



6-1-2010

Stopping the Wind-An Exploration of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement

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Recommended Citation

Klein, Krystle R., "Stopping the Wind-An Exploration of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement" (2010). *College of Communication M.A. Theses*. Paper 7.
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‘Imi na’auao—to seek enlightenment, wisdom and education

‘Ike Pono—to know, see, feel, to understand, to comprehend, to recognize/righteous,
appropriate, moral goodness, proper, fair

Kuleana—privilege, responsibility, area of responsibility (the responsibility which
accompanies our blessings)

This project was a discovery of truth, and on a deeper level, the journey of ‘Imi na’auao. In discovering the truth of the islands, and hearing the stories from those who live it, ‘Ike Pono was achieved. As a person blessed and cursed with privilege, it is my duty to respond with Kuleana.

The series of events that led to this final project are not riddled by mere coincidence. My experience while living on the island of O’ahu compelled me to look deeper into an otherwise untold story to many. The truth and allure of the islands drew me in. There is an undeniable, unexplainable connection between myself and the mauka (mountains) and makai (ocean) of Hawai’i. Representative Mele Carroll, a Native Hawaiian of the royal lineage, believes that this connection is due to an ancestry I have in Hawaii. Although it does not show, and at the time cannot be explained, her intuition is rarely wrong.

I felt this connection as a fourteen-year-old girl, fortunate enough to have the opportunity to travel to Hawaii with my mother on business. A powerful force came over me. I felt compelled to dance in the ocean, stare in wonder at the mountains, look

inquisitively into the display culture, even in its superficial form at tourist luaus and commodified statues. I felt an overwhelming and indescribable pull, and I knew I would be back.

After completing my Bachelor of Arts Degree in 2003, I continued to work as a morning show host on a rock station. I then took the obligatory backpacking through Europe trip as a recent graduate, and when I returned, I decided to answer to the call of Hawaii and return, to live, and continue my education at Hawaii Pacific University in Honolulu.

This is when I discovered the deep and profoundly moving discovery of the wrong. The wrong has been cast upon the island by American imperialism, and the struggle that Hawaiians are embarking upon to right that wrong. The culture was invaded, crushed, and a new one, meaningless to the colonized and conquered people, was put in its place. The native tongue of the people was forbidden by those who believed that their mission was to spread the word of the Lord the heathens in foreign lands. The belief was so instilled that the missionaries sought to prevent Hawaiian souls from scorching in Hell, and while on to lead a life in the ways that were defined, for them, in terms of Christian worship, and conducted in English. The wrong inherent in those good intentions led to the decimation of the identity of a people, and those good intentions were not untainted by greed and corruption.

I knew none of this upon arriving to Hawaii. I was brought up on the mainland, and was taught the false history written by the American victors. America was a liberating nation. Americans were heroes. Americans stopped the Nazis, broke bread with the Natives, banished slavery, and even added Alaska and Hawaii to the union so

that those residents could benefit from the American dream, while the proximity of both states allowed our great military to further the protection of the nation. This history is a “win-win”, in which everyone has all to gain. There is no mention of the America that stormed into a foreign land, profited off of that land while marginalizing the land’s own people, and then ultimately overthrew its government and illegally forced it to be a part of the US for its own gain.

I discovered the truth on a bus. This bus took me from work and school in downtown Honolulu to the farthest Western point of the island called Makaha. The sheer mention of this area would make peoples eyes grow large. “You?” they would ask. “*you* live in *Makaha*?” “But...you’re white. How do you survive?”

My cousin lived in Makaha and worked as a teacher in the middle schools, and because of her integral role in the community, she was accepted. When I needed a place to stay, she welcomed me into her home, which was a two-hour bus ride from Honolulu. But I had no choice.

On this bus, the C Express bus, I would feel the eyes of resentment falling upon me. I was stared at, scowled at. At first I thought it was my imagination, but it continued. Burrowed eyebrows, crossed arms. As the bus flew farther to the West, the white faces vanished, until I was the only one to receive looks of hatred, animosity, and pain.

Once off the bus, I would have to wait for another bus to take me into the valley. There, at the bus top that lined a gas station, as I waited next to a large and quite intoxicated older Hawaiian man who insisted that we get married, a pick up truck

screamed into the station. A group of young Hawaiians filled the bed of pick up truck, and as soon as they saw me, their joy turned to hatred.

