and co-victimization experiences with racial/ethnic, sex, age, sexual orientation, physical disability, marital status, religion, and national origin discrimination were created and pilot tested on a small number of graduate and undergraduate students. The 209-item survey posed general questions about experiences students might have had on campus during the previous year with any form of campus ethnoviolence, and more specific questions about experiences with racial/ethnic, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation related incidents. Special attention was paid to what Ehrlich refers to as “methodological sinkholes” (1995) and items were carefully worded to address conceptually distinct experiences. Participant demographic questions included the race/ethnic group with which students identify most strongly, their sex, age, sexual orientation, marital status, whether they are attending school on a student visa, current living arrangements, and other non-individually identifying information.

The student sample was specifically designed to be representative of the (undergraduate) student body on the UHM campus. Faculty from departments with cross-section enrollment and faculty whose courses generally enroll significant percentages of Native Hawaiian and Filipino students were invited to participate in the study by volunteering one class period for survey completion during the spring semester 1993. Participating faculty encouraged students to complete the questionnaire during class time and a proctor from the UHHRP provided participants with instructions and answered questions as necessary. Students were also given the option of not participating and permitted to leave the classroom; approximately ten students chose the latter option.

Analysis of the sample profile and enrollment figures for that period indicates that our sample was generally representative of UHM campus enrollment at that time with some exceptions as noted below. Within this respondent pool, students self-identified as Japanese (8%), Caucasian (2%), Chinese (1%), Filipino (4%), Hawaiian (7%), Pacific Islander (0.5%) and Korean (2%). Slightly over half (52%) were female; nearly three quarters (73%) were under the age of twenty-five, and 5 percent of the students surveyed identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Of the students who responded, most were single (70%) and about 80 percent were undergraduates.

Our population sample over-represents Filipinos (22% enrolled in Fall 1992) and younger students. The total number of African-American and Korean students surveyed was too small for quantitative analysis. Comparison data on students’ sexual orientation are not available. A total of 926 participant questionnaires were analyzed during the summer and fall of 1993.
Results

Global Rates of Verbal Experiences

The first item on the questionnaire, a general question about whether participants had "personally been the subject of derogatory references, depictions or jokes in a UHM classroom or UHM job/placement" during the past year, provides an initial glimpse of the relative frequency of various types of verbal aggression directed at students while at school. Table I provides a breakdown of reported incidence rates of experiences of verbal harassment directed at students because of their membership in one of these groups.

Nearly one-fifth of all UHM students surveyed answered "yes" on the basis of ethnicity/race (17.9%), and one in ten answered "yes" on the basis of sex. Significant percentages of students also reported experiences of verbal abuse based on age, national origin, and religion. The global rate of harassment on the basis of sexual orientation (2.9%) appears low. However, because the percentage of students self-identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual was five percent, it appears that the reported rate of verbal harassment on the basis of sexual orientation for participants of this study was nearly 60 percent.

Table I. Students' Direct Experiences of Verbal Harassment at UHM (N=926)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protected Class</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Disability</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patterns of Physical and Verbal Experiences

Table II provides a summary of women's and men's direct experiences of ethnic/racial harassment and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation. These data suggest that various forms of verbal harassment—name-calling and insults and other harassing/intimidating behavior—are the more common forms of discrimination experienced by students because of their sexual minority or racial/ethnic group membership. In addition,

Table II. Direct Experiences of Ethnicity/Race and Sexual Orientation Discrimination by Sex of Respondent (N=926)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>From a peer or co-worker</th>
<th>From a person in authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Called names/insulted because of ethnicity/race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassed/intimidated because of ethnicity/race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received insulting phone calls/letters because of ethnicity/race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically threatened/attacked because of ethnicity/race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Called names/insulted because of sexual orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassed/intimidated because of sexual orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received insulting phone calls/letters because of sexual orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically threatened/attacked because of sexual orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>.085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * denotes a significant difference.
There were significant sex differences in response to three items in this section: rates of physical threats or attacks on the basis of race/ethnicity from peers and from individuals with authority over the victim, and physical threats or attacks on the basis of sexual orientation from someone in a position of authority.

The most dramatic findings on this section of the survey were the rates of direct experiences of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation within the past year. Keeping in mind that 5% of our sample self-identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual, a full five percent of all respondents had been called names or insulted by a peer because of their sexual orientation, and over 3% had been verbally harassed by an authority figure. Almost 4% of all participants were otherwise harassed or intimidated by a peer and nearly three percent by an authority figure on the basis of sexual orientation. Almost 2% had been physically threatened or attacked by a peer because of their sexual orientation, and slightly less than 1% had been physically threatened or attacked by persons in a position of authority.

Table III provides a profile of reported experiences of verbal harassment because of ethnicity/race for each major racial/ethnic group surveyed. Reports of experiences of verbal harassment directed at students because of their race/ethnicity are consistent with the ethnic hierarchy frequently discussed by sociologists (Okamura 1990; Takaki 1989)—Filipino and Pacific Islanders at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, followed by Native Hawaiian, Caucasian, Chinese and Japanese. The total percentage of students reporting verbal aggression in this section is 19 percent—again, a figure slightly higher than the race/ethnic harassment response rate reported earlier in Table I (see note 5).

Table III. Direct Experiences of Ethnentic/Racial Discrimination, by Ethnic Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group (N / % total respondents)</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander (32 / 4%)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino (31 / 14%)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian (64 / 7%)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian (204 / 22%)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (227 / 14%)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese (293 / 28%)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sexual Harassment by Authority Figures and Peers

A number of findings from the section of the questionnaire concerning sexual harassment stand out (Table IV). First, as in the case of aggression directed at students because of their race or ethnicity, verbally aggressive sexual harassment was more common than physically aggressive acts. Second, women students were far more likely than their male counterparts to report all forms of sexual harassment measured in this study except rape or attempted rape by an authority figure. Significant sex differences in rates of verbal harassment were reported from both peers and authority figures with twice as many female students reporting unwanted sexual teasing (20% compared to 10%), and an even greater proportion of women reporting unwanted sexually suggestive looks from peers (18% compared to 8.5%). And finally, peer harassment was more than twice as frequent, overall, as was harassment by an authority figure. This is consistent with findings from earlier sections of this study pertaining to racial/ethnic and sexual minority harassment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>From a peer or co-worker</th>
<th>From a person in authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teasing, jokes, remarks of a sexual nature</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual or attempted rape</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure for dates/sexual favors</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters/phone calls of a sexual nature</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually suggestive looks</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering or pinching</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 2, p < .05, X² = 5.996, * denotes significance

Note: Degrees of freedom reflect categories of responses. Figures for yes answers (once, more than once) have been collapsed in this table.

Summary of Reported Co-Victimization

Reported rates of co-victimization came from students who were not directly harassed or attacked but who knew of incidents and may have experienced anxiety and distress because of someone else’s victimization. In some instances, a single attack which receives
a great deal of publicity on campus (e.g., a sexual assault late at night near the campus parking garage, or the eviction from class of a Native Hawaiian student who objected to misrepresentations of Hawaiian history, etc.) can affect most or all of the campus community. Rates of co-victimization are directly related to what is commonly referred to as "campus climate"—in this context referring to the perception students have of their relative safety as members of a particular "ethnic" group (racial, ethnic, sex, sexual minority, and so on).

Table V provides a summary of reported co-victimization related to verbal harassment. Asked if they had "seen or heard offensive comments, put-downs or jokes" at the University during the past year, even higher numbers were reported than those related to sexual harassment co-victimization—the most common form of ethnonviolence discussed on most college campuses. A full half of our participants (50%) had knowledge of verbal harassment directed at others on the basis of their ethnicity/race, 43% on the basis of sex, 37% on the basis of sexual orientation, over one-third (33%) on the basis of age, and close to 25% on the basis of national origin and religion.

Table V. Co-Victimization Experiences of Verbal Harassment at UHM (N=926)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protected Class</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity/Race</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation/Preference</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Problem of Sexual Harassment Co-Victimization

A relatively high number of students also knew of people who had been the victims of sexual harassment in the form of "unwanted teasing, jokes, or remarks of a sexual nature" (28), "unwanted suggestive or romantic gestures" (19%), or "deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering or pinching" (19%). Table VI provides a summary of women's and men's reported rates of sexual harassment co-victimization, revealing that many male and female students had heard about specific instances within the past year. Here, the sex differences are less marked than for the direct experiences of sexual harassment reported earlier, suggesting that while the targets of sexual harassment are more likely to be female, both male and female students are likely to experience its indirect effects.

Table VI. Co-Victimization Experiences of Sexual Harassment by Sex of Respondent (N=926)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teasing, jokes, remarks of a sexual nature</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually suggestive looks</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure for dates/sexual favors</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering or pinching</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters/phone calls of a sexual nature</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual or attempted rape</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The "Greatest Impact" Experience

Finally, students were asked to describe the direct experience incident of campus ethnonviolence that had the "greatest impact" on them in the past year (Table VII). A total of 298 incidents were reported: 177 by women and 102 by men. Since students could check more than one attribute for a single incident, we were able to examine the unique relationships between various forms of discrimination within this population. Incidents related to ethnicity/race, sex, age and national origin were the most commonly reported forms of campus ethnonviolence. By far the most common focus of the incidents reported by women was sex discrimination: 73% of women's experiences involved this form of discrimination—a figure that likely includes incidents of sexual harassment. Yet there was also an overlap between incidents of sex and ethnicity/race discrimination. Thirty-eight percent of the incidents reported by women also included a race/ethnicity dimension. Men's reports, on the other hand, showed nearly three quarters of the incidents they experienced were linked to their race/ethnicity. This figure is probably an underestimate since some students will consider national origin closely related to their membership in a particular race/ethnic group and may report accordingly.

Table VIII indicates significant differences between the different ethnic groups, as well. Overall, Filipinos, Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians experienced race/ethnic, sex, and sexual orientation discrimination in larger proportions than did other groups analyzed in this study. Japanese were least likely of the groups to report a "greatest impact" incident of discrimination although Japanese women, along with Native Hawaiian and Caucasian women, reported the highest rates of sex discrimination among the racial/ethnic groups identified. Chi-square analysis reveals that significant race/ethnic group differences in reports of sex and sexual orientation related incidents exist within this population. Further analysis reveals that between men, differences were significant for race/ethnic and sex.
discrimination related incidents, while women's patterns of "greatest impact" reporting were significantly different for sexual orientation related incidents only. As is always the case in survey research, it is not clear whether these data reflect accurate discrimination experience rates or the degree to which reporting rates were influenced by cultural and/or social norms. Some students may have been reluctant to speak about these types of experiences despite survey procedures that assured anonymity for participants.

Table VII. Focus of "Greatest Impact" Experiences By Sex of Respondent  
(N=177 women, 102 men)

Please select the one experience during the past year, at UHM or in a UHM-related setting, that has had the greatest impact on you. What was the focus of the incident?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity/race</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Disability</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A total of 298 incidents were reported; however, 19 respondents did not report their sex. Total percentages within each column do not equal 100 because respondents could report more than one type of discrimination for the incident.

Discussion

Toward a 'Shared' Reality

Researchers across the U.S. have labeled the rising tide of campus ethnoviolence directed at women and sexual, racial and other minorities a "backlash" that may reflect increased competition for resources by majority students socialized in racist, bigoted, heterosegmental, or homophobic environments (Dalton 1991; Helms 1990). Rates of campus ethnoviolence victimization and co-victimization are the fabric of group tensions on any campus. Actual incidents become the basis of stories that are told, retold, distorted and mythologized (Ehrlich 1995:7) among students who may assess their relative safety on campus through the lens of these stories.

Table VIII. Focus of "Greatest Impact" Experiences By Ethnicity of Respondent

Please select the one experience during the past year, at UHM or in a UHM-related setting, that has had the greatest impact on you. What was the focus of the incident?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total (N=879)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity/race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df=5, p<.05, X^2=11.07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Males (N=331)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity/race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df=5, p<.05, X^2=11.07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Females (N=488)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity/race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df=5, p<.05, X^2=11.07

Note: A total of 298 incidents were reported; however, 19 respondents did not report their sex. Data from students identifying themselves as Korean are not included in this analysis because of small sample size.

In stark contrast to the available data, the stories of women and minority victims of campus ethnoviolence are being questioned in increasingly sophisticated ways. With the rise of movements to quash "PC" efforts designed to ensure civil rights for women and minority 'outsiders' in academic institutions, counterattacks that label the victim as the perpetrator of assaults on truth, free speech, academic freedom, collegiality, etc., are becoming common.
The problem of ethnoviolence at the University of Hawai‘i must be directly placed within the unique socio-political context of racial/ethnic conflict within the state. The manifestations of campus ethnoviolence in Hawai‘i appear to involve less violent assaults than those on many U.S. campuses, yet patterns of reported experiences linked to race/ethnic group membership, consistent with the ethnic hierarchy described by researchers (Okamura 1990; Takaki 1989), suggest that these experiences may help define racial/ethnic boundaries and keep members of certain groups 'in their place.' The legacy of colonialism is clearly visible in the experiences of college student participants in this study.

The impact of campus ethnoviolence can be seen in both the psychological and physiological stress victims and co-victims experience. Yet recognition of this trauma eludes those who are not likely to become victims (Ehrlich 1995). Campus administrators, many faculty members, and students from traditionally privileged racial/ethnic groups may find it easier to view the people they receive regarding an isolated incident of ethnoviolence as an 'exception' to the norm. Many will search for a logical explanation for the exception such as 'she was in the wrong place at the wrong time' or 'that student must have been objecting to historical misrepresentations in an aggressive way,' rather than placing the incident within the larger context of campus ethnoviolence as an alarmingly common phenomenon.

In designing this project, we made no attempt to interrogate the subjective meaning of either direct or co-victim experiences in individual's lives. The data related to co-victimization, which indicate that many students who have not experienced direct incidents of harassment or assault are well aware of the potential threat of ethnoviolence to their well-being on campus, are particularly intriguing. These co-victimization findings suggest that some campus-based incidents at the University are discussed publicly—at least between students. In what form and with what degree of accuracy these incidents are discussed is not clear. Although participants were asked questions regarding their experience with the 'greatest impact' incident(s), these questions were related to immediate steps taken to secure their own safety and well-being, that is, whom they spoke with about their experience, whether they reported to a campus official, and so on (Hippensteele, Chesney-Lind & Venniegas 1996).

Academics have long viewed problems of sexual harassment, assault, racial violence and other forms of hostility directed at women and minorities as occurring outside the walls of the ivory tower, in part because the social reality of victims' experiences on campus has remained hidden. One resulting problem has been the lack of a common language for describing the myriad ways in which ethnoviolence is experienced by women and men on campus. Critical race theorists argue that we learn to interpret new stories in terms of old ones we have internalized. In other words, students, faculty, administrators, victims, co-victims, and those unaffected personally by campus ethnoviolence, draw from individual, personal treasures of information to assess and determine the "reality" of campus ethnoviolence. Stories that deviate too drastically from those we recognize as familiar or "true" may be judged lacking in credibility, false, or even dangerous (Delgado 1991). The need for accurate information about the reality of campus ethnoviolence in our unique academic communities has never been more critical.

Descriptive statistics, such as those presented above, help place new stories of individual victims of campus ethnoviolence within the larger, more realistic, landscape of the problem. Marcus et al. (1995) and others have found that individual reactions to specific stories of oppression and violence are mitigated by contemporary contextual information they receive about the scope of the problem. The participants in this study reported experiencing ethnoviolence linked to their sex, racial/ethnic, and/or sexual minority status in epidemic proportions. By emphasizing the prevalence and scope of victims' experiences, researchers and others can more effectively undermine prevailing ideologies that hold individuals—especially women—responsible for the conditions of social inequality that affect their lives (Fine 1993). Thus, women who share their stories of campus ethnoviolence in an effort to challenge and resist racism, sexism, homophobia, colonialism, patriarchy, and other oppressive practices, become examples of the manifestations of these social ills, rather than the locus of their own victimization.

These data also provide the necessary empirical backdrop for the introduction of a diverse range of social narratives—voices of victims across race, ethnic group, sexual orientation, class and political lines who can lay claim to the knowledge that they are not alone. The defining features of experiences with ethnoviolence are often linked to an individual's expectations of responses from others. When victims of sexual harassment, assault or other discrimination expect friends, peers and colleagues to deny the reality of their trauma, they will attempt to mask their experience—often multiplying its effects on their lives in the process (Fine 1993). When victims can reasonably expect others to recognize and understand the context and detail of their experiences because they have accurate information about ethnoviolence, they are more likely to speak out and resist in psychologically and politically meaningful ways (Bart & Moran 1993).

Obtaining objective data on the dimensions of ethnoviolence is a crucial first step to understanding the campus-specific dimensions of the problem (Hippensteele & Chesney-Lind 1995). These findings clearly show that the problem of ethnoviolence at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa is much larger than the community, as a whole, has been ready to acknowledge. Harassment, discrimination and violence are not problems unique to the few individuals who ‘go public’ with their stories.

A logical sequel to this investigation will be a series of qualitative studies that emphasize the context and detail of individual experiences with campus ethnoviolence and the degree to which these experiences are embedded in the socio-political context of the University and the surrounding community. The master narrative of campus ethnoviolence at the University of Hawai‘i has already been written—daily reinforcing stereotypes of
women as victims of their own design. Yet counter-narratives that illuminate the context, detail and range of women’s and men’s experiences will eventually render this master narrative oblique. A diverse body of social narratives can and will strengthen and synthesize efforts to bridge the conceptual and institutional barriers that limit efforts to understand and internalize the reality of harassment and discrimination at the University of Hawai'i.

Notes

1. The overt behavior intended to psychologically or physically harm persons because of their ethnic group membership (Ehrlich 1990; 1992), which includes, among others, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and sex.

2. Researchers use a variety of definitions of sexual harassment in conducting surveys of incidence and prevalence, which partly explains the wide range of reported experiences and published reports. For a more thorough discussion of these definitions and subsequent survey methodologies, see Hippensteele (1991).

3. Prejudice refers to negative attitudes toward a group, while discrimination includes actions taken against someone who do not enjoy equal treatment because of their membership within a group, and ethnoisolation is defined as overt behavior intended to harm someone psychologically or physically because of their ethnic group membership (Hippensteele, Chesney-Lind & Venegas 1996).

4. Co-victimization refers to the experiences of people who have either witnessed or heard about incidents of ethnoisolation directed at members of their own ethnic group. These are important because co-victims are often significantly influenced by their knowledge of discrimination and attacks on others, which can be interpreted as an indicator of their own vulnerability to campus ethnoisolation.