“*Fucking Haole!*” They hollered at me. “Get the fuck off our island! Haole girl! What the hell you doing here?”

The scowls on the bus were enough to get me wondering, but this event pushed me into the absolute need to discover. It became my duty.

- a. What caused this kind of reaction to me? Where does that pain come from?
- b. Did that incident give me a sliver of empathy toward what some minorities have felt in the past, and sadly even to the present when they are singled out harassed or worse because of their skin color?

I had to find answers.

Thus began the complex work of delving into something I will never truly understand, as I will always be the outsider. I will always be a part of the privileged majority, who can go to Hawaii, meet these amazing interviewees that opened their hearts and mind to me, in order to share their stories, their fight. I could listen to them; I could try truly to hear their stories, so that I might present them to others. I can fight to have their story heard. I have a connection to Hawaii, to the way it lured me in, broke me, forced me to grow, and kept me coming back because there was always unfinished business there. The spirit of aloha is alive, persisting beyond (and despite) the tourist gimmicks. But there is a fragility that goes along with that spirit, a respect that you must earn as an outsider. A spirit that acknowledges your understanding of the delicate situation, and if that understanding is known, the islands open up and give back what you

give to them. So I will fight as only I can share the story, help to create awareness, all the while keeping my boundary as respect toward those who are living the fight.

I believe, as any person with a conscience would, that what happened on Hawaiian soil to the Hawaiian people by the Americans was wrong. I do not associate myself with that experience, on either side. I do not harbor guilt because I wear the same shade of skin as the oppressors. I am connected to the island, connected to the truth, to the venture of humanity, and unfortunately my outsider position needs to be handled with great care. I feel the need not to defend my position, but to create an awareness of my own awareness and understanding of what the position entails.

This project is more than merely words on a page and images on the screen. The objective is to tell the story of the Hawaiian fight, while the discovery continues on both sides. If awareness is created, dialogue and thought triggered, then this work has achieved its desired goal. I have become a storyteller, and it is my duty to tell the story of what is truly going on in Hawaii.

And this is how it was meant to happen. I know this, because from the moment of conception, this idea has manifested itself into greatness. I have been welcomed with open arms by old friends on the island, by people who were interested enough to be interviewed by me for the project, and by the 'aina (land) itself. Something magical is happening there, and every single day of my work on the island proved that to be true.

As I assembled pieces of the reality that I was discovering, the questions that needed answers began to form:

Do racism and prejudice diminish as generations become more integrated and aware?

How do the Native Hawaiians feel about a white researcher interested in their struggle?

Is that interest driven by white guilt or a sense of privileged ability to tell the tale along with a true yearning for knowledge and understanding?

Is it the same mentality that members of my own race had—the “justification” that allowed them to take over lands and people because of an inherent feeling of superiority (which comes from where?) and endless mobility that I have now in order to research a phenomenon that I find so fascinating based on my own experience of what some would call “reverse racism”—a term that implies that all racism flows from white to minorities unless “reversed.”

How are people fighting for sovereignty?

Is this a realistic fight?

In considering these questions, I am reminded of what Dr. Pierce at DePaul University said. “When you are a person of color in a white supremacist world, how hard can you fight? When you are a member of the privileged, how do you fight? When is it okay to accept the way things are?” I choose to fight by understanding, and this project is part of what will be a lifelong attempt to learn, to understand, and to communicate in the ways in which I am inherently and learned to expound. I will not accept things as they are until I know that I have done all that I could to change them.

Review of Literature

History

The conflict of historical fact for the purpose of justifying present events is a prevalent theme woven throughout the film, *Stopping The Wind*. Interviewee Poka Laenui, President of the Institute for Hawaiian affairs notes, "History is very important. Oftentimes it's misused to anchor oneself and lock oneself, like a chain, into the past. But it can also be used as a springboard, to be informed and to leap into your future, not to duplicate history, but to use that to urge you to move continually forward." The complexity of Hawaiian history does not go unnoticed in the examination of the current fight for sovereignty and the dynamics of racial interaction on the islands of Hawaii.

Hawaiians existed in a completely oral tradition before the influx of western visitors, slightly warping the reality of the outcome that lies in textbooks. Captain James Cook is said to have "discovered" Hawaii for the British Empire in 1778, yet recent findings of vanished Hawaiian texts that documented oral stories reveals that white-skinned travelers may have visited the islands as far back as 900 A.D. (Silva, 20). In the interest of contextualizing the timeline of history as it pertains to the look at the fight for sovereignty, the official text shall be used here, with a note to the reader to understand that all history, especially this fragile examination of the colonizing of the Hawaiian people, exists in many forms and with silenced accounts of further details and perspectives.

After Cook's arrival, the missionaries set sail for the islands from New England in 1819. Their objective was to use their deeply-rooted faith in converting whom they believe to be savages to their Christian views. Their mission was met with little opposition, as the Hawaiians were subjected to mass death because of the Gonorrhea, syphilis, fleas and more that Cook and his crew brought with him. The population of the Hawaiian people post-Cook fell almost 90% as a result of their inability to withstand the foreign diseases.

Merchants and sailors frequented the islands in sandalwood and whale trades, and soon the sugar plantations became a main source of monetary gain. The missionaries and merchants began to take control of the trade, and desired more power in which to further expand their interests. The Bayonet Constitution was forced upon the reigning King Kalakaua by the Americans in 1887, which gave Americans most of the island control. Shortly after the death of Kalakaua, his sister, Lili'uokalani, became Queen, but was overthrown by the Americans in 1893. The US annexed Hawaii in 1898, and the debate over whether or not to allow the colonized country into the US union resulted in the approval of congress to officially add the 50th star to the American flag in 1959.

“Colonial intervention in the name of Christian conversion was constructed as an act of liberation. It was a means for establishing the King’s supernatural sovereignty to free native peoples where before only the tyranny of paganism and demonic practices existed” (Rafael, 162). For centuries the paler race felt the need to conquer “lesser” civilizations in order to expand their own hegemony. Several theories exist as to why the white race felt superior. Some say it was a matter of climate. As biological anthropology

proves, white races emerge from geographical areas where sun is not as prevalent, and the need for excess pigmentation in the skin is unnecessary. Therefore, as the cold weather sets in, the adventure seekers head for new lands. This theory explains the need to venture out, but does not explain the justification for the overtaking of other civilizations.

In view of the influence Christian evangelism has had in the history of the Hawaiian conquest, it is not unreasonable to believe that there is a connection to a particular story in the bible. As past and present history has proved, religion can serve as a means to justifying even the most preposterous of actions, and as something that is as deeply embedded as faith can be, there is no rationalization for this kind of mentality.

Consider the Curse of Ham (or, the Curse of Canaan). In Genesis 9:20, Noah becomes intoxicated off of his own wine. His son Ham discovered him drunk and naked in his tent. Instead of immediately covering him, Ham went to tell his brothers, who then proceeded to cover their father without laying eyes on his naked body. When Noah sobered and heard that Ham had disrespected him by seeing his naked body and not covering it himself (although some interpretations say that Ham castrated Noah, which is why the curse was so severe), he put a curse on Ham's son Canaan. This curse made Canaan a slave and turned his skin black. Therefore, self-serving interpretations of the bible in the time of conquer took that to mean that black skin was a curse, and that slavery and triumph over darker races was a justifiable, even commendable venture. The dehumanization of an entire race became a venture from God.

“Because colonization is about civilizing love and the love of civilization, it cannot but be absolutely distinct from the disruptive criminality of conquest. The

allegory of benevolent assimilation effaces the violence of conquest by construing colonial rule as the most precious gift that the most civilized people can render to those still caught in a state of barbarous disorder” (Rafael quoted by Chang, 1). The colonizers *believed* that they were doing what was right. They believed that it was their duty to civilize; indeed, they were doing the barbarians a favor. They viewed conquest as imperative to enabling the savages to live the way that God intended. This view is considered, by today’s standards, as xenophobic and ethnocentric. This conflict of two cultures, one in which dark skin equated to inferiority and justifiable slavery, the other in which dark skin was merely a condition of the climate to which one was born. The conquered would not share the perspective of the conquerors, and saw the correlation between dark skin and slavery as highly irrational. Her royal highness, Queen Lili’uokalani pointed to the illogic of colonizers with venom. “Perhaps there is a kind of right, depending upon the precedents of all ages, and known as the “Right of Conquest,” under which robbers and marauders may establish themselves in possession of whatsoever they are strong enough to ravish from their fellows” (Lili’uokalani, 365).