5. It is interesting to note that when participants were asked a general question about verbal harassment on the basis of sexual orientation (Table 1), only 2% of participants report having had such an experience. However, when asked the same question in a more descriptive manner as reported in Table II, a much higher proportion of students report having had such an experience. The use of multiple measures to enhance accuracy of victim reporting has been successfully used in a few studies (Hammer & Saunders 1984; Jumper, 1990; Smith 1987), most often in the context of interviews or survey research. The utility of multiple measures techniques to increase accuracy of reporting for survey research has not yet been well documented.

References


Hippensheer, Susan K. 1995. "Sexual Harassment in Academia: Scenario Construction and Gender Differences in Students' Behavioral Definitions and Judgments." Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Psychology, University of Hawai'i, Honolulu, HI.


The Broken Gourd

HAUNANI-KAY TRASK

II.

This night I crawl into the mossy arms of upland winds;

an island's moan welling grief, centuries of memory:

Each of us slain by the white claw of history: lost genealogies, propertied missionaries, diseased haole.

Now, a poisoned pa'ina swarming with foreigners and dying Hawaiians.

III.

A common horizon: smelly shores under spidery moons,
pockmarked maile vines, rotting 'ulu groves, the brittle clack of broken lava stones.

Out of the east a damp stench of money burning at the edges.

Out of the west the din of divine violence, triumphant destruction.

At home, the bladed reverberations of empire.

I.

After the last echo where fingers of light soft as laau'e come slowly toward our aching earth, a cracked ipu whispers, bloody water on its broken lip.

Long ago, wise kānaka hauled hand-twined nets, whole villages shouting the black flash of fish:

'Nā wāhine u'i trained to the chant of rolling surf, nā keiki sprouted by the sun of a blazing sky.

Even Hina, tinted by love, shone gold across a lover's sea.
The military has left its changing inscriptions on Hawai‘i for over a century. In my long residence here, two marks were the most ominous:

- the open atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific, giving us great sunsets and strontium—90 in kids’ milk.
- and the sound of scores of re-fueling tankers taking off over Honolulu when Nixon began bombing Cambodia in the early 70s.

How today’s military successfully rewrites itself as a neighborhood helper commands my attention.

—Phyllis Turnbull

I found myself in Hawai‘i studying militarism in much the same way that I came to study bureaucracy on the mainland:

realizing it was all around me, and that closing my eyes wouldn’t make it go away.

To help change it, I decided to try to understand it, with the analytical tools provided by feminism and political theory. The military and bureaucracy have much in common.

—Studying them is like watching an accident—horifying, but I can’t stop looking.

—Kathy F. Ferguson
Military Presence/Missional Past: The Historical Construction of Masculine Order and Feminine Hawai‘i

Phyllis Turnbull and Kathy E. Ferguson

Hawai‘i has the dubious distinction of being the most militarized state in the United States (Albertini, Foster, Inglis & Roeder 1980:1); it is also a state in which none of the weapon-producing industries are located. One index of a militarized society is the pervasive presence of arms and the arms industries, troops and installations. But we want to argue that the militarization of a society is a dynamic, contested process of constituting a particular kind of order. It works through the social and economic co-optation of the military into other institutions, and the cultural imbrication of military codes, symbols, and values into daily life. We want to show how the practices that shaped and continued to shape such an order in Hawai‘i also naturalize and legitimate it, while simultaneously undermining competing possibilities of other orders. We are saying there is a larger pattern at work in the militarization of Hawai‘i than might first be evident from such facts as: Honolulu International Airport sharing runways with Hickam Air Force Base; the Arizona Memorial and Punchbowl Cemetery serving as “must see” tourist stops; news of the military saturating local newspapers, interstate freeways connecting military bases; JROTC and ROTC flourishing in high schools and at the University of Hawai‘i; retired military personnel pursuing second careers on governing boards of various local institutions; military vehicles competing with commuter traffic; military names serving as freeway exit signs. We contend that facts such as these do not speak for themselves; instead, their meaning accrues through the narratives by which facts are recruited and made available for comprehension and contestation.

Telling our history of the militarized present of Hawai‘i entails paying attention to the process of how these observations are facts, of how they qualify to enter into discourse, to be spoken and understood, contested or taken for granted. Our genealogy of the present order departs from the usual narrative of development and betterment, and finds instead a history of the present to be one of “unsteady victories and unpalatable defeats, moments of intensity...lapses...extended periods of feverish agitation(land) haunting spells” (Foucault 1977:146). We find this perspective more dynamic, more capable of representing the confluence, both interactive and discontinuous, of several centuries of the order-producing narratives of strangers to these islands who saw what was new to them through the gendered lenses of what they expected to see. In their eyes, Hawai‘i was notably passive and lacking, in need of their projects to fulfill its promises. Supplement its voids, and evade its entrapments. The military installations that saturate Hawai‘i and mainland civilian weapons megaliths participate in a hegemonic narrative of hierarchy, bellicosity and control. Both mark the world ruthlessly in terms of dyadic oppositions, projecting masculine entitlement onto themselves and feminine otherness onto those spaces in need of mastery and appropriation.

The most significant narrative productions have been those by explorers, missionaries, sugar planters, soldiers, and tourists. Each has carried multiple and intertwined accounts about what Hawai‘i offers and what it lacks, and about how they could supply Hawai‘i with what it needs. Historically, their projects have entailed the enforced movement of a variety of kinds of bodies across different borders, and the persistent transgression and ethnic reinforcement of a range of critical boundaries. These movements have been sustained by multiple and persistent violences: the material violence of displacement, expelling, and resettlement; the discursive violence involved in reading a place through the discourses of their own desires; and the ontological violence of writing a particular kind of order onto bodies and spaces. We aim at reconnecting those violences to the present, to unsettle its givens, to question the violences of the present militarized order.

Reflecting on the militarization of the United States in the last fifty years, Michael Sherry refers to it as “the process by which war and national security became consuming anxieties and provided the memories, models, and metaphors that shaped broad areas of national life” (1995:x). The most recent consolidation of control over the weaponry of war reaffirms the validity of the anxieties over the “danger” the world presents to our country. Yet this view leaves unspoken, untouched by doubt, any other readings of the nature of the international order, the American place in it, and the American state itself. Freud made it easy for modern writers and critics to recognize that views left unspoken are often views that cannot be spoken lest they expose the gossamer origins of received truths. What we call a national state is neither natural nor god-given but a relatively modern social production; it is not a thing, despite our language, but a set of social practices, a ritual of power “in which things are constituted in the process of dealing with them” (Campbell 1992:a). A state bears itself existence through discursive and social practices that produce its identity by defining it against difference. State boundaries, discursive as well as physical, mark “domestic” from “foreign,” “inside” from “outside,” safety from danger. These distinctions turn on representational acts and, as Campbell observes, the ability to represent things as alien, subservive, dirty or sick, has been pivotal to the articulation of danger in the American experience” (1992:a). Cuiny’s “memories, models, and metaphors” are among the interpretative acts that have naturalized national security and shaped us as citizens rather than raising questions about the emperor’s clothes.

The dependency of these interpretative acts upon an unacknowledged debt to female otherness both hides and paradoxically points to the crucial role of gender in militarization. Elizabeth Grosz, reading Luce Irigaray, assists in understanding another aspect of the anxieties which generate the bellicosity/insecurity that is understood as national security. Masculine modes of thought, she writes, tend “to deny and cover over the debt of life and existence that all subjects, and indeed all theoretical frameworks, owe to the maternal body, their elaborate attempts to foreclose and build over this space with their own (sexually specific) fantastic and paranoid projections,” (1992:12). The violence of the denial and the ontological scale of the debt generate the anxieties as men “hollow out their own interiors and project them outward” as a knowable universe, as forms of valid knowledge and practices (i.e., philosophy, science, religion, geography, urban planning),

"Telling our history of the militarized present of Hawai‘i entails paying attention to the process of how these observations are facts, of how they qualify to enter into discourse, to be spoken and understood, contested or taken for granted."
"Hawai‘i is coded as a soft, feminine, welcoming place, waiting and receptive."

In a sense, homoerotic attraction is the necessary and, at the same time, repressed Other to heterosexuality. It is common, within military forces, to talk about male bonding among soldiers, to legitimate affection among men while still embracing homophobia and patriarchy. It is common, between military forces, to have soldiers express admiration for a worthy opponent or contempt for a weak one. Both configurations of fear and anxiety interact to produce the unique gendered opportunities in war, for men to both love each other and kill each other, usually in the name of something coded feminine—motherland, home, family, motherhood; freedom, fortune, destiny.

Colonization takes place, in part, when powerful military men are able to take a great deal of authority away from previous, often local, elites. When the powerful military men are mostly white, and the local elites are mostly men of color, colonial race relations are intertwined with power's erotic horizons and zones. The metaphorical place of Hawai‘i in colonial encounters is not only the damsel in distress, but also the attractive, desirable site that provokes men to fight for her.

On yet another level, of course, Hawai‘i is simply valuable real estate, a great piece to be possessed. Gendered metaphors circulate madly in the colonial encounter, typically encoding a suppressed homoeroticism into a framework of patriarchy. The result is not usually good for women, or the land, or for any who are vulnerable or marginal.

Thinking/Writing Order

Central to the streams of order that converge and rebound on Hawai‘i’s present are particular organizations of sex, race, and class as triads of vectors of power: sex/gender, race/ethnicity, and class/property. As Anne McClintock demonstrates, these three critical dimensions of power relations in colonized places act as “articulated categories” which “come into existence in and through relations to each other” (1995:5). Each is always already marked with the historical patterns and practices, the cultural coherence and ambiguity, the institutional distributions and erasures carried by the others. Race/ethnicity always affixes itself to laboring or non-laboring bodies and to gendered relationships; sex/gender always marks persons to whom particular colors and classes are simultaneously attributed and enforced; labor is always organized, and property defined and distributed, among groups also ordered around reproductive functions, sexual practices, and color coding. Imperial conquest is inter-digitated with the cult of domesticity and the global political economy (McClintock 1995:17).

The terms of these energetic, interactive triangles chase and dodge around one another, powerfully enabling each other while sometimes getting in each other’s way, confounding their dance steps even while producing the following triadic permutations: male power, white power, and commodity capital; female sexuality, cannibalism, and plunder; child-rearing practices, missionary schools, and plantation labor; population control, origin stories, and the market; penetration/emasculature, conquest/engulfment, and appropriation/absorption.

Tracking these three interaminating, mutating axes of power requires simultaneous attention to the tangible productions and distributions of land, labor, schools, churches, families, and wars, and to the acts of speech and silence which produce and enforce meaning claims in discourse. Discourse does not relate to the material realm as a hidden meaning standing behind the surface, but as an “unsusceptible dialectic of saying and seeing” (Jay 1994:398) encountering both the persistent “mateness of objects” as well as their availability (Foucault in Jay 1994:398). What can be said/written/understood is always already interacting with what can be seen/grasped/seized in ways that are both mutually constitutive and conditioned to incompleteness.

Colonial Encounters: Fear and Longing

There is an uneasy combination of fears and longings in the colonial encounter arising from the tension between the availability of Hawai‘i to the newcomer’s eye and the resistance of Hawai‘i to the colonial gaze. The emotional registers in which colonial discursive and institutional practices were most commonly intoned reflected the restless mixture of desire and anxiety identified by Grosz and McClintock. In the latter’s words, ‘the inaugural scene of discovery becomes a scene of ambivalence, suspended between an imperial megalomania, with its fantasy of unstoppable rape, and a contradictory fear of engulfment, with its fantasy of disembemberment and emasculation. The scene, like many imperial scenes, is a document both of paranoia and of megalomania’ (McClintock 1995:26-27). The colonizers of Hawai‘i brought with them both a profound sense of entitlement and a fear of engulfment. While the information they gathered and the relations into which they entered were largely guided by the seizures they sought, there remained an unsettling incompleteness. They were both animated and disturbed: Hawai‘i’s perceived deficiencies provoked both desire (take it, fill it, make it ours) and anxiety (it’s different, it’s not like us, it’s looking back at us). In sexual terms, like the vagina (dentata) that is thought both to require the penis for fulfillment and simultaneously threatens to sever it, Hawai‘i both beckons and disturbs its newcomers.

"The colonizers of Hawai‘i brought with them both a profound sense of entitlement and a fear of engulfment."

The history of the present in Hawai‘i emerged from its encounters with Western explorers, missionaries, entrepreneurs, and sugar planters, all propelled by different mixtures of longing and trepidation. The explorers encountered a place they defined as largely empty of meaning, lacking in culture, and therefore available for Western expansion. The missionaries found a people they defined as dark, mysterious, lacking civilization but capable of being domesticated. Entrepreneurs and sugar planters found the people lacking industry, the land uncultivated, but a promising venue for profit once an appropriate labor force could be secured. The military saw/sees Hawai‘i as strategically important
and in need of defense which imported American soldiers can supply. The traffic in workers and soldiers finds parallel in the commerce of bodies across borders that tourism produces and celebrates. Each of these vectors of conquest knits Hawai‘i more firmly into a masculine colonized discourse of darkness, availability, and lack.

**Missionaries, Mission, and Megalomania**

We read the footprints of the missionaries back into the particular political scene of Hawai‘i via their contributions to the phallic, colonial gaze on the Island Other. Where planters and entrepreneurs were to see an empty or virginial land, capable of great fecundity, the New England missionaries foresaw a space filled with persons who for "long and dismal ages of darkness" had been "perspiring for lack of knowledge." In the instructions issued in 1819 by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) (1819-25) to the first company of missionaries to leave for Hawai‘i, anticipated a population upon whom the "Sun of Righteousness" had never risen, and who were living in the "ruddest state of uncultured man." For the 73 missionaries who constituted The Mission, that vision was to become father to the fact. Carriers of the colonial order, they violently elaborated the narrative of their Instructions which legitimated supplanting the indigenous social order with their own through an interplay of intractable maintenance of boundaries and boundary assaults. That their good works benefitted them the most has not gone without notice. Less has been said about the male megalomania and the paranoia which the gendered order of The Mission itself.

"The darkness which the missionaries had pledged themselves to end was at the same time boundless and threatening, arousing the fear of loss of their own boundaries."

For McClintock, the megalomania announces itself in the feminization of land, a strategy she terms a "Violet Containment" (1995:23). The Mission’s representation of Hawaiians as heathens was similarly a manic act, cohabited by paranoia. The darkness which the missionaries had pledged themselves to end was at the same time boundless and threatening, arousing the fear of loss of their own boundaries. To avoid their engulfment by the disorder of the unknown, they zealously rode shotgun on their own perimeters and organized mapping expeditions into the liminal space of darkness. Their efforts at neutralizing what McClintock terms the fears of "narcissistic disorder by reinscribing, as natural, an excess of gender hierarchy" (1995:23) were written all over the institutional practices of the governing board of the missions and were constitutive of the daily practices of missionary families in Hawai‘i.

The ABCFM refused to send single men as missionaries because, as Patricia Grimshaw writes, "the experience of celibate men in the Tahitian mission of the London Missionary Society had established clearly that, in the midst of a Polynesian community, celibate men were at risk from the sexual openness of the society" (1989:6). Fearing the moral contamination and decline threatened by sexual congress with native women, yet requiring the services of women who could be counted on to "serve discreetly at the elbow of power...upholding the boundaries of empire and bearing its sons and daughters" (McClintock 1995:6), the Board mandated that missionaries be married prior to their departure. Faced with this hurdle, some of them set about acquiring a wife much as they must have gone about equipping themselves with the other "laboratories necessary as an outfit to the Sandwich Islands" (Simpson 1993:28). But rather than purchasing brides, they interviewed for them. Grimshaw credits the ABCFM with brokering some of the marriages. Some indication of the excess of this aggressively gendered order is evidenced in the marriage of Dwight Baldwin and Charlotte Fowler, who sailed for Hawai‘i one week after their first meeting (Grimshaw 1989:12). Nothing was left to chance in bringing order to the missionaries’ erotic lives before inserting them into Hawai‘i’s spaces.

**Missionary Reproductions**

Once in Hawai‘i, the patriarchal spatialization unfolded. Boundary patrols were established, a new technology of knowledge instituted, and bourgeois domesticity urged upon the indigenous people even as the Mission order quickly begat itself. Seventy of the total of seventy-six missionary wives who lived in Hawai‘i for more than several years bore children at regular intervals (Grimshaw 1989:89). Missionary wife Sarah Lyman, in a recent history of the family, reveals, was evidently a bit out of step since it was thought remarkable that she “did not get pregnant for more than a year after the Lymans arrived in the Islands” (Simpson 1993:62). Thirty-eight wives who lived in Hawai‘i during their fertile years bore two hundred and fifty infants (Grimshaw 1989:89). In positioning them as helpmeetes, as the ABCFM did in its Instructions (1819-25), the wives reproduced the gender division of labor reminiscent of the domestic economy of many small businesses of professional households in New England (Grimshaw 1989:103). The women’s boundary maintenance work supported the men’s hallowed space, creating a comfortable home as a reassuring basis for the work of the male, and providing a “suitable” environment for the children of his name. One danger entailed in childrearing was the constant appearance of evil in the actions of children. Then, as now (we are told), eternal vigilance was the price of security; mothers sought to prevent their children from playing with native children, assumed to be naturally depraved, or acquiring their language, thought to be heathen and lewd.

Hawaiian bodies were particularly threatening: comfortably large, half-clad in the eyes of the beholders, and bearing none of the confining marks of a familiar order as they went about their hedonistic and heathen ways of life. The hula in particular seems to have represented a threat of engulfment and anxiety of tidal wave proportions. Understanding few, if any, of the words of the chants accompanying the hula, neither could the missionaries see the beauty and grace in the erotic vigor of the dance and dancers. Instead, they read it as pornography on the hoof. Keeping this threat of bodies at bay, but never fully overcoming it, consisted of two kinds of restrictions: clothing the offending Hawaiian bodies and discouraging hula on the one hand; on the other, rigorously restraining their own bodies, foreign alike to themselves and to these shores, in long-sleeves, high collars, cravats, trousers, long skirts, bonnets, and bound hair.

A final move in the effort to map domesticity on the social space of the Hawaiians was the attempt to introduce the concept of marriage and female submissiveness among those native to Hawai‘i. The bourgeois family order—conjugal, autonomous, exogenous—promoted by The Mission was no match for the dense Hawaiian kinship relations through which children were cared for and food was caught, grown and pooled. Frequent visits among these rich social networks involved much travel about and between the islands by the natives whose shifting about was interpreted as shiftlessness by their would-be tutors. But missionary gestures toward domestication suggest the interactive enablement of patriarchal domestic order and racist imperial order. Dark people are figured in colonial discourse as ‘gender deviants, the embodiments of prehistoric promiscuity and excess, their evolutionary belatedness evidenced by their ‘feminine’ lack of history, reason, and
proper domestic arrangements" (McClimock 1995:44). It was hierarchical relations between women and men in European domestic space that offered just the right model, in imperial eyes, for organizing relations between dark people and white men in colonial spaces.  

By 1832 it had become apparent to the missionaries who conducted the first rough census that much of the traffic by native bodies had become one-way. The number of the indigenous population had plummeted to 190,000. Whether the number plunged from the 400,000 estimated by Cook’s expedition or the 800,000–1,000,000 figure set by Cook Stannard is, despite its significance otherwise, not at issue here. Rather, it is that the recoding of the land and people was enormously facilitated by the loss of those thousands of bodies, and the rupture of the social relations and ways of life of a people. What Hawaiian bodies lacked was not the proper order—Christian, mercantile, or literate—but the crucial antibodies against the invading bodies.

This dramatic drop in population made clear to the missionaries that the licentious ways of the Hawaiians had caught up with them and confirmed both the wrongness of the Hawaiian way of life and the rightness of the Mission’s re-ordering goal. The discursive violence continues today in various forms of denial and victim blaming and an emphatic view that we must ‘put the regrettable accident behind us.” To make roadkill of the Hawaiians is to deny the violence of the explorers’ feminization of the land and its recapitulation in the heathenization of its people by the Mission. For both, as for the later planters, the military, and tourism champions, their gaze strategically encompassed the rulers and chiefs, while the people were motes in their eyes at best. Lacking personhood, the natives were a distorted screen upon which the carriers of the new orders projected their desires and rages. The dilemma inherent in the missionaries’ gaze is illustrated in Susan Griffin’s distinction between two senses of grasping. One is "to seize, and grip, as in wrest power from the grasp of or grasp a woman by her waist" (emphasis original) (Griffin 1992:212). This is the power of domination, the commanding grip or the judging gaze. The other way of understanding is enacted more by a mobile glance than a fixating gaze (Jay 1994:56–57). “It lies in grasping a truth which is “a delicate gesture, like taking a hand in greeting. A lightness of touch is needed if one is to feel the presence of another being” (Griffin 1992:212). The lightness of the touch of the Other was precisely the boundary crossing simultaneously most desired and feared by the missionary males and their grasping fellow scribes who sought the seductive promise of encounters with difference while simultaneously pushing the frightening difference to the forbidden category of absolute Other (Cornell 1991). In order to shore up their nearly breached perimeters, males in the mission overzealously imprinted their truth, an “excess of gender hierarchy,” on the realm of dark Hawai’i instead.

Military Traffic

Waves wash up on beaches and then recede, some of the flotsam is carried far enough to resist the suction of the water which takes the rest back. The deposits on the shore are subject to continual suction and movement, but some also become embedded in the sand. There is rarely a specific moment in the usual work of the ocean when an object can be said to be washed up on the shore; rather, that occurs over time. Similarly, it is difficult to name a moment when the military order became embedded in Hawai’i. It occurred in a series of developments, some of those “moments of intensity...lapses...periods of feverish agitation...fainting spells” (Foucault 1977:145).

From the outset, the haptic military gaze was more focused on Hawai’i itself than its people. European ships, soon followed by American ones, were the flotsam carrying the first intimations of such an order. James Cook and George Vancouver, the earliest of the European explorers, were commissioned officers in the Royal Navy, and British ships sailed with Cook. Cook supplied Kamehameha I with Western military technology. British ships visiting within a few years carried on a regular arms trade with various chiefs, and the trading ships themselves were usually armed. Some Britons coveted both Hawaiian land and commercial advantage and ridiculed the narrow order American missionaries were attempting to shape, but Hawai’i ultimately proved not to be an object of British imperial lust.

American military interest in Hawai’i was first signalled in 1826 when American naval warships began to call at Hawai’i. They joined French and British warships in doing so (Kuykendall 1957:91–92). As it grew and sharpened, American military desire for Hawai’i was often cystotile to the diastole of the economy. Both forces found Hawai’i lacking and in need of their projection(s) for it. The planters’ trajectory of desire propelled them through land acquisition to sugar cultivation to annexation via a Reciprocity Treaty which assured both duty free entry into the United States for their sugar and exclusive American rights to Pearl Harbor. The military’s desiring arc, sheathed as the duty to say “Hands off Hawai’i” to all other nations, represents desire for Hawai’i itself (Schofield, Beardslee & Egan 1898:8). Duty’s path was episodic but focused; it included the extensive mapping and surveying of the islands carried out by the United States Exploring Expedition led by Navy Lieutenant Charles Wilkes. Maps are portraits, laced with power, and groaning with land use commitments. These new visions of land were soon to rewrite the Hawaiian land violently, replacing the ways of Hawai’i where land had been mapped in language and kapu.

The end of the American Civil War made it possible to intensify the scopic gaze. An early version of the modern “revolving door” circulation of military bodies among various kinds of governing boards saw generals and colonels from that conflict turn up in Hawai’i as American diplomatic officials, as official couriers disguised as cotton planters, and as veterans seeking to regain their health but actually ordered to carry out a survey of Hawai’i’s defensive capabilities, commercial facilities and any other information that might be useful to the United States in case of a war “with a powerful maritime nation” (Kuykendall 1966:248). It freed up enough warships to constitute a Pacific Squadron which called often at Honolulu. A rehearsal for the overthrow of the Hawaiian government occurred in 1874 when one hundred and fifty American Marines were landed to quell protests and a small riot that occurred after the defeat of Queen Emma in her election race with David Kalākaua (Daws 1968:198–199).

Military desire again intersected with economic interests in the renewal of the Reciprocity Treaty that gave the planters free entry of their sugar into American markets and the United States (military) exclusive access to the resources of Pearl Harbor (Lind 1984: 86–86). The U.S.S. Boston, a state of the art warship, was a frequent caller in Hawai’i at this time. The steps leading to the forcible abduction of Hawai’i became increasingly bold. The most violent occurred in 1893 with the American military as a guarantor in the overthrow of the reigning monarch by a small band of American and other foreign businessmen. Rather than risk armed combat and the shedding of Hawaiian blood, Queen
Lili‘uokalani surrendered her land to the United States, not the local schemers, voicing her confidence that once the United States government knew of the crime, the land would be restored as had been the case with England in 1683. The Queen was tragically wrong. Hawai‘i was an object of American desire.

Since annexation, the continuing arrival of boats and planes loaded with military equipment, materials, personnel and families has relentlessly written military order onto Hawai‘i’s geographic and social spaces. On O‘ahu today a significant amount of the land and the population are military. ‘Hula girls’ great incoming ships which discharge soldiers onto the beaches or often into the_ jalousies and indwelling of Waikiki, K‘e‘aukuu Street, and other districts where commercial and erotic desire intermingle. Hawai‘i’s continuing appropriation and organization according to military desire constitutes Hawai‘i’s sometimes as welcoming, sometimes as seductive, and routinely, international contests, in need of defense, but always written on the parapet of the hapa‘maka‘i gazing gaze.

The mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and diachronic projections “that have played across the history of Hawai‘i’s militarized project” configure and recalculate the topological territory through the engines of anxiety and desire (Nietzsche 1966). Historically contingent on one another, the gaze of explorers, missionaries, planters, soldiers, and tourists (partly on Hawai‘i and partly on themselves) function as mobilizing phallic, racial, and property signifiers to know, to relate, and to socio-rehabilitating Hawai‘i, its land and its people, into the supporting cast of the historical “play of dominations.” We question the price of this hegemonic order.

Notes

1. Best known in Hawai‘i are Pearl Harbor Naval Base, Hickam Air Force Base, Kane‘ohe Marine Corps Base Hawai‘i, Schofield Barracks Military Reservation, Fort Shafter Military Reservation, Wheeler Air Force Base, and Camp H. M. Smith. There are scattered holdings elsewhere in the state. Estimates of the military’s landholdings in the state are notoriously vague, ranging from just a few square miles up to hundreds of thousands. Of course, this number varies with military changes. The point is that with this, as with other important data such as landholdings, the state of Hawai‘i, according to its recently retired State Statistician, is “repeatably less than exact knowledge of either the numbers of military personnel and dependents or total defense expenditures in Hawai‘i.” (Schmitt 1993). The State of Hawai‘i (1996) further warns readers that “considerable caution is necessary in comparing statistics from different sources on land use, ownership, or tenure” (Hawai‘i LEED 1997, 27). Regardless of these differences, one need only drive persistently around the island of O‘ahu, or consult the aerial map of military holdings at the front of the telephone directory of installations on the island, to be impressed with the extent of the military’s use of Hawai‘i’s land.

2. These elisions of sex/gender and race/ethnicity are taken from Dumas (1996).

3. The accumulated literature about the missionaries in Hawai‘i is extensive and ranges from the self-congratulatory to the severely critical. We do not attempt an annotated bibliography here but offer a selection of the range. Bishop (1986); Dobson (1985); Simpson (1993); Kaukendal (1997); Greenlaw (1989); Buck (1989); Kees (1989); Tsuk (1989); Kane (1990).

4. This border leaked away. While the first missionary children were packed off early to families in New England, by the 1840s they stayed in Hawai‘i and went to Punahou, a school newly-founded for them and some Chiefly offspring. Many missionary children were bilingual, but did not display this language ability within the missionary circle.

5. Sarah Lyman wrote of the “profouso” waste of time spent surfing. “You have probably heard that playing on the surf board was a favourite amusement at ancient times. It is too much practised at the present day, and is the laudor of much intrepacity, inasmuch as it leads to intercourse with the sea without discrimination” (Simpson 1993, 43). Kathie Kane is not the only one to read undetermined from window deposit pious deposit into such passages, but we think her for not being able to pass it up.

6. Noone Silva (see her article in this volume) has recently recovered the importance of the Hī‘akaiakapōleole legend for understanding Hawaiian gender was conducted in the Hawaiian order. This legend celebrates a strong, inventive, and reflective woman. Lincoln (1999) documents the strength, autonomy, and high rank of chiefly women.

7. Venerable disease spread from Kaua‘i to Hawai‘i in the ten months between Cook’s first call at the southwest island and his return to the southeast one from the Pacific Northwest. It was a new in Foucault’s “effective history” language of domination as “the removal of a relationship of forces, the usurpation of power, the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it...” (Foucault 1977). The traditional Hawaiian way of assigning rights was not working. Although the Hawaiian people showed considerable aloha‘a‘ina in dealing with the new ways of commerce being introduced by the early traders—trading, whaling—they were being strictly untenable by the gems the early traders had brought with them. It was into this time of discontinuities, reversals, etc., that the missionaries had stepped.

8. This merits an extended discussion not possible here. See Bushnell (1986); Starnard (1998).

9. Governor Territorial Governor Walter F. Frear wrote that owing to psychological causes, the Pacific people were not on a scaffold before the white man; thus, their decline was inevitable (1916, 3). A. A. Leiply had great praise for the missionaries for “planting Christianity here by acts of goodness,” and countering the immorality and license of Western traders who “had preceded them with arms, alcohol, and disease” (1999, 43).


11. Gent. B. S. Alexander and John H. Schellard were among the poorly disguised spits assessing the military needs of the islands. Their report emphasized the value of Pearl Harbor and the disclosed means of establishing base naval and commercial purposes. Among these recommenders was one first proposed by Linneb. Williams a survey of the corral bar at the entrance to provide for easier penetration by naval vessels (Kaukendal 1960, 276).

12. Four bounders of Harvard from the U.S. Boston landed near the Palace and government buildings, not near the American properties a few blocks away.

13. See note 1.
References


DiPalma, Carolyn. 1996. "Ethnicity and Specificity Written as the Body: Sex, Gender, Race, Ethnicity in Feminist Theory," Ph.D. dissertation. Department of Political Science, University of Hawai‘i, Honolulu, HI.


Once, asked why I was a prison doctor, I said,

"Because I want to work for the abolition of prisons."

Many problems I've seen in prisons
would benefit from health or social solutions
rather than criminal justice penalties—especially for
incarcerated women. Sadly, although I said this more
than a decade ago, the reverse trend has
become true in America. It's discouraging,
but I will not give up the struggle.

—Kim Marie Thorburn
Introduction

Since the early 1980s, incarcerated populations in the United States have been increasing dramatically. Overall, the per capita rate of incarceration tripled during the decade ending in 1990. More importantly, the growth of incarcerated women outpaced that of men in many jurisdictions.

"...the growth of incarcerated women outpaced that of men in many jurisdictions."

In Hawai‘i, the growth of the correctional population parallels national trends, but the in-custody women's population remains quite stable (Table I). However, the stability of the daily population of incarcerated women in Hawai‘i can be attributed to the Spears consent decree, a federal court mandate regarding conditions of incarceration at O‘ahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) and the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC). The court order includes maximum population caps at these two facilities which house the majority of women inmates in the state.

Table I. Hawai‘i Female Inmate Year-End "Headcount"

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prison</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hawai‘i PSD (1996a).

In short, the daily population of incarcerated women in Hawai‘i is a poor description of women impacted by the state’s correctional system. The Hawai‘i Department of Public Safety (PSD) complies with the court-ordered population requirements by moving women quickly in and out of WCCC. This results in a high population turnover, as reflected in the 1995 year-end figure for women under the correctional jurisdiction of Hawai‘i published in the Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin Prison and Jail Inmates, 1995. Three hundred twelve women were in this category, which includes women in custody of the prisons and jails and also, in community programs under the jurisdiction of Hawai‘i’s correctional authority. This number grew by 21.4% in one year (U. S. DOJ 1996).

Another population control measure for WCCC is the detention of women in neighbor island community correctional centers which are not designed to accommodate them. The number of women held in the community correctional centers on Maui, Hawai‘i and Kaua‘i has increased in recent years and, combined with the number being held at OCCC, already exceeds the capacity of a new dormitory at WCCC.

A Profile of Incarcerated Women

Women are a small fraction of incarcerated populations (Table II), but as their numbers are increasing at such rapid rates, they deserve our attention.

Table II. Number and Proportion of Incarcerated Women, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>U. S.</th>
<th>Hawai‘i</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In Custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>68,544</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: U. S. DOJ (1996); Hawai‘i PSD (1996a).

A 1985 study of prisons, jails and community correctional programs in 14 states profiled the typical female inmate as "less than 30 years of age, non-white, unmarried with two children...less than adequate education, and often...from an impoverished background" (McGaha 1987). The profile has not changed in subsequent nationwide surveys (ACA 1990; U. S. DOJ 1994). A 1992 survey of female prisons found that the average offender dropped out of high school and did not have a graduate equivalent degree (GED). Her work experience was in sales or services but most have not been able to hold jobs for more than 6 months (Corrections Compendium 1992).

A 1996 study of a high-risk group of incarcerated women in Hawai‘i with the United States incarcerated female population. The figures show many parallels but also some differences. Hawai‘i’s incarcerated women are less likely to have come from single parent households and more likely to have completed high school. But they are more likely to be unemployed.

Crimes of Women

The crimes for which women are incarcerated differ from those of men (Table IV). Men are incarcerated more often for violent offenses. Women tend to be in institutions because of drug and property offenses. And the differences in the Hawai‘i correctional population offense data are even more striking than the national comparisons.
Table III. Profile of Incarcerated Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-white</th>
<th>64%</th>
<th>72% (52% Hawaiian/part Hawaiian)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood household without both parents</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education = high school no GED</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed at time of arrest</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried at time of arrest</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children &lt; age 18</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table IV. Offenses of U.S. and Hawai'i Incarcerated Populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Women</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawai'i Women</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

U.S. DOJ (1993, 1996); Hawai'i Department of Public Safety does not present this data segregated by gender. Hawai'i PSD (1996a); Goldkuhl (1999).

Health Needs of Incarcerated Women

One indicator of the special health care needs of female correctional inmates is cost. In fiscal year 1993, the annual cost of medical care in WCC was $280,000 or $4,455 per inmate, approximately one and a half times the average expenditure of $254,000 or $3,700 per inmate in male facilities of comparable size (Hawai'i PSD 1993).

The higher costs for health care of incarcerated females are not limited to Hawai'i. A 1996 survey of health services for incarcerated women found that the costs of women's health services were higher than men's in 21 of 29 state and federal correctional systems in which the information was available. Costs were noted to be gender equal in six systems and lower in two systems (Weiss 1996).

Several health needs are unique to women inmates. Ideally, programs to meet these needs should be integrated into the health services for incarcerated women. These include programs for: 1) substance abuse; 2) physical and sexual abuse; 3) mental health; 4) reproductive health; 5) pregnancy; and 6) postpartum care.

This paper will discuss these and make recommendations.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse interventions are essential to the health care of incarcerated women. Consideration of the substance abuse patterns of women is important for program development. For example, crack cocaine use and habitation is more common in imprisoned women than men. Nineteen percent of women in prison nationwide in 1991 used crack in the month before incarceration compared to 12% of men (U.S. DOJ 1993). Similar patterns exist in Hawai'i. A 1995 study of substance abuse patterns among the correctional population of Hawai'i demonstrated a higher proportion of poly-substance abuse among women (50%) as compared to men (44%) (Chamber & Kesselbaum 1997).

Furthermore, social linkages to drug use must be considered in substance abuse treatment programs for incarcerated women. Often there are dependent relationships with men who share drug habits and/or may pester women to obtain money for drugs. Exchange of sex for drugs is a common practice (Kelhaw et al. 1993).
By most estimates, approximately three quarters of female inmates would benefit from substance abuse interventions (U. S. DOJ 1993; Corrections Compendium 1992). Surveys indicate that only about 10 to 15% of correctional institutions have organized substance abuse treatment programs with the exception of volunteers who facilitate Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings (Corrections Compendium 1993). To be effective, substance abuse treatment of incarcerated women has to deal with a broad range of dependencies. It should be formulated as intensive psychosocial modalities that include work on relationships and economic self-sufficiency.

One common model is the residential-treatment therapeutic community which provides a total-abstinence, supportive environment. Therapeutic community program components typically include drug screening, AA, NA, anger management groups, and job and other life-skills training. Programs for women also include work on other dependencies which correlate with drug use, such as relationship choices.

Hawaii has one in-custody therapeutic community called Ho'oma'na (empowerment). The women reside in WCCC in a unit separate from the rest of the inmate population. The residents participate in some of the prison's regular programs along with the therapeutic community programs.

Physical and Sexual Abuse

A large proportion of incarcerated women report lives filled with abuse, including sexual abuse, domestic violence and other dysfunctional relationships. Approximately one third of jailed and imprisoned women reported sexual abuse before age 18 (U. S. DOJ 1992).