These adventure seekers, these land accumulators, failed to realize or concern themselves with the culture and people who were there before. They saw land as a place to invade, take over, make their own, and accumulate wealth. To the Hawaiians, the land was what nurtured them, fed them, and protected them. But (according to the logic of the invaders) they were cursed with dark skin, and therefore, the will of God must be done for their own good.

This spiritual battle was complicated further by a more venal conflict. “Being colonized is about being taken advantage of, about losing freedoms: It is an invasion. As

a result of the colonial experience, lands were stolen, cultures were assimilated, native languages all but disappeared, and the right to self-govern was taken, leaving a people living in the shadow of what they once were” (Smith, 1818). There were two opposing forces at work after the arrival of Captain James Cook in 1778. The missionaries selflessly spent their lives 6,000 miles from their home in order to spread the word of the Lord to those they believe to be heathens who, before their arrival, did such comparatively unconventional things as worship Pele the volcano and Earth Mother.

But the merchants, whose ventures were of a more monetary nature, found a more earthly interest in the sandalwood trade. When the sandalwood had been harvested to extinction, whale trade was the next big venture. When whales began to die out, sugar cane was harvested. When the brutal challenges of growing, harvesting and processing sugar led to great uproar between classes and races, the European and American plantation owners brought Asians to the island, which further marginalized the Hawaiians. When sugar profits began to drop, people-in the form of tourists -became the next wave of commerce. People, particularly Americans and Japanese, began arriving to the islands via the tourism trade, which, like the sugar trade, caused great suffering to the Hawaiians, because of the over-consumption of land and resources. The tourism trade further displaces the Hawaiians, raised prices on land so that they could not afford to live, and restructured the hierarchal and economic powers of the islands.

The objectives for the missionaries and merchants eventually began to merge into one. “Building an empire for God came to look, in time, more and more like building an empire for self and nation” (Fish-Kashay, 281). The temptation to gain wealth and status consumed missionaries and eventually compromised their entire puritan ideals.

The missionaries believed that it was their duty by God to lift up the savages to enlightenment and a developed Christian civilization. This justified the missionary existence in Hawaii, justified their need to overcome the Hawaiian culture with their own, devalue the Hawaiian existence and banish it altogether. A similar paternalistic ideology justified the American takeover—these savages weren't able to self-govern, and needed the enlightenment and protection of America (Silva, 54). Americans injected the rehabilitation movement into Hawaiian culture to fulfill what the US government truly believed to be its “social and moral responsibility to help impoverished Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) who were socially and politically disenfranchised” (Kauanui, 68).

As the missionaries' children received higher quality education, furthering the deeply embedded racial divide, the missionaries themselves preached that the demise of the entire Native race (from more than 300,000 in 1778 to 71,000 in 1853) was evidence of “spiritual and moral malaise” (Edles, 48). Missionary physicians documented that the Native Hawaiians were vulnerable to and dying from Western diseases, but maintained that the only reason their vulnerabilities existed was because they were biologically and racially inferior. The only way to save this “mixture of black and yellow peoples,” as described by count Joseph Arthur de Gobineau in 1854, who “were dying off as a result of miscegenation and thus needed the wisdom of the whites in order to advance themselves” (Edles, 48), was to suppress their culture, and to assimilate them into a hierarchical relationship with the now-dominant white, American culture. The idea that the Hawaiians lacked the strength and intellect to absorb Western disease and education further justified the missionary ideology that their presence was needed, and their culture was superior.

While many Native Hawaiians survived the Western plague, their very culture was suppressed. Anne McClintock describes the act of cultural suppression as “a discursive strategy that makes use of the developing theories of progress and evolution that propose that all people will eventually ‘progress’ to resemble Anglo-Americans.” McClintock calls this the trope of ‘anachronistic space’ in which “the stubborn and threatening heterogeneity of the colonies was contained and disciplined not as socially or geographically different...and thus equally valid, but as temporally different and thus as irrevocably superannuated by history” (Silva, 105). This trope idealizes the conquest, and yet again, justifies the colonization practice of categorically arranging people to create superior and inferior races due to people’s perceived and subjective primitiveness or developed modernity.