Twenty-four percent of the women in prison had been sexually abused after age 18. One third of female inmates reported being sexually abused and one third, physically abused, before they entered prison. Female inmates were more than three times as likely as male inmates to sustain physical or sexual abuse prior to incarceration (U. S. DOJ 1993; 1994).

The 1992 analysis of the WCCC population revealed 66% of the women reporting histories of physical abuse and just over a quarter experiencing sexual abuse (Goldkuleh 1995). Furthermore, the magnitude of the experience of abuse in the lives of incarcerated women may be underreported in surveys. Women may be willing to discuss this sensitive topic only after developing a trusting relationship. The 1983 study of 16 of 24 incarcerated women in Hawaii which involved in-depth interviews after establishing rapport determined that almost all the women received brutal discipline which often amounted to abuse as children and over 60% were sexually abused by relatives (Chesney-Lind & Rodriguez 1983).

The health consequences of abusive relationships underlie the needs of incarcerated women throughout the spectrum of health care. First mental health services for incarcerated females must deal with disorders resulting from traumatic stress. Recognition of the association of dependent, dysfunctional relationships and sexual exploitation with substance abuse behaviors of women is important in program development. Reproductive health problems may also result from sexual exploitation.

The problem of abusive relationships may not end with incarceration. In 1992 two jurisdictions, Hawaii and Georgia, launched investigations of sexual abuse of female inmates by correctional staff. In Hawaii, the investigations resulted in indictments but no convictions (Magda 1993). In Georgia, there have been convictions of involved staff. And many experts believe that the problem of sexual exploitation of female inmates by staff is much more common than what has been detected (Repleke 1992; Tyson 1996).

Systematic documentation about sex abuse treatment in correctional facilities is not available. The need for it may be obscured by a history of prostitution among many female inmates. However, access to rape treatment centers should be considered at least at the point when sexual exploitation within facilities comes to light. The systems in Hawaii and Georgia turned to these resources as women came forward with their experiences.

The Hawaii's system also evaluated staff attitudes and needs about inmate sexual abuse in order to develop a training program to deal with female inmates. The initial needs assessment identified institutional, inmate and staff factors that contribute to the risk for abuse. Since most of the incidents were identified as pseudo-consensual as opposed to nonconsensual, recognizing the inmate's participation in the behavior (bartering or pseudo-love), the study concluded that a strong institutional message must be conveyed that sexual relationships are not acceptable nor legal under any circumstance (KMCWC 1993).

A subsequent study identified objectification of inmates, social support deprivation (in part due to long staff overtime hours) and acceptance of rape myths as important risk factors for sexual abuse of the incarcerated female population in Hawaii. Gender of the staff perpetrator was not a risk; both female and male staff participated in inmate sexual abuse but nonconsensual sex was more frequently perpetrated by males and the risk factors varied between genders (Calhoun 1996).

Mental Health

Severe mental disorders, such as schizophrenia, manic depressive illness, and psychotic depression, are increasingly prevalent in incarcerated populations. Most systems report that 10% or more of inmate populations suffer from severe mental disorders (Hermann, McGarry, Mills & Singh 1991).

The increasing number of severely mentally ill people in jails and prisons means that correctional mental health services must shift their focus from evaluation and reporting to courts and parole boards to the provision of treatment for psychotic and other severely mentally ill inmates. The mainstay is prescription of psychotropic medications.
Five hundred twenty-one unduplicated prescriptions for psychiatric medications were issued at WCCC in 1994, three to five times the number of such prescriptions in male facilities of comparable size (Hawaii’s PSD 1994). Since there is no evidence that the proportion of severe mental illness varies between the incarcerated male or female populations in Hawaii, it appears that the use of psychiatric prescriptions for women differs from their use for men. These preliminary data do not provide information about whether provider or patient factors or both contributed to the increased usage of psychiatric medications by women. It does, however, raise questions about the possible overuse of medication for women. Furthermore, the phenomenon of excessive prescription of psychiatric medications for incarcerated women may not be limited to Hawaii. In California, women inmates litigated alleged inappropriate prescription of psychiatric medications (Espinoza 1993).

Psychosocial intervention models are also needed to deal with the mental and emotional problems of incarcerated women. Mental health needs of incarcerated women often center around concerns over family separation. Lives of abuse, dependency, and traumatic stress lead to low self-esteem and mental disorders, such as disabling anxiety and depression.

The mental health staff at WCCC consists of a psychiatric social worker and part-time psychologist and psychiatrist. In 1994, WCCC recorded 1,546 visits to the psychiatric social worker. This is over two thirds the number of psychiatric social worker visits at OCCC, a facility more than seven times as large. There were 974 visits to the psychologist, almost two thirds the number of psychiatric visits at OCCC. The psychologist position was vacant (Hawaii’s PSD 1994). At OCCC in 1995, women received more than twice as many referrals for mental health evaluations as men during admission screening (Shibata 1996). This high usage of mental health services by the incarcerated women in Hawaii may well reflect an expression of their psychosocial needs.

Preventive Services

Preventive health care of incarcerated women, intended to detect and treat risks or asymptomatic early disease, cannot be accomplished by a sick-call model of service delivery. Sexually transmitted disease (STD) and cervical cancer prevalence among female inmate populations indicates that thorough gynecological examinations, including Pap smears and screening tests for STDs, must be a component of intake health assessments (Ingram Fogel 1993; Moran & Peterman 1989; Bickell, Vermund, Holmes, Safyer & Burk 1993).

Currently the community standard is that Papanicolaou smears are regularly repeated in sexually active women in WCCC. Breast examinations and age-appropriate mammography should also be components of routine gynecological care. Family planning services should be included in preventive health care of women of reproductive age as well.

Women represent the highest incidence of new HIV infections in many communities and incarcerated women come from populations with high-risk behaviors. Ideally, management of HIV infection includes early detection so that preventive interventions, such as immunizations, treatment of tuberculosis co-infections, and antiretroviral therapy, can be provided while the immune system is still intact.

A physician from the Hawaii’s Department of Health STD/AIDS Branch provides these gynecological screening evaluations for newly admitted women at WCCC. And nurse practitioners provide preventive and health maintenance services to Hawaii’s incarcerated women. Nutrition counseling from a dietitian is also available. HIV testing is voluntary in the Hawaii’s correctional system but the policy is to encourage testing in order to provide early interventions when infection is diagnosed.

Reproductive Health

The sexual histories of many incarcerated women (including intercourse at a young age and multiple partners) place them at risk for STDs and their complications (Bickell et al. 1991). Some jurisdictions test women inmates for STDs, such as gonorrhea, syphilis and chlamydia, upon admission to the facility and rates of infection are usually higher than community rates (Moran & Peterman 1989). STDs are associated with other gynecological diseases, such as cervical cancer and pelvic inflammatory disease, and with pregnancy complications, such as tubal pregnancies and miscarriages.

A study of 101 women in Riker’s Island found that 27% had chlamydial cervical infections, 8% had gonorrhea, and 16% had syphilis (Holmes et al. 1993). In a Nassau County (New York) Jail study, syphilis rates were higher among women than men (Heimberger et al. 1993). Thirty-five percent of women in Riker’s Island had papillomavirus which causes venereal warts and is associated with cervical cancer. In the same study, 9% of the women had abnormal Papanicolaou (Pap) smears, the test that screens for cervical cancer and premalignancy (Bickell et al. 1991). Twenty-five percent of women inmates reported STDs and 75% had abnormal Pap smears in a North Carolina prison (Ingram Fogel 1991). Hawaii’s provides Pap smears and screening for gonorrhea, chlamydia and other vaginal infections, and syphilis on admission but cumulative data are not available.

In most systems that systematically evaluate HIV infection, rates are higher among female inmates than males. HIV seroprevalence on admission to 10 selected jails and all federal and state prisons ranged from 2.7% to 14.7% for women compared to 2.1% to 7.6% for men (U. S. DOJ 1993). Between 1988 and 1994, the state Department of Health HIV Seroprevalence Program blind tested serum specimens on inmates arriving at OCCC and WCCC. By 1994, 2.4% of inmates entering these facilities were infected with HIV but no new cases were detected in women (Hawaii’s PSD 1995). These figures are slightly lower than national rates, where in 1994, 2.4% of incarcerated men and 1.9% of incarcerated women in the United States were known to be infected with HIV (Weiss 1996).

While data are lacking, it is the anecdotal experience of correctional health professionals that menstrual problems are prevalent among incarcerated females (Ingram Fogel 1993).
In 1995, there were 29 pregnant women in the Hawaii state prison system and three in the federal prison system, with 27 pregnant women in the state prison system and two in the federal prison system. The prevalence of HIV infection among pregnant women in the state prison system was reported to be 4% in 1995. These data indicate that pregnant women in the state prison system are at higher risk of HIV infection compared to the general population.

Six percent of women who were pregnant when they entered state prisons in 1991. This was the highest rate of pregnant women among incarcerated women in the state prison system. Pregnant women who were incarcerated in state prisons were more likely to be African American or Hispanic, and they were more likely to have a history of substance abuse and mental health problems.

Pregnancy

There is little published data on the outcomes of pregnancy among incarcerated women. One study found that pregnant women who were incarcerated had lower birth weights and shorter gestations than women who were not incarcerated. Another study found that pregnant women who were incarcerated were more likely to be exposed to violence and have higher rates of premature labor and delivery.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in the study, pregnant women in the state prison system are at higher risk of HIV infection compared to the general population. Further research is needed to understand the underlying factors contributing to this increased risk and to develop effective interventions to reduce the risk of HIV transmission among pregnant women in the state prison system.

Most prisoners and jails arrange for in-custody births at nearby hospitals and permit the newborn infants to remain with the infant's mother after birth. However, some states have stringent policies that limit or prohibit these arrangements. In Hawaii, for example, newborn infants must remain with the newborn infants must remain with their mothers after birth.
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It's important to me that the voices of these silenced women be heard. Many of their problems began during childhood, when these women became silent out of fear. The problems and the silence continue into their adult lives; drugs come to take on a medicinal quality.

These patterns are reinforced by cultural traditions which stress that women be submissive and "take it."

If we, as a society, can become better listeners, this might be the first step toward resolving social problems and developing programs to help women drug users.

—Karen Joe Laidler
Going Home: The Double-Edged Sword
The Paradox of Family Among Women Drug Users in Hawai‘i
KAREN JOE LAIDLIE

Introduction

Since the early 1980s, America has been captivated by what is often described as the nation’s most pressing social problem, that is, the drug problem. The emergence of crack cocaine in inner cities like Los Angeles and New York has been held responsible for the proliferation of gangs, violence, and high-HIV-risk behaviors (Reinarman & Levine 1989). Heroin use has been reportedly on the rise in San Francisco, Denver, and Newark (U. S. DOH 1996), and has been referred to as “the fast lane killer” (New York Times 1994).

Hawai‘i has not been isolated from America’s preoccupation with drugs. During the mid-1980s, Hawai‘i hit national headlines as the seedbed for a new “drug epidemic” (San Francisco Chronicle 1989). Health and law enforcement officials reported that a new form of methamphetamine, known locally as “ice” or “batu,” had hit the streets with devastating consequences, and anticipated it eventually would emerge as the drug of choice on the U. S. mainland (Newsweek 1989). Although the “ice epidemic” never spread to the U. S. mainland (Lauderback & Waldorf 1993), epidemiological data indicate that ice continues to be a primary drug among many local users (U. S. DOH 1996).

...the campaign against drugs has included a moralistic interest and intense concern with women drug users.

Addicted women have been demonized, with the media typically portraying them as neglectful mothers, engaging in high risk sex behaviors and violence in their search for drugs.”

America’s war on drugs has been costly and large in scope, ranging from stiffer penalties for drug offenses, to aggressive international policing, to numerous prevention and intervention programs. In addition, the campaign against drugs has included a moralistic interest in, and intense concern with, women drug users. Addicted women have been demonized, with the media typically portraying them as neglectful mothers, engaging in high-risk sex behaviors and violence in their search for drugs. Such images have resulted in extremely punitive policies toward mothers and pregnant women drug users (Humphries et al. 1992).

This paper challenges these images of the addicted woman by examining the life histories and social worlds of a group of women who are moderate to heavy ice users in Hawai‘i. Specifically it is concerned with placing their drug use patterns within the context of the violence they experienced in early childhood and their strategies for coping and resisting the violence. The problems they confronted and the strategies they used to cope with these problems are paradoxically linked to the cultural claims and ties of their extended kinship networks.

A Hidden Population

Very little research has been conducted on substance use among Asian and Pacific Americans. The few available studies generally have been based on household and student surveys or clinical reports from small treatment populations (Sue, Zane & Ito 1979; Newcomb, Maddahian, Skager & Bentler 1987; Trimble, Padilla & Bell 1987; Skager, Frith & Maddahian 1989). These studies have found that Asian and Pacific Americans report less drug use than those who are not Asian Pacific Americans. These efforts, however, have not been fully able to address basic questions of prevalence and incidence among the different Asian ethnic groups due to methodological problems of small sample size, samples restricted to particular populations (students and more acculturated groups like Japanese and Chinese), and the absence of those groups most at risk, such as immigrants, refugees, and the economically marginalized (Zane & Sasao 1992). Treatment and clinical reports also have not been able to address the issue of prevalence given their case-based orientation and tendency to group together different Asian ethnic populations (Kuramoto 1994). Moreover, their assessments are based only on populations who are successful in accessing services. By contrast, treatment staff report that low utilization rates are related to obstacles such as language differences, lack of knowledge about available resources, and the cultural constraints of shame and guilt (Joe 1990).

Even less is known about the social and cultural factors associated with illicit drug use among different Asian and Pacific ethnic groups. Alcohol and mental health studies on Asian and Pacific Americans, however, have identified stressors such as competing cultural demands and economic marginality as significant risk factors (Sue 1987; Johnson, Nagoshi, Ahern, Wilson & Yuen 1987; Loo 1991). The family has also been linked to health and social problems but in two contradictory ways. First, the Asian and Pacific American family’s cultural emphasis on strong ties, loyalties, and obligations are stressful for individuals who are confronted with Western notions of individuality (Loo 1991; Hunt & Joe forthcoming). Attempts to develop individual autonomy are further complicated by the cultural and practical demands of living in multi-generational households which are common in Hawai‘i. Under such conditions, the family has been linked to delinquency and health problems (Joe 1990). Second, the strong cultural demands and structure of the Asian American family also have been identified as a significant source of social control over individual behavior (Zane & Sasao 1992). Among refugee populations, the breakdown of the family structure (e.g., absence of one or more parent) has been identified as significantly related to delinquency and gang involvement (Bankston & Caldas 1996; Hunt & Joe forthcoming).

Clearly, an in-depth understanding is needed of the ways in which potential risk factors like gender, class and family interact. Most importantly, studies on other populations are instructive on the connections between these risk factors and drug use. Studies based on interviews with African American, Caucasian and Latina women have shown that
alcoholic and substance abusing women generally have a history of childhood sexual abuse (Teets 1990; Yandow 1989; Boyd 1993). Parental substance abuse also has been linked to women’s addiction to alcohol and cocaine both in its onset and its continuation (Boyd & Mieczkowski 1990). Parental use creates a situation which is conducive to the acceptability and availability of drugs and alcohol. Moreover, family substance abuse can result in neglectful parenting, which in turn isolates and makes girls vulnerable to sexual victimization (Boyd 1993).

Thus far, only a few studies have been able to uncover a number of middle-class cocaine users (Adler 1993; Waldorf & Murphy 1993). Illicit drug use is particularly problematic among the economically disenfranchised and in socially distressed communities. The social dislocation of the inner city has entailed the abandonment of local legitimate economies, the decline and deterioration in housing, and the emergence of the crack cocaine economy. As Dunlap and Johnson point out, this dislocation has resulted in the “severely distressed inner city household” whereby the “household has emerged as an adaptation that meets the survival needs of several persons in the kin network” (1992:309).

In these households, family composition constantly changes, and includes both blood and fictive kin relations. Grandparents and aunts take on child-rearing responsibilities, or alternatively foster parents are entrusted with young ones. Maher et al. (1996) note that crack-addicted women are increasingly without stable living accommodations, and are being cut off from the shelter and support of family networks. They find brief refuge as “couch people” with different extended kinship networks. They resort to a number of creative alternative living arrangements including shelter with friends, temporary stays in welfare and shelter facilities, squatting, and living with older men. Each of these arrangements, however, presents different types of risks for the victimization of women.

These studies make it clear that the substance-abuse experiences of women are exceedingly complex, involving parental sexual and substance abuse as well as economic constraints on the family. The following analysis attempts to uncover the relationship between gender, class and family among a group of women drug users in Hawai’i.

Research Design and Methods

The data stem from an ethnographic study of adult moderate to heavy methamphetamine users in three locales noted for high usage and problems with methamphetamine—Honolulu, San Francisco, and San Diego, conducted from 1991 through 1993 (Morgan, Beck, Joe, McDonell & Gutierrez 1994). Each site was distinctive in several ways, including the primary mode of use. Honolulu users primarily smoked, while San Francisco and San Diego users typically injected and snorted respectively.

In addition, according to emergency admissions and treatment reports, the Honolulu site was the only one which included a significant number of Asian and Pacific American users. Three-fourths (or 111) of the 150 active users interviewed in Hawai’i were Asian or Pacific American. One third of the 111 Asians in Hawai’i were women. Across all three sites, women represented one-third of the total number of users.

This analysis is based on in-depth interviews with the Asian and Pacific American women users in Hawai’i (n=37). The sampling strategy was based on the chain referral method, and initiated by our interviewers’ street contacts. Respondents had to meet four criteria to be included in the study: 1) be 18 years of age or older; 2) methamphetamine was their primary drug of choice; 3) used an average of at least 0.5 grams per month over the last year; and 4) resided in Hawai’i for the past two years.

The interviews lasted approximately two to two and one-half hours, during which respondents were asked a series of quantitative questions regarding demographic characteristics, drug use, as well as their legal and health histories. Respondents were also asked to describe in depth, on tape, their life histories and the qualitative aspects of their drug use—history, experiences, and reasons.

During the course of the study, two of our female interviewers and one male interviewer had access to differenter user groups in Honolulu, and were able to document patterns and changes in the ice scene. Their field notes provide an additional data source for this analysis.

Local Culture

Okamura (1994) rightly points out that the concept of Asian American is rarely used by people in Hawai’i. Instead, they may refer to distinctive Asian ethnic categories like Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Korean. However, people in Hawai’i tend not to identify with ethnic or racial categories but with a distinct culture, namely, local culture. Okamura (1980; 1994) traces the emergence of Local identity to the 1960s, when a number of external factors began to alter the islands’ social structure, particularly the migration of a large number of Caucasians from the U. S. mainland, a significant rise in immigration from Asia and the Pacific, and the rapid growth of tourism. In light of these forces, Local came to represent a shared identity of the people of Hawai’i in their appreciation and love of the islands, and their people and its culture. As a category, Local acts as a demarcator of social boundaries, distinguishing those who are born and raised in Hawai’i (or long time residents who acquire the lifestyle and customs) from those who are not: Local culture is less a reflection of the blending of Asian and Pacific Islander cultures, but is instead an accommodative process. For example, Hawaiian and American customs are associated in the use of fictive kinship terms like “auntie” (Okamura 1994:122). In essence, Local culture and identity places priority on aloha kanaka, or friendliness and generosity in social relations (Okamura 1980).

The ethnic heritage of the interviewed women reflects the diversity and complexity in Hawai’i. All of the respondents in this study identified themselves as Local. Over one-half of them were mixed Hawaiian. Nearly one-third identified as Filipina, with many indicating they were of mixed ethnicity. The remainder of the group were Samoan, mixed Portuguese, Chinese, and Japanese. With the exception of two Filipinas, all of the women were born in Hawai’i. Over 80 percent of them grew up in lower and working class families, and the remaining few came from middle-class backgrounds. As noted elsewhere, we started locating some middle-class users, but found them to be “hidden” in isolated user networks (Morgan et al. 1994:158).
Most of the women were in their mid-to late-20s, had never been married, but had at least one child. Few had gone beyond high school, and nearly one-third of them had dropped out prior to completing the twelfth grade. The majority of them were unemployed, supported themselves through government assistance, their families, or illegal activities, and lived in poverty.

Many of the characteristics of these women were similar to those reported in other studies on working-class women in Hawaii. Chinn (1974) found that her sample of "young local" garment workers were predominantly from working-class families, third or fourth generation Hawaii residents, unmarried, under 30 years of age, and living in home (often rented or sublet). As described below, the women in this study like those in Chinn's also lived in "households of necessity" characterized by children being looked after by grandparents and other relatives, chaos, and sometimes violence.

The Family: Chaos and Refuge

The cultural tradition of 'ohana originates from the Hawaiian familial tradition of solidarity, shared involvement and interdependence (Pukui, Healy & Lee 1972). The term is frequently used today, but reflects the spirit of local culture and identity. As Okamura stresses, personal gain is minimized while interpersonal harmony and satisfaction are maximized (90-92). In its contemporary form, 'ohana upholds the familial spirit and traditions of cooperation and unity. And as mentioned above, these persons who are not blood related but integral to the family are included in the 'ohana network. Fictive kin assume familial relationships to maintain social ties, and cousins.

Most of the women in this study grew up in differing degrees, in such an extended family system, and given the extremely high cost of living in Hawaii, this extended network provided their financially strapped families a visible source of mutual support and aid. The women described shifting from the households of their parents to other members of the family network—aunts, uncles, grandmothers, cousins—at various times in their life. Yet the 'ohana system serves not only as an immediate resource to cope with the families' financial problems, but also as a relief mechanism for the heated tensions which often emerge from economic marginality. These were "households of necessity" as evidenced in the succeeding case notes of one of our respondents.

Mary is a 23-year-old Chinese Hawaiian woman who is the fourth child of six. Her mother has been married three times, and her children are from different marriages. While Mary's older sister was sent to stay with their rich aunt, she and her younger brother lived with their grandmother during their early childhood years. While Mary believes that she was sent to live with her grandmother to "take care of her and to help her with the house and cook," in light of her young age, it is more likely that her mother relied on her own mother to help care for two of her children while she worked and looked after the other children and a physically abusive husband who suffered from severe diabetes. During her teen years, Mary returned to her mother's home and helped care for her diabetic stepfather. (Respondent 46)

The pressures associated with economic marginality may also manifest themselves in parental alcohol and other drug use. While nearly half of the women's parents used marijuana, and over one-third of them used cocaine, alcohol appeared to be the most problematic. Forty percent of the women report that their parents had problems with alcohol, but this figure very likely is higher as many try to normalize their parents' alcohol use. Joanne's case notes illustrate this normalization process.

Joanne, a 44-year-old homeless Hawaiian Filipina, states that her father consumed several cans of beer on the weekends, but was only a "recreational drinker" because he "never missed work due to his drinking" and, most importantly, provided for his family. She had her first drink at 22 years of age when her father became seriously ill and died, and, "for the next ten years stayed in an unconscious drunken state by nighttime everyday." (Respondent 46)

Parental alcohol or drug use was often connected with physical or sexual violence. In some cases, the violence was severe, and the extended family system was unable to provide a long term sanctuary.

Susan, a 19-year-old Hawaiian woman, remembers from about the age of five that her father would routinely beat up her mother to the point where she was unable to walk. Subsequently her father would come looking for her or her mother would take out her own anger and hostility by beating on Susan and her siblings. Both parents were heavily involved in drugs, and her father was a dealer. She describes having a loose family structure as her father had several children by other women. While growing up, she was exposed to many "adult" situations involving drug deals and burglary out in bars. Her father was sent to prison for heavily abusing a man on a fire and beating him to death while drunk. At 14, an unknown teenage molested her at a family function. She tried to isolate herself, but when her mother learned of the incident, punished her for "promiscuity" by repeatedly hitting her on the head and sending her to a group home for troublesome teenagers. Summary Case Notes for Respondent 46.

Susan's case also clearly illustrates how the intensity of family pressures heighten as these young women are expected to conform to culturally prescribed gender roles and expectations. Although she had been raped, her family believed that it was she who had violated sexual norms. At the same time, these women must also assume adult responsibilities at an early age as both parents worked long hours or one parent had left the family (either temporarily or permanently). Many described having to become the "parent" of the home, caring for their younger siblings, and managing the domestic chores of the house.

The strain from economic marginality, combined with cultural expectations about "being a good girl," and heavy parental alcohol consumption, exacerbates family violence. Helen,
Dealing with Family Chaos

The women tried to endure the turmoil in their family, and given the extended kinship network, some were able to stay with relatives when the situation at home exploded. The majority of them eventually stopped bearing the family violence and sought refuge. Some believed the best strategy for dealing with family violence was to start their own family. Marty, a 34-year-old Hawaiian Chinese woman, describes the process:

“...my parents were working. Then in the fifth grade, we moved, and... my father got sick, mom had to go on welfare. Things started not working out for the family, my parents was fighting, my father used to give my mother lattis every time and put us down. They were strict. We pretty much rely on each other [the siblings]. I never did get along with my dad. I don’t know why, I’ve always tried, cleaning up, never had to be told what to do. I took care of my sisters and brothers. Cleaned the house, cooked, did all kinds of house chores, but my father couldn’t stand me... I couldn’t take it anymore, so I got about in the seventh grade, that’s when I met my husband. I wanted to get married but I couldn’t. So I got pregnant, my first daughter, about a year after that, I quit school already. I came home, I told my mom I wanted to get married. So she gave me consent. My father, never. So I forged his name... I was 15 years old. Stayed with my husband and never went back home. Only went back home once in a while to give my mom money and see how she doing.” [Respondent #41]

Gradually, women were introduced to cocaine, but at this point the family member was usually a sibling, cousin or other relative. There were several sources through which women first encountered ice. Many women tried ice with a small group of their girlfriends. Others were introduced to ice by a relative, typically a cousin or sister-in-law. Several of the younger women indicated that male dealers, who had motives other than getting a new potential customer, negotiated their first encounter with ice. Finally, approximately one-third of the women initially tried ice with their partner, and the experience often was associated with sexual enhancement.

Women initially rationalized their ice use in gendered ways. The drug has an appetite suppressant effect which allowed them to stay thin. In a society where thin women are idealized, this provided a source of self-confidence. Moreover, the speedy effect derived from ice gave them an energy boost to transcend and complete the monotonous tasks of
"Many of these women have become isolated and have a strained relationship with their family, but given the extended kinship network, they can rely on various relatives as a somewhat stable resource for managing their everyday life."

While this extended kinship system provides them with consistent support, it has the paradoxical consequence of enabling their use of ice, intensifying their dependency on it, and further aggravating family tensions."

Stephanie is a 35-year-old Hawaiian Irish woman. While growing up, she recalls that her parents, both alcoholics, began physically beating her at five years of age with "extension cord wires, water hoses, punches, everything." She ran away, and after high school, married and became pregnant. Her husband died shortly after the son's birth in a work-related accident. She has been homeless for seven years, and sometimes stays with friends. Periodically she visits her mother and son, but adds that her ice-use has "interfered" with her relationship with her mother. Her mother has been caring for her son since she has "no place for me and my boy." She regularly gives half of her welfare monies to her mother for her son's food and clothing. [Summary Case Notes for Respondent #475]

Like other women in this study, Stephanie takes refuge in ice as she finds herself with fewer and fewer options. As she states, "I can't get no help finding me and my boy a place. So because I'm homeless, that's why I do the drug, I get so depressed cause I don't have no roof over my head for me and by boy." Her family, which caused her to run away from home, is one of her few remaining resources.

Going Home

These women's life histories, like recent studies of women in the New York crack cocaine scene (Maher, Dunlap, Johnson & Hamid 1996; Dunlap & Johnson 1992), shatter recent portrayals of the demonic character of female drug users. As this essay has tried to illuminate, women's initiation, continuation and problems with illicit drugs must be examined within the context of their family ties. Importantly, the family, in turn, cannot be understood in isolation, but must be examined in relation to its interaction with gender and class. In this way, we can then examine the paradoxical effects of the family as both protector and facilitator of problems like illicit drug use. Most of the Asian and Pacific American women in this study represent a highly marginalized population and come from a distinctive class and intercultural local background in Hawai'i. Clearly their experience cannot be generalized to all other Asian and Pacific American women drug users. The experience of women in other locales and among middle-class women users may be similar in some ways and different in other ways.

However, the lives of the women in this study do raise a number of important research, prevention, and treatment issues regarding the family and class. As we have seen in their cases, the extended family commonly found in the working and lower classes kindles solidarity and cooperation, and when financially hard pressed, can act as a vital lifeline: a source of stability. At the same time, however, economic pressures on the family remain; there is little chance of abatement.

In this cultural and class context, economic pressures, particularly for the "traditional breadwinner" of the household, aggravate family tension and conflict. Furthermore, perceived violations of traditional cultural norms of femininity result in simmering family conflicts in the heated home environment. When it boils over, family conflict is expressed
in many forms: abandonment, neglect, verbal attacks, parental problems with alcohol and drugs, and physical and sexual violence. These women did not respond passively, but sought refuge from the family chaos through the most readily available means: sometimes they moved in with other relatives in the kinship network or with friends for as long as possible, or they lived on the streets.

It is during this period of chaos that most of these women were at a high risk, and as such, began using alcohol and marijuana, sometimes initiated by a male relative. Gradually their expanded user networks, which often included extended kin (cousins, etc.), initiated them into other illicit drugs. Although they grow increasingly isolated from others because of their extended use of ice, and the family tension from childhood remains, the cultural customs of the extended family system paradoxically offer them a source of shelter and support, and a place back home.

Notes

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1. The ethnic composition of our sample reflects our field workers’ attempts to capture our targeted sampling strategy. Given the “hidden dimensions” of methamphetamine use and drug use, more generally among Asian and Pacific Americans, it is not clear whether this is a precise reflection of the ethnic breakdown of this drug user population. Ethnicity and culture in Hawai’i are particularly complex to disentangle, given the pervasive inter-mixing of ethnicities. Among those who identify as Hawaiian, most are of mixed ethnicity, but their Hawaiian identity takes precedence.

2. In traditional Samoan families, gender relations are organized around Polynesian traditions of male dominance, separation, and obligation. While Hawaiian customs were similar to the Polynesian model of separation, this was severely altered with the death of Kamehameha I in 1819, and the subsequent arrival of the missionaries. Although the Hawaiian system retains some of the features of male domination, it is the women who have “learned the ways of the mahihihi (strangers).” Women adjusted to and became clever at cultural and economic transactions with the new world” (Nunes & Whitney, 1994:60). At the same time, however, Hawaiians, who are the most marginalized group in the state, have accommodated to poverty through normalizing early motherhood, high dropout rates, and welfare dependency for girls (see Joe & Chesney-Lind 1995). In modern Filipino families, girls, and women have been socialized according to colonial cultural and religious, usually Catholic, norms that emphasize the secondary status of women, girls’ responsibility to their families, and the control of female sexual experimentation (Aquino 1994).

References


True to my haole nature, this paper is really all about me.

I had some notion that if I researched/deconstructed haole I could better understand it—an admittedly haole approach, but then that's what this is all about.

—Judy Rohrer
Haole Girl: Identity and White Privilege in Hawai‘i
JUDY ROHRER

Introduction

This is a paper about what it means to be a white person in Hawai‘i, what it means to be a haole. Hawai‘i’s ethnically mixed population and history as an independent kingdom colonized by the United States makes being a white person here a completely different experience than anywhere else in the country. In Hawai‘i, white does not blend in; it stands out. Having grown up in Hawai‘i and now living here as an adult, I have struggled with my haole identity, mostly trying to figure out how to minimize, disguise, or get rid of it altogether. I have tried hard to be anything but da haole girl. Instead of continuing to try to escape, I decided to face it through research and writing.

To date there has been little analysis—scholarly or otherwise—by haoles on what it is to be haole. In fact, the works most helpful to me were that of local/Hawaiian people, including Haunani-Kay Trask, Jonathan Okamura, and Eric Yamamoto. The one exception was The Mainland Haole: The White Experience in Hawaii, an extensive study done by a lone white Canadian anthropologist, Elvi Whittaker (not by a haole academic from the University of Hawai‘i), or even from a continental United States institution. Her analysis and interviews with haoles proved extremely helpful and, as far as I could tell, is the only data of its kind. In contrast to this, quite a lot has been written about the experience of being local and/or Hawaiian by both local and non-local people.

The lack of analysis about “being haole” by haoles, especially by those of us living in Hawai‘i, is part of white people’s general inattention to whiteness. Whiteness is a taboo subject, something white people do not talk about, much less explore and interrogate in print. To do so would mean talking about racism and white privilege, extremely uncomfortable subjects for white people. Better we find something anything else to focus on. The largely white male academic world has skirted the problem by being enthralled with studying the other. However, this is changing slightly through the writings on whiteness by a few white academic and activist women. Those who influenced my thinking the most include Ruth Frankenberg, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Mab Segrest and Donna Haraway.

For this paper, I have gathered together the writing that I could find about being haole, supplemented it with the work of the women mentioned above, and used my own experience as a backdrop. In this way, I interrogate my haole-ness while exploring the multiple meanings of haole through the lenses of race theory, history, language, local culture, identity construction, power relations, and feminist theory. Rather than a linear journey to one final answer, this is a quest for greater understanding and awareness. And while it is primarily a personal venture, I share it hoping that it might be useful to others interested in cultural identities, the politics of whiteness, and specifically, what it means to be haole.

Locating the Self

You Have To Know Who You Are
And Why You Are Here.

In one form or another this directive has reoccurred throughout my lifetime, put to me by women of color I have known/read/heard speak. I have answered it for myself in different ways; sometimes I have not had an answer.

Who am I? It makes sense that I would have different answers at different times under different circumstances. Identity is relational, contested, contingent, negotiated, produced, manipulated, multiple, socially and historically constructed. In other words, it is never just one thing. "Our cultural identities are...always in a state of becoming, a journey in which we never arrive..." (Herenko 1994:407). Postmodern theorists encourage us to ‘play’ with identities, putting them on and taking them off like hats or cloaks. Oppressed peoples are reclaiming and redefining their identities as sources of strength. Non-white feminist theorists have stressed the multiplicity, interconnectedness, and simultaneity of identities. I am not just a woman, but a white woman, not just a white woman, but a white lesbian, not just a white lesbian, but a white, educated, middle-class lesbian, not just a white, educated, middle-class lesbian, but a white, educated, middle-class, able-bodied lesbian. These identities are the ones about which I have spent the most time (re)constructing, thinking, and educating myself. But what about haole?

Why am I here? The second part of the directive makes the haole identity more salient for me right now. It is impossible to escape being a haole when living in Hawai‘i, because local people are always implicitly or explicitly asking why I am here. It is not a given that I belong. And, as the Hawaiian sovereignty movement gets stronger, the question becomes more pointed.

I remember the exact moment I learned I was a haole.

I had just moved to Hawai‘i from California, just started second grade, and was beside myself with anxiety.

I was terrified of this new place, its unfamiliar culture(s), the almost comprehensible language everyone was speaking, the big new school with all its spoken and unspoken rules.
I was the only white girl in my class.

I hadn't made any friends yet and I was waiting in the cafeteria line for lunch feeling very alone and very conspicuous.

I was so insecure that I had asked my dad to drive me to school and sit in the car where I could see him while I waited in line.

I was concentrating on trying to pick out our car in the parking lot when, out-of-the-blue, the kid behind me said 'fuckin' haole' and gave me a little push.

Perhaps I wasn't keeping up with the line and he got impatient. Perhaps he was trying to impress his friends. I don't remember any of that.

But I do distinctly remember those words and the feeling of humiliation and panic that overwhelmed me.

I knew 'fuckin.' I'd heard that before, and I figured anything associated with it couldn't be good.

I bolted from the line, ran to the car, and insisted that my father take me home.

He did.

The well-known feminist axiom, "the personal is political," emphasizes the importance of theorizing from our own experience—from the realities that constitute our daily lives—rather than pretending there is some sort of universal "view from nowhere." We learn to see, and what we see is limited by the potential of our experience (Wendt 1987:82). I am trying to understand what I have learned to see, trying to be "somewhere." Grounded theory, theorizing that privileges personal experiences, helps us understand who we are and how we can be in this world, with all its contradictions, contingencies and variations.

Rather than feeling "cultureless," white women need to become conscious of the histories and specificities of our cultural positions, and of the political, economic, and creative fusions that form all cultures. The purpose of such an exercise is not, of course, to reinvent the dualisms and valorize whiteness so much as to develop a clearer sense of where and who we are (Frankenberg 1993:204).

For quite some time, I ascribed to the notion that white people are "cultureless," but this, as Frankenberg points out, just enabled me to hide, to remain invisible, to not know myself. If I truly want to "develop a clearer sense of where and who I am," I need to understand that where I am also has a lot to do with who I am. When I am in Hawai'i, I am haole. I must somehow come to terms with that identity and not pretend that haole is an abstract construct. In this regard, Donna Haraway's concept of "situated knowledges" helps:

We seek those ruled by partial sight and limited voice—not partiality for its own sake, but rather for the sake of the connections and unexpected openings situated knowledges make possible. Situated knowledges are about communities, not isolated individuals. The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular (1998:590).