What history fails to convey is how extremely complex this entire series of events truly was. Either side can call upon portions of this history for their own advantage, scraping by the wrong that whichever side they are fighting had done. As is usually the case with history, when observed as objectively as possible, we see that all participants committed acts that contributed to the fall of the Hawaiian people, and participated in the wrongdoing that occurred on all fronts. As Lawrence Fuchs points out, no two individuals will perceive or emphasize historical events in the same way (Fuchs, viii). He goes on to say that “history, dealing with real people and events, like a painting, inevitable judges what it depicts.” Historian John Bodnar has suggested that public memory “emerges from the intersection of official and vernacular cultural expressions” (Rosa, 97). In the history of Hawaii, that intersection is found in the subversive acts of the native populations, struggling to survive; however, the practices of the conquered

people were less than salubrious. One must have a rooted understanding of the truth of history in order to decide what to do next.

Historical contexts must include that necessary intersection in order to deepen the understanding between the official and vernacular, as in the case with the ali'i. (high chiefs) who played an integral role in the aid of American imperialism to dominate the islands. Haole businessmen traded supplies with the chiefs in return for sandalwood. The chiefs' debts to the haole businessmen became great. The businessmen wanted payment in the form of sandalwood. In order to meet the demands, the ali'i would make the maka'ainana (commoners) collect wood for long hours, which would force them to neglect their own crops and cause great suffering with inadequate food supply and shelter (Fuchs, 286). Beyond harvesting sandalwood, the ali'i would call natives from as far as forty miles to come and perform menial tasks for them, which in turn forced the maka'ainana to neglect their fields (Fuchs, 293). The mission's secular agent Levi Chamberlain observed that the "ali'i oppressed the commoners by monopolizing about half their time and exacting tribute and other duties from them" (Kashay, 294).

The way in which Hawaiians constructed their family relationships, conducted their home affairs and maintained their living conditions were quite shocking to early Western newcomers. According to Fuchs, chiefs would have four or more living quarters on one piece of property, while dozens of commoners survived in simple huts, living among dogs and pigs. One mention from a chief could send hundreds of maka'ainana to death, or a priest could condemn anyone at anytime to human sacrifice. In order to maintain royal bloodlines, incest between brothers and sisters was encouraged, and abortions and infanticide were common (Fuchs, 6).

Private land ownership did not exist. All of the island land was governed and owned by the chiefs. The commoners worked the lands to provide for their families, communizes, and chiefs. Commoners rarely kept more than one third of their produce for themselves (Fuchs, 6). This situation was commonly accepted, as the Hawaiians knew of no other way, and a relatively peaceful culture existed before the first brush of Western civilization. However, it seems that based on this evidence, internal oppression was at the root of the Hawaiian political system, and the distinct hierarchy enforced by the ali'i demands kept the culture functioning in a way not too far from monarchies in developed nations. This hierarchal structure may have contributed to the ability for the missionaries and masters to trick and oppress the Hawaiians, as they were accustomed to a political system that benefited only a few while the rest resided in contentment with their lands and resources.

Another piece of history subject to multiple interpretations is the story of King Kamehameha. Shortly after Captain Cook discovered Hawaii for the West, Kings on each island fought each other for ultimate control of the region and Kingdom. King Kamehameha I obtained guns and cannon from the haole, and used them to overtake all of the islands, except Kaua'i, which eventually gave in (Fuchs, 7). There was much Hawaiian blood shed, but it was shed by a Hawaiian, not by the newcomers. Yet, this particular Hawaiian is idolized today by Hawaiians as being the reason that Hawaii is one culture, and one race. The bloodshed is seen by some Hawaiians as having been justified – it produced a solidarity that would not have existed otherwise. The actions of Kamehameha demonstrated how damaging and violent, yet necessary nation making could be. And that same unification made a takeover that much easier.

Today, the sites of these atrocities are now tourist attractions. On the island of Maui, there is a site where Kamehameha slaughtered so many Hawaiians that their bodies dammed a river. The story, detailing the women and children who watched in horror as their men were slaughtered, can be read before one enjoys a hike along the river. The bloodshed continued on O'ahu, where Kamehameha and his men drove opposing warriors off of the Nu'uaniu cliff. A site where today, tourists gaze at the ocean from the cemented and walled plot bearing a painting of the atrocity.

Regardless of whether we view Kamehameha as the slaughterer or savior of Hawaiians, once all land belonged to one kingdom, the easily persuaded ali'i and those haoles who took advantage of their kindness worked out the Great Mahele of 1848, in which the monarch (persuaded by the Westerners) decided to privatize all the land. Once the land was privatized, Hawaiians were made to pay taxes and register titles to their lands—a concept that was foreign to them. Failure to do so allowed others (mainly foreigners) to claim the land. Haoles also persuaded the Hawaiians to sell their lands, which forced the Hawaiians to seek shelter on already owned lands. By 1886, two-thirds of the islands were owned by foreigners (Edles, 50).

“Probably no single event so drastically changed the social system of Hawaii as the Great Mahele, resulting from the decision of Kamehameha III to permit land to be purchased by private persons” (Fuchs, 14). The Great Mahele resulted from a deeper-rooted idea that originated with Kamehameha I, which allowed heirs of lesser chiefs to inherit land when the lesser chief passed, instead of the land going back to the head chief. During this process, Europeans and Americans asked the King for land on which to build warehouses, stores, and homes. The King granted land grants to the Westerners in

exchange for services and goods. Once these lands were in the possession of haoles, the Western ideological means to divide, lease, buy and sell land commenced. Once the Great Mahele land officially divided the lands, many Hawaiians became landless because they didn't understand Western rules of privatization of land (Kauanui, 75). Proof that this did not benefit the Hawaiians lies in the statistics. After the division, of the allotted 984,000 acres reserved for Hawaiians, they only received 28,658 acres (Kauanui, 77).

Residual effects of the Great Mahele resulted in the Hawaiians giving up much of their own land in the misunderstanding that it was no longer shared. They moved to tenements, and in towns. Without the source of the land to provide them with their food, shelter, culture and way of existing, they began to die. "Unless they can be gotten back to the soil, they are a doomed people," was written in the Honolulu Star Bulletin in 1918 as the journalists observed the direct effects of the Great Mahele (Kauanui, 81).

Clash of Culture and A Rebellion

The atrocities did not stop at the taking of the land. The entire Hawaiian culture as it had always existed, became suppressed. An example of the vanishing culture due to Western influence can be found in the Kumulipo. As the Hawaiians had always practiced an oral culture, in order to express their lineage, something that Hawaiians took great pride and care in doing, they would recite their ancestry in poetry form. Reciting this unique poem traced ones lineage as far back as their ancestors had recited it, and then some. The Kumulipo described who that person was.

Queen Lili'uokalani had used the Kumulipo to trace her own heritage. Once English speaking foreigners took over the Hawaiian government, the genealogy of the ruling chiefs was finished. There were no longer “mele Inoa” (praise songs) created and performed. Instead, the missionaries replaced these with hymns (Okiihiro, 19). Hymns could not replace the importance of the poetic process of preserving history and identity, but the Hymns prevailed.

Another form of poetry in which the Hawaiians took great pride was the Hula. Before the westerners arrived, hula was taught in hula schools for the chiefs to enjoy. The dance signified each school's lineage, and every song along with its choreography showed traits of the specific families from which it came. The missionaries considered the hula to be barbaric and sexually inappropriate, and banned the ancient ritual. However, once tourists began to arrive, the hula developed into a sanitized form, disconnected from the lineages of families, traditions, and chiefs. A cheap imitation of what it once was, rather than the intricate and complex beauty that it was meant to be. The end of the kingdom along with the end of the Hawaiian language transformed the hula and its power to a cheap commodity for tourists (Okiihiro, 20). The hula and the reciting of the genealogy were integral to Hawaiian culture. Genealogies are the gateway to the Hawaiian concept of time and space. They are the means to discovering identity. They inspire Hawaiians and “anchor Hawaiians to [their] place in the universe and give [them] the comforting illusion of continued existence” (Silva, 93).

While the Hawaiians existed in the oral tradition, the foreigners relied on the written word. Therefore, the colonized were a people lacking their own history in the context of the written documentation of life, and that Hawaiian history was kept from the

books. This process is what Ngugi wa Thiong'o calls the colonizer's "establishment of mental control" (Silva, 125). The colonizers used the immense power of text. So powerful in fact, that it gave them the ability to transform and annihilate an entire culture with 26 letters. Paradoxically the Hawaiians in present day are using those same letters to infinitely express themselves, their ideas, and their fight for sovereignty.