What Haraway does not say, but implies, is that by situating ourselves, we begin to turn the gaze away from "the other" and on to ourselves. This is a small, yet essential, step in correcting years of theorizing on the bodies of "others." As Ruth Frankenberg (1993:18) writes in White Women, Race Matters: "It is by intention an investigation of self rather than of other(s), since it is a study of whiteness and women undertaken by a woman who is white." Eh, that's me, one haole girl tryin' for study haoles.

It's a Race Thing

Because haole is a racial term (whether or not it is a slur will be discussed later), it is important to deconstruct its meanings within the realm of race theory. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1993:3) trace the uneven evolution of racial discourse in this country from "essentialist racism"—essential biological inequality used to justify slavery, to "color-blindness"—essential sameness under the skin propelling assimilationist and multicultural thinking; to "race cognizance"—self-articulated and celebrated difference/autonomy propelling cultural nationalist movements. This is not a smooth progression. All three discourses still operate and intersect to varying degrees.

Omi and Winant place the United States today somewhere between the "color-blindness" and "race cognizance" discourses because the strength of the idea that race is something given/natural/biological is waning. They argue that the socially constructed status of race is so pervasive today that conservatives are able to twist it and argue that race is a "false consciousness," an illusion. To counter this, Omi and Winant believe not in arguing against the old idea of race as "natural" or biologically determined, but for the "continuing significance and changing meaning of race." This can be done by creating a "process-oriented" theory of race, one that would "recognize the importance of historical context and contingency in the framing of racial categories and the social construction of racially defined experiences" (Omi & Winant 1993:6).

Understanding race to be constructed, unstable and malleable makes it no less "real" than if it were biologically determined. In their introduction to Race, Identity, and Representation in Education, Cameron McCarthy and Warren Crichlow support this thinking:

What we are saying is that racial difference is the product of human interests, needs, desires, strategies, capacities, forms of organization, and forms of mobilization. And that these dynamic variables which articulate themselves in the form of grounded social constructs such as identity, inequality, and so forth, are subject to change, contradiction, variability, and revision within historically specific and determinate contexts. We maintain that "race" is a social, historical and variable category (1997:xx).
In calling for a "relational and nonessentialist" approach to race—one which takes multiple and variable identities into account and does not reduce race to biology or any other simple "source"—McCarthy and Crichtlow also point out that "much work needs to be done to understand and intervene in the ways in which whites are positioned and produced as 'white'... (1993:xi)]." It is only a small step from here to confronting racism. Ruth Frankenberg illustrates the linkage between a "process-oriented" theory of race and an unveiling of white privilege.

"Whiteness refers to a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced and, moreover, are-intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of domination. Naming 'whiteness' displaces it from the unmarked, unnamed status that it is an effect of its dominance. Among the effects on white people both of race privilege and of the dominance of whiteness are their seeming normativity, their structured invisibility (Frankenberg 1993:6).

Historicizing the Haole

In Hawai'i, then, it is important to look beyond static definitions of haole (or, for that matter, local) toward a "process-oriented" understanding. It is significant that haole is one of the few Hawaiian words that maintains itself in everyday language, in both pidgin and standard English. This is not an accident. The continued salience of the meaning of haole has quite a bit to do with its historical and relational context.

Use of the word haole can be found in pre-contact times in the Kamalipo, a creation chant and in written references to a type of pig, the pua'a haole. Most scholars agree that its earliest meanings were "foreigner, foreign, introduced, of foreign origin," as it is defined in the Pukui and Elbert Hawaiian Dictionary. Emily Hawkins, a Hawaiian language professor at the University of Hawai'i states, "it was a word used for outsiders, or things that were not from here." One of the first references describing a white person, in this case an English captain, is found in a biography published in 1838.

I remember using knowledge of the epistemology of haole to try to counteract its sting.

When local (non-Hawaiian) kids would call me haole, I would say, "Haole means foreigner. You're a foreigner here too."

But it didn't matter.

Haole had taken on new meanings through years of colonialism and neo-colonialism.

The kids knew I was "da haole girl."

Years later I'm coming to understand that too.

Recently there has been an upsurge in education about the colonial history of Hawai'i. Understanding haole means understanding that history of exploitation, capitalism, destruction, and appropriation. Hawaiian Studies professor and activist Haunani-Kay Trask explains that Hawaiian history since foreign contact has been incorrectly taught as a history of acculturation, rather than deculturation:

Colonization is, above all, a process of deculturation of the native people. It is a pervasive totality which seeks "the liquidation" of a native people's "systems of reference" as well as the "collapse of its cultural patterns" (Deloria 1973; Memmi 1967; Fanon 1967:78-89). Because missionaries focused on transforming habits of thought (e.g., through their schools), styles of behavior (e.g., through their imposition of repressive sexual morality), and customs of governing (e.g., through their imposition of Western law), they were engaged in the breaking down of Hawaiian culture... What many Westerners call acculturation to their "civilized" ways is really deculturation... (Trask 1984:116).

The colonization of Hawai'i is not a thing of the past. It can be seen everywhere today: shopping malls; campaigns for standard English; the continued deterioration of the health and socio-economic status of Hawaiians; the tourist traps of Waikiki; and the pervasive commercialization of Hawaiian culture. The sovereignty movement can be credited with forcing us to confront this reality and making it clear that haoles are the original colonizers. The term haole was born of, and cannot be divorced from, this legacy.

Placing haole within the historical, political context of the islands makes the term's relational qualities clear. The terms local and haole have developed, to varying degrees, in relation to each other. Jonathan Okamura's epistemology of local traces haole as its primary negative reference point:

Throughout the historical process of accommodation, the principal cleavage in Hawaiian society has been between the dominant Haoles and the subject Hawaiians and immigrant groups. The collective subordination of the latter groups first fostered a closer degree of social relations among them and the awareness of their common subject status. Later, the specific term "local" was used to distinguish Hawaiians and the immigrant groups in general terms as people from Hawai'i in distinction to whites from the mainland. At present, the current meaning of local...has arisen as a consequence of the threat to Hawai'i posed by the increasing numbers of mainland Haoles, Asian and Pacific immigrants, and tourist industry developers. Thus, it has been the presence of either dominant or outsider groups in opposition to the people of Hawai'i that has given salience and meaning to the notion of local throughout its development (1980:135).

Okamura may be overstating the case by placing so much emphasis on "outsider groups" as the determining factor in the production of local identity. For my purpose, what is important is that identities are relational, and that historically, the "presence of either dominant or outsider groups" necessitated their naming and their observation. The oppressed have always had to know more about those who oppress them than the oppressor has known about those they oppress. Audre Lorde articulated this concept:
For in order to survive, those of us for whom oppression is as American as apple pie have always had to be watchers, to become familiar with the language and manners of the oppressor, even sometimes adopting them for some illusion of protection (1990:281).

It has been important for me to pay attention to the ways local people identify haole-ness in behavior or culture because, to a certain extent—as a process-oriented theory of race would contend—haole is as haole does:

The Mainland Haole has come to be perceived—not because of what he is, but because of what he is doing collectively—as a threat to the local people’s self-determination (Yamamoto 1979:108).

Haoleness has as much to do with place as with race, with culture as with biology. Consequently there is a peculiar haoleness about non-white ethnics from the mainland. Before the annexation of Hawaii, American blacks were referred to as haole eelele (Lind 1969:110), literally translated as black foreigners (Whittaker 1986:176).

Haole is about place and culture.

We used to have parties in elementary school all the time it seemed—beginning of the year, Halloween, Christmas, birthdays, May Day, end of the year.

The most important part of the parties was the food. Everyone would sign up to bring something.

Kids brought noodles, mochi, Chinese pretzels, teri chicken, fried rice, pickled mango, etc.

I didn’t know what half the stuff was.

I was so afraid whatever I brought wouldn’t be right.

(Besides, my parents had this “natural” thing about “no sugar, no white flour, only carobs.”

so I couldn’t even make “normal” haole stuff like chocolate chip cookies or brownies.)

I wanted to be safe,

didn’t want to stick out as the “stupid haole.”

I developed a strategy:

I made sure I was always one of the first to sign up... and I always chose napkins.

One way I learned about how we “act haole” was by paying attention to the stereotypes and ethnic jokes which often provide a window into cultural relations. Whittaker writes:

The importance of stereotypes is that in societies with heterogeneity and gaping social distances, in plural worlds like Hawaii, they facilitate interaction, they award stigma or praise according to the dictates of the current moral order. They have a simplicity which serves as a superficial sensemaking device.

The Caucasians sense the weight of the stereotypes which operate against them. They are loud, arrogant, and dripping with money.... Several jokes portray the Caucasians’ insensitivity to non-whites, their ignorance, and their uncritical view of their own behavior (1986:176).

Even if haoles were none of these things—which unfortunately we are—this is the prevalent image of us, and therefore a factor in our interactions. Interestingly, Whittaker (1986:179) notes that most of the haoles she interviewed did not participate in ethnic jokes because they felt the jokes marked a certain “intimacy” with local people that they did not feel they had. Not participating, however, could also be seen as showing an attitude of superiority—tinkin’ you too good.

Whittaker (1986:176) records a joke I heard before that exemplifies the haole stereotype: A Japanese guy and a haole guy are at the graveyard. The haole guy puts flowers on his wife’s grave. The Japanese guy puts a bowl of rice on a grave. The haole says, “When do you think she’s going to come up and eat the rice?” The Japanese guy responds, “As soon as your wife comes up to smell her flowers!”

It is significant that while Whittaker and I have written this joke in standard English, it would most likely be told in pidgin. Pidgin can be thought of as a language of resistance and community that enables local people to come together, to share and build a lifestyle distinct from haole culture and domination. Much has been written about local culture and pidgin. What is important here is that pidgin is lingua franca among local people (Okamura 1980:124) and something most haoles refuse to comprehend.

The prevalent view among haoles is that pidgin is “broken English”—that it is “incorrect,” a sign of low intelligence. Children are punished for speaking pidgin in the schools of Hawai‘i. What is being denied is the understanding that pidgin is a language in its own right, officially known as Hawai‘i Creole English (HCE). Pidgin has its own rules, words, sentence structures and vocabulary. Like Black English/Ebonics, HCE was born out of a need for a language of resistance allowing communication among ethnically diverse slaves/workers, whether they be on southern cotton or Hawaiian sugar plantations. These languages continue to act as rare spaces within, yet not controlled by, the dominant culture. It is in the best interest of those benefiting from the status quo to undermine and repress HCE and Ebonics because without language, resistance is much more difficult. This is the power at work behind the preservation of the myth of “broken English.”

All too frequently Caucasians tend to see pidgin as inaccurate, as demonstrating only partial competence in the English language. Few of them have the perspectives recently developed with regard to black language, namely that its nuances and multiple meanings make it as sophisticated as straight American English (Whittaker 1986:176).
Being Haole in Hawai‘i

Hawai‘i is perhaps the only place in the United States where the “invisible center” (the white, male, heterosexual, Christian, able-bodied “norm”) that maintains its power by hiding it, and which beckons to all of us, regardless of how many of these categories we may or may not fill, is forced into partial visibility. The Caucasians seem to be saying through their objections that they dislike having ethnicity become their most identifying feature...for the first time in their lives many of them face their own ethnicity. Previously it had been quite irrelevant. Now, however, ethnic recognition determines interaction (Whittaker 1986:153).

Whittaker’s observation about white people not liking to have to face their ethnicity/privilege resonates with my experience. However, I do not agree that ethnicity is “irrelevant” elsewhere; quite the contrary, it makes an enormous difference almost everywhere. It is merely that on the continent (or what some Hawaiian nationalists refer to as “America” to distinguish it from Hawai‘i), that “the difference” of white supremacy/privilege is well camouflaged by centuries of institutional racism and the mythologies of American individualism and democracy (i.e., the system is set up to benefit white people without white people having to admit it). This is not the case in Hawai‘i:

The [white] migrants of today...encounter already established positions, with the result that for the first time in their lives, a sense of their unconscious and unavoidable involvement in history and politics, in economics and power, became apparent (Whittaker 1986:142).

Being called out of our “racelessness” into a culture where we are asked to question many of our assumptions, beliefs, and values is completely unsettling. I am not suggesting that white privilege does not operate in Hawai‘i, just that there are more openings, more spaces, for it to be exposed and questioned. Our world gets shifted without our consent in ways we dislike, and our cultivated ignorance about Hawai‘i leaves us unprepared for this shift.

Caucasians arrive in Hawaii with a legacy of ideas and attend to the world accordingly. Spun from such beginnings their expectations about the people of Hawai‘i are predetermined... Particularly poignant for them...is that they find themselves at a disadvantage. In their eyes they are victims of what they can only view as violations of what they thought was an indisputable moral code (Whittaker 1986:143-44).

It is important to note that part of our “legacy of ideas” is the notion that “the world is an open place, responsive to Americans and their values...” (Greenblatt 1993:112). Much has been written about the particular character this idea has taken in relation to the places and peoples of the Pacific. The haole image of Hawai‘i is “fantasy island,” full of friendly, helpful, exotic, naive “natives.” Haunani-Kay Trask writes that for the haole, “Hawai‘i is the image of escape from the rawness and violence of American life. Hawai‘i...is the fragrance and feel of soft kindness” (Trask 1993:80). It is precisely because haoles come with these expectations that we are so shocked, disappointed, and incensed when not everyone smiles, spreaing arms and legs, catering to our desires.

Useful here is a metaphor by Louise Kubo, a lecturer in the UHM Women’s Studies Program, about trying to interrogate the invisible center, island style. She says what we have is a donut—transparent white people in the middle pushing out and defining the margins of people of color. What is suggested here—and what makes haoles so uncomfortable—is a malasada, a donut with the center filled in. In the emerging Hawai‘i paradigm, white people are no longer invisible, no longer central, no longer controlling because what makes a malasada a malasada is precisely the absence of an “invisible center” or donut hole.

Is Haole Derogatory?

This brings us to the reoccurring debate about whether or not haole is a derogatory term. For years, some haoles in Hawai‘i have insisted that it is and have tried to will it out of circulation. Three recent manifestations of this debate illustrate the arguments: the 1990 Joey Carter—Haunani-Kay Trask exchange; a recent Honolulu Advertiser feature; and a February 1995 ruling by the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission.

Joey Carter—Haunani-Kay Trask Exchange

In 1990, Joey Carter, a University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM) haole undergraduate from the continental United States, wrote a commentary piece for the Ka Leo, the UHM student newspaper, in which he expressed his outrage at what he called “Caucasian bashing” (Carter 1990). Haunani-Kay Trask, a Hawaiian Studies professor and activist, responded by saying he obviously did not understand the history of the islands or institutional racism, and perhaps he should just go home (Trask 1990). Debate raged surrounding this exchange, most of it about whether Trask’s response could be construed as “harassment.” To the extent that the focus was confined to Trask as a “harasser,” Carter was able to maintain his image as “victim,” and the larger issues of racism and colonialism were buried. The content of their exchange highlights many of the issues I am addressing.

Carter’s piece is a good example of haole defensiveness. New to the islands, Carter did not like being a haole and let people know it. He sarcastically wrote, “My haole brothers
and I are arrogant, selfish, aggressive, insensitive. Godless, well-off, rednecked or skinheaded. We consider ourselves superior to everyone else on the planet—because we’re white, right?" He asserted how this is not the case by offering the "helpful acts he and other white people have performed for "a variety of races." Carter placed himself squarely in the center of the conservative backlash against affirmative action stating: "Racism is not an exclusively white endeavor." He added, references like "haole-dominated society" and "puppet-haole governments" are racist. Coming from Louisiana he equated the use of haole with the use of "nigger" (I will return to this analogy later). Carter ends by saying, "So, am I a haole? Are you a ‘local’? Are you a ‘black’? Are you an ‘Oriental’? We can classify ourselves however we choose to—but it still won’t be us. We’re so silly sometimes. I am who I am, you are who you are." In one fell swoop Carter dismissed all cultural/ethnic identities as "silly." Carter explained individualism triumphs. We are all simply "who we are"—individuals—flat, cardboard cut-outs with no history, no context, no relationships to power, no nothing.

Trask’s response did not mince words. First she said, if Carter is white, then he is haole. And as a haole, he is a privileged member of American society, whether he acknowledges it or not. She asserted that Carter’s is a "typically white American problem: he wants to pretend that he is outside American history, a history which has made white power and white supremacy the governing norm..." She went on to historicize his presence in Hawai‘i, and previously Louisiana, as a "luxury provided him through centuries of white conquest that visited genocide on American Indians, slavery on African,peonage on Asians, and dispossession of Native Hawaiians." She noted that racism is a system of power in which one racial group dominates and exploits another. "People of color in America don’t have enough power to dominate and exploit white people."

Joey Carter, like so many Americans, wished desperately to place himself within the decontextualized, dehistoricized, homogenized, world of white liberal theory—what Omi and Winant identify as "colorblindness." In that cheery world he would not be blamed for the past or what white folks may be currently doing because he would be an "individual." But, being in a culture where some people did not hesitate to call him on his location, he was trying to wiggle free.

"Haole: Is it a Dirty Word?"

On February 5, 1999, the Honolulu Advertiser’s Sunday Island Lifestyle section was devoted to the feature, "Haole: Is it a Dirty Word?" After interviewing some island residents, the journalist found that most said haole is "at least tinged with contempt" (Wioti 1999). This is not surprising to those of us who have lived here or know something about the historical or present-day context in which the word is used. What is interesting is who said what, and how.

— Kanalu Young, Hawaiian studies assistant professor: Hawaiians have the right to use their own language. Colonialism has left haole with a hint of resentment. "Anyone can be haole, just presume you’re superior before you know that in fact."

— Cliff Richards, white boy from Pālolo: "It’s an immersion into a culture that becomes your own. You rise above being a haole and become a ‘local haole.’"

— Harold Mooneyham, white boy who grew up in Pālama: "sometimes haoles piss ME off when they act like haoles!" "You can use it innocently enough, but its basic connotation isn’t neutral."

These two haole boys, who grew up in the context of local culture, point out that there are ways to not act so haole, to "rise above" that behavior. Once you have done that, others may consider you a "local haole," which means that you understand enough about local culture that you no longer act "so haole."

— Warren Nishimoto, University of Hawaii Oral History Project: "We’re not just talking about skin color here, we’re talking world view. We’re talking the haoles having the nice homes, nice parties. The immigrants had nothing."