The Kanaka Maoli did not completely surrender to the invasion of their culture. As they were grossly outnumbered militarily, they sought the very tools of their oppressors to convey their dissent. The Kanaka Maoli fought racist ideals that deemed them savages by taking what they had learned from the haoles (Westerners) and using it to their advantage. They utilized such tools as the printing press and written word. *Ka Hoku o ka Pakipika*, a newspaper that was written in Hawaiian, proved the Kanaka Maoli had mastered the civilized technology. Using the colonizers' tools as their own, they wrote traditional literature and discussed modern politics. "They countered the hierarchical racism by refusing to grant it any validity and by valuing their own language and culture to a high degree" (Silva, 73). By succumbing to the pressure to become civilized, the Kanaka Maoli could in turn work on keeping their independence. "For many Kanaka Maoli, to be *na'auao* meant to be literate and educated in business, law, and/or politics, but it did not mean that traditional arts and customs should be condemned to a dark, soulless past" (Silva, 73).

This subtle form of rebellion was masked by greater forces of ideology that sought to suppress traditional arts and customs. These forces began with educational systems put in place by the missionaries. Select schools charged tuition that most of the haoles could afford because they were using the Hawaiian resources for profit. The

descendants of the missionaries and merchants learned English and skills geared toward white-collar jobs or housewife work. Common schools were available to the rest of the islands' residents, where the material taught was mostly in Hawaiian and skills were made to qualify students for laborious work (Silva, 46).

Queen Lili'uokalani used the 26 letters to make her plea to the Christian Americans. "Do not covet the little vineyard of Naboth's, so far from your shores, lest the punishment of Ahab fall upon you, if not in your day, in that of your children" (Lili'uokalani, xii). I find yet another tragic reality exemplified in the way that the Queen used the same Christianity that was taught to her and her people, and eventually used to overthrow the kingdom as being used as a plea for justice, and a threat to the future generations that must bear the burden of their ignorant ancestors.

Conveying the detail and complexity of Hawaiian history is an impossible feat to accomplish in a short paper; at most, this sketch of events will convey a sense of how events of the past contribute to today's Hawaiians' sense of betrayal, deception and imperialism. Contradictions, elaborate schemes, greed, lust for power, heroism, adventure all lie within the pages of the stories written in English and Hawaiian. History is the ultimate tool in framing the present, in establishing groundwork, and becoming a springboard as Poka Leuniu says, into the future (*Stopping the Wind*).

The influx of influential Americans living in the islands had their own interests in the islands, and their fear of a takeover from their opponents grew. Therefore, the Americans close to the King in Honolulu pressed him to seek international recognition of Hawaiian independence, therefore putting off any more intimidation by outside groups.

Secretary of State Daniel Webster in Washington agreed to sign a treaty that recognized the Hawaiian Kingdom (Fuchs, 17).

Once Kalakaua took over as King, the Americans' influence and wealth on the islands was immense. The sugar industry was booming, but the plantation owners needed help. In 1876, the plantation owners urged Kalakaua to sign the Reciprocity Treaty. The treaty allowed Hawaiian entities to sell their sugar to the US tax-free. This action caused a surge in sugar production, and most of that money went right back into the pockets of the foreign sugar plantation owners. Production was so high, that the Hawaiian workers were overwhelmed. The plantation owners looked to Asia and brought workers in from Japan, China and the Philippines. This influx of another group of foreigners grossly outnumbered the already diminishing Hawaiians (*Hawaii's Last Queen*).

“The conclusion cannot be avoided, that if my brother (King Kalakaua) had indeed sought his own pleasure rather than the good of all residents under our flag, his family would be in their hereditary rights to this day. By his liberality to those of American birth he inaugurated the treaty of reciprocity; by his investigations an solution of the problem of labor he gave them the opportunity to raise sugar at an enormous profit; and he thus devoted the earlier part of his reign to the aggrandizement of the very persons, who, as soon as they had become rich and powerful, forgot his generosity, and plotted a subversion of his authority, and an overthrow of the constitution under which the kingdom had been happily governed for nearly a quarter of a century” (Queen Lili'uokalani, 78).