Nishimoto, a local Japanese researcher, like Kanalu Young, places the word within its historical context by referencing the plantation system. Young, Richards, Mooneyham and Nishimoto all indicate an understanding of haole far more complex than simply a synonym for white. Haole is attitude, behavior, culture, class, history. This complexity was lost on the following interviewees.

— Mark Pinkosh, of "Haole Boy"/Starving Artists fame: "It refers to people with white skin in Hawaii. It’s an indicator that you’re part of the tribe, the people of Hawaii."

— Noel Kent, University of Hawaii’s Ethnic Studies professor who teaches a "Caucasians in Hawaii" class: Caucasians think of haole as a harmless ID tag. "What I try to emphasize is instead of this black-white dualism, good-local-bad-haole, we’re all very complex people, with tremendous capacity for the morally good and the morally terrible. You have to look at each individual."

These two white men try to put a multicultural gloss on haole. They decontextualize the term by trying to make it completely benign—a harmless ID tag, a name for "one of the tribe."

— Jim Curran, white professional: "Is the word needed anymore?" He only uses "nice" Hawaiian words like "pau" and "mahalo." "You go to California, there are a lot of ethnic groups. Nobody seems to need the word haole there."

Here is yet another white man who understands that the term is not generally positive or even neutral, and he therefore wants to banish it from speech. The statement about how haole is not used in California shows Curran’s complete ignorance of the contextual nature of racial categories. While people may have no use for haole in East Los Angeles, they certainly do for "gringo" and "white-motha-fucka."
Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

On February 12, 1995, just seven days after the "Haole: Is it a Dirty Word?" feature, the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission ruled that haole used by itself is not derogatory, but that embellishments can make it a racial slur (e.g., the famous "f**kin’ haole"). This was the HCRC's first case involving haole as a slur.

The same day the following editorial appeared in the Honolulu Advertiser:

Of course it isn’t derogatory. And it’s a shame things had to come to this point. The Hawaiian language is a rich (and steadily growing) part of our special Island culture. Its use should be a matter of pride, not contention (February 12, 1995, B2).

This statement by the Advertiser seems naive on the heels of an article in which most of the interviewees had admitted to at least some "hint of contempt" in the term haole, and many spoke to its multiple meanings. Of course haole is not always derogatory or a racial slur, but to gloss over its negative connotations is to disappear the genealogy of the word and truncate its meaning. Instead of promoting a full understanding of haole and pidgin, the Advertiser stifled discussion by limiting examination of language (notably Hawaiian and not pidgin) use to a "matter of pride."

Responding to Being Haole

I have explored the historical, relational, socio-political construction of the term haole.

In this section I will explore some of the more common ways haoles deal with our hardness. All of these forms of response are interrelated, overlapping and variable. Some of us cycle through all of them (and more), others fluctuate between a few of them, some get stuck in one.

The way we respond to being haole, however, is also determined by what kind of haole we are: in other words, what we bring to haole by way of socio-economic status, political ideology, past experiences, and so on. For example, Julie Wuthnow, a former University of Hawai‘i Women’s Studies lecturer, describes four kinds of haoles: the liberal individualist type; the elite class and Kama‘aina; the military; and those who are not soldiers, don’t have lots of money, and are beginning to question liberal ideology (Wuthnow 1995, 48). I mainly fall into this fourth category, although I also admit spending time hiding in liberal thinking.

One of the ways haoles try to escape from haole is by finding more "neutral" labels for ourselves. Some, like Joey Carter, want to be "Caucasian." In fact, Dini Whitaker uses "Caucasian" instead of haole throughout her book and refers to ethnicity, not race (as in previous quotations). But this is a "race thing," and "Caucasian" is not the same as "haole." "Caucasian" is a sterile, statistical, academic abstraction that says nothing about Hawaiian or being a white person here. It enables us to avoid situating ourselves. Another label that Carter and others have tried to make stick is "individual"—as in the oft-heard liberal line, "we’re all just individuals." There is no s**ner way to flatten or gloss over history and power relations.

When I was young I tried not to be haole.

I would tell my local friends that I was "Greek, Mexican, Swiss-German, Swedish."

They would look at me like I didn’t know what I was talking about.

I could be all those things, but it didn’t matter much to them.

I was still haole—that meant something.

I finally gave up.

There are haoles who call themselves Kama‘aina. Sons and daughters of the original haole elite first appropriated this label—the descendents of missionaries, plantation owners, and traders (Kirkpatrick n.d. 1986). Some haoles adopt the label right away, while others feel one needs to have lived in the islands a certain length of time before claiming Kama‘aina status. Many Hawaiians strive to be haoles should never claim this status, regardless of length of residence, because it means "children of the land" and was never meant to be a substitute for "haole." Appropriation is one of the most insidious forms of colonization.

Today in Hawai‘i, as in the 19th century, the largest landowners are missionary-descended corporations known as the Big Five. They have called themselves Kama‘aina, as many other non-natives have, for over 100 years. Of course, we Hawaiians understand all too well that they would like to have native status to legitimize their colonial presence on our land. But I do not know a single native Hawaiian who recognizes them (or any other non-natives) as children of the land. In other words, they may refer to themselves as Kama‘aina, but we do not. (Frink 1986:16)

Like many things Hawaiian, the word has been commercialized. Now there are "Kama‘aina" airline deals and hotel rates everywhere. In these contexts, the term is used to mean those who live in Hawai‘i, whether they are local or haole.

Kama‘aina is complicated for me because it points to the way class intersects with haole.

My family was anything but "elite."

We were hippies driving beat-up cars, camping on the beach, living hand to mouth, "experiencing" paradise.

I was teased at school for my "puka pants," "stink bag lunch," and long-haired younger brother.

I was teased not just as a haole, but as a hippie.

And yet, after several years of living here my parents called themselves "Kama‘aina."

I guess they were appropriating and leveling the word at the same time.
One of the common first responses to being called haole is to counter it with allegations of unfair prejudice or "reverse racism." Joey Carter is not an anomaly in making this charge. Whittaker (1986:154) found that "Caucasians discover they do not merely inherit their mainland position. Previous privileges are often denied them. They compare their position to blacks on the mainland..." As we have seen, some go so far as to equate being called haole to being called "nigger" even though the two reside on very different planes— naming by the oppressed and naming by the oppressor. Making these kinds of comparisons denies the power of structural racism that Trask tried to explain to Carter.

The charge of "reverse racism" works together with one of the two theories Whittaker identifies as ways haoles explain their treatment. This is what she calls the "historical theory," wherein prejudice against haoles is based on the immoral acts of discoverers, missionaries, and haoles of the past, making it unjust to blame today's haoles. "By neutralizing historical responsibility and by nullifying the ethnic connection, the real reason is placed on matters that are known to be inappropriate to present-day Hawaii" (1986:184).

The other theory Whittaker dubs the "deserved prejudice theory." Haoles who ascribe to this thinking believe haole arrogance, greed, and ignorance provoke prejudice against them. We have seen this in the previous statements of "local haoles." This way of thinking can also be used to invoke and then negotiate guilt. "By admitting and even embracing guilt, another ethic is relied upon, namely that admission of guilt is itself a kind of absolution. One should not continue to punish those who have already admitted their guilt and are punishing themselves" (Whittaker 1986:188). Acting out of guilt is a typical first response to admitting racism, yet the invocation of guilt is not constructive; it does not change anything. "Ashamed, contradictory white subjects are not absolved of their responsibility to build effective alternatives to structural racism" (Gorman 1993:84).

Another response to being haole, especially for those who have been here for awhile, is to ignore its meaning. Similar to trying to find a more "neutral" label, people try to neutralize haole itself. The earlier statements from Mark Pinkosh and Noel Kent in the Advertiser feature are good examples. This excerpt from a piece in the Advertiser entitled "Culture Shock turns to Joy" relies heavily on the myth of multiculturalism and evidences thinking along the lines of Whittaker's "historical theory":

Coming to Hawaii was not like moving to another state. It was more like living in a different country. We went from a WASP (white Anglo-Saxon Protestant) area to a place where we are a minority. Our daughter Kristi was the only blonde in her school....all these strange people were so different from everyone I knew.... These last few years, we have been to Buddhist temple, celebrated Chinese New Year and Japanese girls' and boys' days. We have attended a baby's first luau. We have enjoyed learning and being part of this wonderful racial stew called Hawaii. I realize there are people who will distrust and fear me because of the color of my skin. I only wish those people would take the time to know me before they judge me.... Open minds and open hearts can open many doors [Emphasis supplied] (Miller 1993:44).

The discourse about Hawai'i as a "wonderful racial stew" is a highly salient, deeply entrenched one. It is reconstructed daily by our politicians, newspaper monopoly, commercial advertising, tourist industry, and educational system. As the hegemonic narrative, it serves the elite of Hawai'i because it glosses over the violence of power imbalances and the historical domination of indigenous people and immigrants. It turns haole into "one of the tribe." Jonathan Okamura makes this clear in reference to local culture:

[B]lending, sharing, and mixing are essentially vague and misleading terms that do not describe nor facilitate the analysis of the complex social processes that were involved in the emergence of local culture and society...the view that local culture is derived from a sharing of diverse cultures seems to ignore the imposing of American institutions on Hawaiians and the immigrant plantation groups through armed revolution and the penal sanctions of the contract labor system (1980:123).

Becoming Haole in Hawai'i

I have explored some of the historical and relational contexts for haole. I have identified some ways haoles "act haole." We are arrogant, loud, shamelessly ignorant of Hawaiian history and local culture. We try to adopt other labels, charge unfair discrimination, seek absolution through guilt, and evoke pretty multicultural images of a dehistoricized "paradise." Wuthnow nicely sums up what it is to be haole:

We trip, collide, and never, ever allow ourselves to feel guilty. On a micro-scale this means that we are rude and aggressive drivers, that we talk too loudly and too often, and that we probably let our dogs pee in other people's yards. On a macro-scale it means we continue to colonize and exploit the Hawaiian Islands as developers, tourists, and as academics, and also that we willfully refuse to acknowledge the consequences of our past and present actions (Wuthnow 1995:46).

We cannot escape being haole; we have been too well-trained and the term carries too much meaning and history. Haole is not a positive identity for most white people in Hawai'i, not something we claim with pride, but something ascribed to us by a history, a culture and a language we may know little about. Our feelings about the term range from ambivalence to anger. In fact, some of us spend a good deal of energy ignoring or denying our haoleness. It is difficult for us to know how to choose to be/have haole. At this time, what I am searching for are ways to be not so haole, ways to reconstruct my haole identity. If identities are really manipulated, negotiable, and produced, then I want to become a different haole without denying the historical and contemporary context that shapes the term. I remind myself that while Hawai'i is very multicultural, the history behind that ethnic mix has built today's structures of unequal power and domination.

The central issue, then, is not one of merely acknowledging difference, rather the more fundamental question concerns the kind of difference that is acknowledged and engaged. Difference seen as benign variation (diversity), for instance, bypasses power as well as history to suggest a harmonious empty pluralism (Mohanty 1993:72).

Part of becoming a new haole then is acknowledging that my haole difference is not simply "benign variation." Instead, it carries a history, a power, a privilege to which local
people react. Once acknowledged, it is hard to know what to do with this without falling into the pattern Whittaker identifies as absolusion through guilt. There are times I find myself deploring haole and haoleness so vehemently I have to question my motives. I could easily be one of the most anti-haole haoles. But so what?

What has helped me in figuring out where to go from here is feminist writing which attempts to question, unvel and deconstruct whiteness. On a certain level, haole can be thought of as a name for white privilege situated in Hawai'i. Describing white privilege, describing haole, on a personal level makes me newly accountable:

A 'white' skin in the United States opens many doors for whites whether or not we approve of the way dominance has been conferred on us. Individual acts can palliate, but cannot end, these problems. To redesign social systems we need first to acknowledge their colossal unseen dimensions. The silences and denial surrounding privilege are the key political tool here. They keep the thinking about equality or equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these taboo subjects... It seems to me that obliviousness about white advantage, like obliviousness about male advantage, is kept strongly inculcated in the United States so as to maintain the myth of meritocracy, the myth that democratic choice is equally available to all (McIntosh 1989:8).

I am only beginning to admit that I did not earn my education on my own, that my haole/white privilege played a significant role...

I got into Punahou on a scholarship my junior year in high school. I went from graduation directly to Bryn Mawr College, an elite women's college in Pennsylvania, again on financial aid.

I satisfied myself that I was not like the rich white kids that made up the majority populations at these schools.

They got in because of their money, I got in because I was 'smart.'

I had earned it.

The myth of meritocracy has a strong hold. While it may have been that I was 'smart,' it's also worth unpacking this term a little.

First of all, what is meant by 'smart?'

Doing well on standardized tests, having good grades, and being able to express yourself 'well' in speech and writing?

Why was I 'smart?'

It was something that teachers, as well as my parents, had reinforced in me for years.

Expectations breed results.

So what were the expectations for the local kids in my classes?

How were they penalized for speaking and thinking in pidgin?

Finally, these schools are competitive.

Why me?

Could part of it be that the white administrators (and they are almost all white, and male) were so eager to have 'one of their own,' and appear generous at the same time, that they jumped at the chance to admit a poor, 'smart' haole girl.

And then there's the further question of who doesn't apply and why:

The barriers of access to, knowledge of, and resources to carry out the application process, keep many equally 'deserving' candidates from applying at all.

This is where my parents' education and privileged knowledge of these systems comes in.

So, can I really say that I alone 'earned' my education?

That white/haole privilege had nothing to do with it?

I could, and it might make me feel better, but it wouldn't be the full truth.

Sometimes it seems so much easier just to live in our bubbles. To remain ignorant of our power/privilege.

To believe the liberal myths about the self-determination of each individual and the justice of our democracy.

So why not continue to live in a haole/white bubble? Because I want to be able to answer those damn questions of who I am and why I'm here. I cannot do that floating out in the biosphere. I need to situate myself to develop better understandings of the world. I remind myself that becoming a different haole is not a simple theoretical or intellectual endeavor. Wuthnow (1995:49) describes why she considers herself a 'recovering haole' in search of a 'Haole Anonymous' meeting. 'Haoleness runs deep...it inhabits not only the intellect of those of us who are haole, but our bodies and imaginations as well... At best, the subject who has achieved ideal haoleness can only be in recovery from colonization; the craving for home will always be there.'

I like the idea of being/becoming a 'recovering haole.' It is a subprocess of being a 'recovering racist,' a concept from anti-racism work. As a white person, I can never fully 'recover' from being haole or racist, because these identities are so strongly constructed in our culture, in our beings. What I can do is work to acknowledge the privilege I have and act out of this self-awareness by becoming more accountable and responsible. This
process of recovery is vital to my becoming a more whole person—vital, in fact, to my survival. I remind myself of Barbara Smith, Audre Lorde, and many other women of color who insist:

You have to comprehend how racism distorts and lessens your own lives as white women—that racism affects your chances for survival, too, and that it is very definitely your issue (Smith 1982:49).

Change means growth, and growth can be painful. But we sharpen self-definition by exposing the self in work and struggle, together with those whom we define as different from ourselves, although sharing the same goals. For Black and white, old and young, lesbian and heterosexual women alike, this can mean new paths to our survival (Lorde 1990:287).

What has helped, and continues to help me understand this is my lesbian identity. I know that unless all systems of oppression are challenged, I will never be free as a lesbian, and therefore never be free, period. Scratching the surface of the interconnected and contradicted nature of oppression, I realize that the multiplicity of our identities is one key to overcoming systems of domination. For, I have never been just a haole, but always a haole girl, and now a haole dyke. Wearing the hats of both oppressor and oppressed, I must confront my haole/white privilege and the racist structures that maintain it if I am to insure my survival as a dyke—my survival. I remind myself, I am not protected. I remind myself of the difference between being called a "fuckin' dyke" and a "fuckin' haole." None of this is easy, and I am still better at "talking the talk" than "walking the walk"—a disturbing consequence of academia.

I am inspired by other white lesbians struggling to keep from sliding into white guilt, struggling to learn to harness their white privilege in service of dismantling racism. They model "recovering racist/haole" as an actively political role, not a self-absorbed or self-contained one. Mab Segrest, a southern white lesbian anti-racist organizer, writes:

I knew my role was working with other white people, and self-hatred was a bad place from which to start. Could I find ways to share and appreciate other cultures without mimicking or appropriating them, without denying my continuing white privilege? Sooner or later, would the contradictions loosen? (1994:80)

It seems so hard for white people to appreciate another culture without appropriating it. Perhaps it is because we have a hard time really knowing who we are. A passage from white lesbian writer, poet, and activist Minnie Bruce Pratt’s fine essay, "Identity: Skin, Blood, Heart," keeps resurfacing:

By the amount of effort it takes me to walk these few blocks being conscious as I can of myself in relation to history, to race, to culture, to gender, I reckon the rigid boundaries set around my experience, how I have been "protected." In this city where I am no longer the majority by color or culture, I feel myself every day: In this world you aren’t the superior race or culture, and never were, whatever you were raised to think: and are you getting ready to be in this world? (1984:1).

Although Pratt is talking about her experience walking in black sections of Washington D.C., I identify the words both with being white in general and being haole specifically. She eloquently identifies the difficult process of continually locating herself, of always asking the questions of who she is and why she is there, of situating her knowledge, of acknowledging her privilege.

When I think about applying this level of awareness to being/becoming haole, it is overwhelming. Where I really get stuck is trying to figure out the "why am I here" part. Hawaii is my home, but what does it mean to be at home on stolen land? Maybe I stay because I know that almost anywhere I go I will be on stolen ground. I could run away from being haole, but I am always white. Am I "ready to be in this world?" I am not sure. I try. I do know one thing—malasadas mo’ betta.

Notes
1. Guest editors’ note: The correct Hawaiian grammar for the plural of haole is also "haole," but popular Hawaiian Creole English usage is "haoles."

2. The two popular culture pieces I found, the Starving Artists’ "Haole Boy" play and Walt Novak’s novel, The Haole Substitute, offer little regard to interrogating haole. The play seems more concerned with applying a multicultural gloss to Hawai’i. Novak simply reinforces his haoleness by using it to capitalize on an untapped audience—young white men, especially surfers, who live in or have visited Hawai’i.

3. In U.S. colleges and universities, 60% of full-time faculty are white men and further, 78% of all full-time professors are white men. These figures are based on data for 1991-92 from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of the U.S. Department of Education. At UH Mānoa, only 30% of the full-time faculty are women. Of these, 65% are white even though only 32% of the population of Hawai’i is white. These figures are based on data for June 1995 from the UH Personnel Office.

4. Throughout this paper I occasionally use pidgin, or more accurately, Hawaiian Creole English (HCE). While I am self-conscious about the potential for appropriation, I feel my use of it in this paper is fitting. I want to recognize and support the legitimacy of pidgin. Haoleness and pidgin are inherently related. When I am called on my whiteness in Hawai’i it is done in pidgin. The term haole derives its meaning from a language based in a particular culture and history. Because I grew up in close contact with that culture, when I think about being haole, some things I think, I think in pidgin.


6. Ibid.

7. In 1893 the Hawaiian monarchy was overthrown by a group of elite haole businessmen backed by the U.S. military. They imprisoned Queen Lili‘uokalani in her own palace and pushed forward the wheels of annexation. Despite the fact that the overthrow was clearly an act violating international law that horrified many, including President Cleveland, the strong sugar interests and their expansionist allies got their way and Hawai‘i was annexed in 1898. In 1993 President Clinton signed an official apology admitting that the U.S. acted illegally by participating in the overthrow. Some activists are using the apology as a springboard from which to demand Hawaiian sovereignty.
8. It is important to be clear about haole "minority" status. My meaning here is that of growing up as one of the few haoles in a plantation town. Because haoles have the largest in-migration of any group, we are now 15% of the state's population, the largest single group. But about a third of this figure is comprised of military-related transient persons. When I was young, Japanese Americans were the largest group, but since then haoles have long since surpassed them. We cleverly maintain the notion of our minority status by comparing our population to Asian/Pacific Islanders lumped together.

9. I am adopting the convention of writing about "America" in the lower case as a sign of political protest.

10. A malasada is a Portuguese donut, a relatively round ball of sweet dough deep-fried and rolled in sugar. Louise Kubo articulated the malasada concept in a cultural identities class at the University of Hawai'i, Pacific Island Studies 690, August 28, 1995. See also Kubo (1997).

11. This is but one example of colonization by the tourist industry. By encouraging everyone living in the islands to adopt kama'aina status in order to achieve economic benefits, the meaning of the word is co-opted to benefit capitalism.

12. One of the most prestigious private schools in Hawai'i. Started by missionary families in the mid-1800s to separately educate their own children, it remains disproportionately white.

References


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I am a foreign woman who has lived in Honolulu for the last several years as a graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

My essay records reflections on my experiences of being a woman-foreigner living in Hawai‘i for the last several years, of how people react to my foreignness, draw boundaries between their own identities and my alieness, and subsequently locate me in their worldviews. It is a personal journey about the meaning of home, of universal love, and of colonialism.

—Hediana Utarti-Miller
She smiled. "Oh, I know where that is. My parents are from Laos, in the same region. That’s your home." I thought to myself. Can someone please tell her that my real home is that old house at the bottom of St. Louis Heights?

"I am going to be an American citizen soon, to get naturalization," she said with pride and bliss. "I just need to do a bit of legal work to finish the process. That’s why I’m wondering if we have an immigration counselor on campus."

Our talk then continued just like many regular conversations between service providers and their clients. But the topics of "home" and "alien" are themes that often come up in my conversations with people. Who are you? Where are you from? Where is your home? Why are you here? Other questions are more specific and directed towards my loyalty to the country, the United States of America. Typically, people ask: "Are you a foreigner or American citizen?" Or, "Are you an immigrant?" The more curious ones ask: "Would you like to stay here?" Or, "Are you going to be an immigrant?" Or, "When are you going to be naturalized?" The more subtle ones ask: "Do you consider this your home?" The presumptuous people comment: "I suppose you’d like to stay here considering what you can have."

The "Home"

With no harmful intent, people would like to know who I am, if I belong here, and if not, do I want to belong here? These questions continually confirm my status as an alien and tell me that my location is on the outside. But they also make me rethink my life and my location here in Hawai’i. Who am I? Why am I here?

In rethinking my life, I have come face-to-face with a bitter reality that I am barely able to acknowledge. I came to Hawai’i several years ago as a foreign student who was ready to "master" the skills of academia and to build my future on them. I saw Hawai’i as identical to other states in the United States, and the University of the Hawai’i at Mānoa (UH Mānoa) as other universities in the country. As part of American academia, UH Mānoa was, for me, a place of knowledge and with it, power. Here I planned to do a graduate program of study about my "home-country," Indonesia. It sounds pretty ironic, doesn’t it? How can one go to America to study one’s own country? It wasn’t ironic for me then, and it isn’t for me now, either, America has always been the center of Indonesian studies. For me, one way to succeed in academia was to be located within the boundaries of that very power.

I had no clue about Hawai’i aside from its subtropical weather and some touristic hula. Gradually, in bits and pieces, I learned about the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom, the annexation of Hawai’i, and the justifications behind making this land a state. Only then did it dawn on me that this place was, and in many ways still is, a colony. I often wonder whether I’m taking part in this continuing history of colonization. Today, more than one hundred years after the overthrow, I trample on one of the many parcels of ceded lands where this university now stands, where I am learning about my own origins, where I am studying about myself, is an institution built on that very colonization.
Yet believe it or not, I feel at home with academia, and with the fact that the majority of my teachers are white academics while the majority of my fellow students are non-whites, international or otherwise. You wonder why? The answer is easy and clear, I'm used to being instructed by white academics. They author most of the sources about my origins, and their thoughts, findings, and theories have instructed me about myself all my life through my 'native' schooling. Unlike here in Hawai'i, the colonizers left my "home" (or, rather, were kicked out through revolution). But they never left my consciousness. For today, I am here still seeking to be closer to them, working to master their teachings. Now I know what Albert Memmi meant when he wrote, "...it is not enough for the colonized to be a slave, he must also accept and live this role" (1967:89).

And so I am confused: on one hand, I am made to feel "alien"-ated; on the other hand, I am at home with that "alien"ation. If this homey feeling draws me to want to stay here, then one may wonder what is so homey about being alienated? Perhaps because it is so familiar. Perhaps, in the end, this story is not about alien encounters, but about familiar encounters.

Now, the question is, who has "alien"-ated us and who has not? Who are actually the ones who "naturalize" us and "grant" us a home? A "home," we are told, is a place where everybody knows our names. Besides our family and friends, the ones who know our names (and everything else about us through our social security numbers, tax records, and passports) are the governments of our countries. They are supposed to know who we are, to ensure our well-being, to protect and provide us with a home. Their respective geographical locations are known as the "home-country," that's the place where we are supposed to belong, regardless of the fact that some of us may be jailed in our home-countries because of our associations with political dissidents.

And why do we "belong" there? Because that's what is established and accepted by the international legal system. We are not legal citizens of the earth if we don't "belong" to a country. This idea of home involves a physical place as well as a mental space. The latter is like a mindset that gives us a body of values, and a set of assumptions about who we are and what we are about. It explains the purpose of our lives and determines our behaviors and practices. In turn, we develop our identities and relations within this mindset's sense and sensibilities. This "home"/"country" that we are supposed to have is a place that provides us with a tale of the past, a ground for the present and a dream for the future (Kedouri 1995) — for Americans, the stories of the Pilgrim Fathers, their American dreams, and aspirations for a prosperous, paradisiacal future.

On the other side of the story, this mindset makes us legal subjects. And we are supposed to be happy in that "subjection," because it promises us a community, a sense of belonging and purpose, a "home," and the freedom to "be what you can be." But it also includes an impetus to sacrifice our lives for it, e.g., in war (Althusser 1971:162-170). Manifesting itself as something comparable to a calling, this "subjection" tells us that we are doing the right thing for the sake of the country. Certainly this calling disregards the fact that many of our ancestors were perhaps displaced and beheaded at some point in the country's history, or that many of us simply don't share the country's ways of going about its business.

So what is so home-y about this "home"? Is "home" a place where you feel cozy, warm and comfortable, as though to override alienation and subjection? And why should "home" entail alienation and subjection? What is the difference between a colony and a non-colony, if in the end they promise and demand the same thing?

Eyes twinkle and mouths smile when people learn that my husband is an American citizen. Some even say: "Of course this is your home. This is your husband's home." I am not a total "alien," after all, for I am now associated very closely with the natural. As a "devoted wife," I should happily take part in my husband's "subjection" and uphold "family values" as best as I can. In times like these, I feel an interesting stereotyping coming into play: it is "natural" for a woman to follow her man, sacrifice her life for him, or at least organize it around him.

So what happens to all those curious questions about the location of my home? All of a sudden, questions about me, my existence, and my home disappear. The fact that I'm an Asian woman wed to an American, that I come from a "Third-World country," seems to verify the comment "Of course you'd like to stay here, for what you can have."

**Coffee and the Universal**

There are many others who adore my alien-ness and see it as a source of inspiration and justification for their "universal love." Food and drink play a major role in this discourse and often become symbols of acceptance of diversity, multiculturalism and internationalism.

For coffee lovers whom I run into, learning that I am from Java is like meeting their true destiny.

Strangely, for those who have not been to Java, I suddenly become the embodiment of good tasting "Java." To be associated with coffee is not too bad, I guess. Its aroma, taste and jolt in the mornings snap me out from my dreamland and get me ready for the day. But I wonder what do I have to do with the jolt these people experience? Since most people's image of Java is an island with grass shacks, tropical rain forests, and half-naked brown people, I wonder if associating a Javanese person with "Java" conjures images of a "noble savage" who lovingly and cheerfully cultivates coffee to fulfill the "civilized" world's desire for it.

"For coffee lovers whom I run into, learning that I am from Java is like meeting their true destiny. To be associated with coffee is not too bad, I guess. Its aroma, taste and jolt in the mornings snap me out from my dreamland and get me ready for the day. But I wonder what do I have to do with the jolt these people experience? Since most people's image of Java is an island with grass shacks, tropical rain forests, and half-naked brown people, I wonder if associating a Javanese person with "Java" conjures images of a "noble savage" who lovingly and cheerfully cultivates coffee to fulfill the "civilized" world's desire for it."
This is perhaps like associating every woman from Hawai‘i with the image of a touristic/commercial hula girl. A friend who had to do such work in the tourist industry once shared with me that no one seemed to care about her as a person—whether she had a family or not, or what her dreams were. They only cared about their own imagination, sparked by brochures and pamphlets selling exotic erotic movements. She said that very few visitors seem to realize that most hula dancers in Waikiki, in performing their dances, are not necessarily having fun but are working to support themselves and their families.

In a similar way, Javanese coffee, as tasty and exotic as it may be in the consumer’s imagination, also entails thousands of people working from dawn to dusk for a low wage that is unimaginable in the United States. Moreover, like its counterpart in Hawai‘i—Kona coffee—Java coffee is not actually native to the island. The forced introduction of Dutch coffee and tea plantations into Java in the sixteenth century charged the island’s subsistence economy to one dependent on the European market. In other words, coffee came through Dutch colonialism. Afterwards, it became one of the major trademarks of Java over the centuries, and remains so today. Ironically, while the coffee producers in Java are aware of their counterparts in Hawai‘i, they see the latter not as allies but rivals in the world market. In this ultra-modern world where “freedom and democracy” presumably prevail, “post-colonial” people, sadly, still look at and understand each other through the gaze of the colonizers.

Interestingly, many people see coffee plantations’ economic relations to the world market as a sign of interdependency and global understanding. Someone from this school of thought once lectured to me that the world is interdependent that one can find Java or Kona coffee and Asian restaurants everywhere, even deep in the American midwest! Some of these “interdependency” folks also believe that Hawai‘i is a true melting pot. The fact that most of us are so exposed to a variety of ethnic dishes is given as proof that we exist in harmony with each other. Can harmony be achieved through eating each other’s dishes?

If that’s the case, will we be able to end war, violence, racism, and poverty with a “multicultural/international” dinner?

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Once, at a potluck gathering, I was summoned to judge someone’s newest experiment. What she called Indonesian rice. (If I were a man, would I be given such “power?” Is this a prerogative of a “good Asian wife?”) Looking at it, I saw some ingredients commonly used in Indonesian dishes: peanut sauce, fried tofu and bean sprouts. But I couldn’t say that this was “indonesian rice,” as there is no such a thing. Every island, even every province, has its own style of rice dishes. Indonesian people don’t normally put raisins in rice dishes, especially not mixed with peanut sauce, for raisins are usually associated with dessert. But, I didn’t want to ruin the mood of “diversity.” Untrained well by my American friends, I reacted “properly.” “Oh, how exciting!” “Terrific!” “Good job!”

While I appreciated this lady’s curiosity and bravery in attempting something new and unfamiliar, this event showcases assumptions about food as a venue of universal love and global understanding.

There are issues involved beyond the food itself. On the surface, people locate and identify me within this pallete of “multicultural” and “universal,” enjoyment of global feasting. It’s like connecting Americans with hamburgers or Mexicans with tacos.

But, under the surface, at issue here is not my location and identity, but rather how my identity supports the identities of these “universal lovers.” By eating my food, they show me, their friends, and themselves that they know me, this Indonesian person and that they know about this place called Indonesia (hooks 1992:36). By claiming to know it, they accept Indonesia as a piece of the puzzle that is their universal love map. Ultimately, the functions of my existence and of Indonesia are as part of their map, supporting their identities as universalists. In other words, my identity comes to sustain to their identities; in the end, my authentic identity is irrelevant.

Back in Jakarta and the other big cities in Indonesia, many Indonesians are probably doing similar things to other nationals, but I can assure you that we associate our American friends with more elements of life besides hamburgers. We learn, hear, and know about America and Americans all the time through the media, entertainment industry, regular household necessities, fast-food chains and American academic books. (Although, for some reason, I didn’t get to read about the American civil rights movement. I wonder why?) The consequence is that one cannot help but aspire to the American dream of freedom, liberty and equality.

As a result of such familiarity, most Indonesians welcome American expatriates or visitors. There is a certain adoration and fondness for those who “adopt” certain “native” lifestyles, like wearing batik or ikat, or having fried rice for breakfast. People feel blessed that these Americans “have become so much like us” and that we are now accepted by such a major player in global culture. Once again, in this dawn of the new millennium, we still see ourselves through the gaze of the colonizers.

Who knows how life would have been without colonization, the borders of “home,” the allegiance to a “country,” or the bonds of stereotyping. We are caught in their confines
and must live within them and their repercussions on a personal level, on a daily basis. Every once in a (not so great) while, when I answer calls to my office, the caller (before or after I answer her/his question) asks: "Where are you from? You have an accent." Or, "You have a cute accent, what's that?" Just recently, one of our walk-ins remarked: "You are from Indonesia! When I talked to you on the phone I was sure you were Dutch." In one of my graduate classes, the professor commented: "You are a Moslem! How is it that you don't wear a veil?" (Hello—not all Moslems are the same!)

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I feel oppressed but resentful. Silenced but angry. Sometimes I wonder if I've become paranoid. What should I do? Yell at these people? (Persuasion has drained my voice.) Avoid them? (How? They are everywhere on the planet.) Trust no one? But I trust my friends, whose lives float in between the spaces; my friends understand the existence of these confines and disregard them at the same time. Questioning the issues of national allegiances, some friends switched to American citizenship, because the latter makes it easier for them to travel and spread words of resistance. A mother of two, while working on her advanced degree in public health, challenged her educational institution by fighting for a class on indigenous healing. A political activist family, refusing to be a part of the food establishment, grows their own vegetable garden. I learn from them that I don't need to be helpless or paranoid, and that I must find my own battle. Resistance is not futile. I refuse to be assimilated!

I can fight back with my voice. To the people who thought my accent was cute, I said: "Oh, my accent is cute. Thank you. I think yours is more endearing." To the one who thought I was Dutch: "Ah, I didn't realize that after more than half a century of Indonesia's independence, this colonized tongue remains so imbedded." To the veil question, I responded: "Will you show me the road to the Garden of Eden if I put the veil on right now?"

Some frowned upon hearing my responses. But I had a good laugh. Don't blame me. I learned this from my friends. They taught me to mock my "alien-ATION." A couple gave me a 500-page anthology of short stories titled Aestounding Little Alien Stories for my birthday. Another gave me a video collection of Alien and The X-Files as a Christmas present. And when I once used the wrong phrases or social science jargon to discuss a computer problem, people rolled their eyes, laughed and sighed: "She is an alien." Under her breath, someone added: "Take me to your leader!"

Glossary

| batik   | An Indonesian, particularly Javanese, traditional cloth. It is usually cotton and has a very particular rather complicated floral design on it. |
| ikat   | A traditional woven cloth, mostly hand-produced in various islands in Indonesia. The colorings used on it are plant-based. |

References


I sing of time before,
*ka wā ma mua*
true, love-struck
engraved in song,
in moon-woven palms
along luminous falls.

I sing of the far green sea
*ka moa'ali'i*
undulating
our great gods
ascending.

I sing of *mana*
the many-flanked Ko'olau
in darkest blue dawn;
the fierce foliage
of Kāne abundant:
'ohe, 'ulu, kalo
'amā'u

I sing of Pele
she who fires islands:
'hāpu'u, lehua, 'ōlapa

I sing of Akua
Papa-hānau-moku
dense lava mother
swept by storm.

I sing of Hawai'i
*āina aloha*
my high dark land
in flames.
a fragrant fern, family of the maile
flower of the 'ōhi'a tree, flower symbol of the island of Hawai'i
feather lei, formerly worn by royalty; a beloved child or person
a native twining shrub with shiny leaves used for decoration and lei
known for its fragrance, especially Kaua'i's 'maile lau brili'i'
divine power
trickster god of Polynesia; also the second largest island in the Hawaiian chain
dark blue sea; that is, the sea furthest from shore
lizard; reptile of any kind; water spirit
elder mo'o sister of Pele, goddess of the volcano
all kinds of bamboo; flute ('ohe hano ihu)
several native species of forest trees with green leaves that flutter like aspen leaves; dancer as contrasted with the chanter; dance accompanied by chanting and drumming on a gourd drum
earth Mother; literally, she who births islands
goddess of the volcano who may appear as a young or old woman
goddess of the earth; another name for Pele
night of full moon, night for lovers
hill on O'ahu where the American National Cemetery of the Pacific is located, literally, the hill of sacrifice; also known as Punchbowl
breadfruit
the past, literally; the time before
beautiful woman (i wāhine u'ī, the beautiful/strong woman)

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Social Process in Hawai’i: Editorial Policy

Social Process in Hawai’i is a journal published by the University of Hawai’i at Manoa Department of Sociology with the objective of disseminating to scholars, students, and the community the results of outstanding social science research on the people and institutions of Hawai’i.

Since this journal’s inception, the Department of Sociology has taken the view that the communities in Hawai’i offer rich and varied opportunity for observing the dynamics of social processes which maintain stability and provide social change. It is our hope that the journal might translate social research in Hawai’i, provide materials for interaction of students, and enhance the understanding of the community among those who live and work here.

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3. Manuscripts submitted to the journal should be of final draft quality; the editor reserves the right to make minor editorial changes.

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