As the history of Hawaii unfolds, it becomes apparent that as the victories of accumulation in favor of the Americans occurred, those in charge only grew increasingly drunk with power and wealth, and their growing need for ultimate control continued to harvest until they were ripe with evil. The negotiations and suggestions that they made with the Kingdom leaders, even though those leaders mostly succumbed to their requests, grew insufficient for the Americans. Therefore, they put their boots on, grabbed their rifles, and decided that it was time to show the Kingdom who was truly fit to rule.

A conspiracy against the Kingdom had been forming, and was completely made aware by June 15, 1887. Queen Lili'uokalani reflects, "for many years our sovereigns had welcomed the advice of, and given full representations in their government and councils to, American residents who had cast in their lot with our people, and established industries on the Islands. As they became wealthy, and acquired titles to lands through the simplicity of our people and their ignorance of values and of the new land laws, their greed and their love of power proportionately increased; and schemes for aggrandizing themselves still further, or for avoiding the obligations which they had incurred to us, began to occupy their minds. So the mercantile element, as embodied in the Chamber of Commerce, the sugar planters, and the proprietors of the "missionary" stores, formed a distinct political party, called the "down-town" party, whose purpose was to minimize or entirely subvert other interests, and especially the prerogatives of the crown, which, based upon ancient custom and the authority of the island chiefs, were the sole guaranty of our nationality" (Lili'uokalani, 177-178).

As the "missionary party" continued to keep its members in the Hawaiian cabinet to accumulate power, it used the king to carry out its own agenda. They developed their

plans in secret, and one day, forced King Kalakaua to sign a constitution that they had created which took away his power, made him “a mere tool in their hands” and “took away the franchise from the Hawaiian race.” The constitution was not ratified, even though the King was held at *gunpoint* and his assassination threatened if he did not sign. After that, the “missionary party” had total control. (Queen Lili’uokalani, 181). Another instance of irony exists, in that the name of the group itself uses “missionary” to describe itself, although the actions of the group conflicted greatly with the original intention of the missionaries themselves.

The very people whom the King trusted forced him with violence to sign a treaty in which he did not agree. The King was deceived and betrayed, and many say he never recovered from the experience. He took a trip around the world, some say heavy with a broken heart, and only his body returned to the islands. His sister, Lili’uokalani, became the last monarch of the Hawaiian nation.

Queen Lili’uokalani drew up a new constitution, and on Jan 14th, 1893 met with her cabinet to go over the new constitution that reestablished her as power. Two of her cabinet members betrayed her and immediately reported her actions to the annexationists—who called themselves the Committee of Safety. With the new information revealed to them by those who the Queen once considered friends, the committee had the “proof” that they needed to justify the overthrow (*Hawaii’s Last Queen*). This overthrow was being secretly plotted in late night, closed-door meetings, and after the sequence of events worked to their favor, the time was right for the success of this shortsighted group of imperialists.

The Committee of Safety spearheaded their revolution, and, with US warships waiting in Pearl Harbor, overthrew the Hawaiian Kingdom. The Committee elected Sanford Dole to be the president of the Republic of Hawaii. Dole was a son of missionaries from Maine who also started the Punahou school for haole children on the islands. Dole spoke fluent Hawaiian and had defended Hawaiian interests in his law practice. His new role was to lead a new Republic created by overthrowing the previously recognized government—an act considered illegal by today's standards (Fuchs, 31).

US President Grover Cleveland was soon notified of the happenings in Hawaii, and immediately repudiated the actions of the Republic, much like England and France had done in the past. However, contrary to the events of past, when the English and French ships acknowledge the repudiation and left the monarchy at peace, the Americans in charge refused to comply. Cleveland took action, and sent a personal investigator, ex-congressman John L. Blount of Georgia to report on whether or not the overthrow was illegal. Blount accumulated volumes of evidence that proved the revolution by the Committee of Safety was done by force, and with American compliance. Furthermore, he revealed these actions were done against the wants of the vast majority of Hawaiians. With this report, Cleveland demanded the restoration of the Queen, but again, Dole refused (Fuchs, 32).

President Cleveland's repudiation also acknowledged *the right of the Hawaiian people to choose their own form of government*. "Were that one sentence literally carried out in fact today, and the Hawaiians sustained in the carrying out of the same, it would be all that either my people or myself could ask." (Queen Lili'uokalani, 324). But instead,

the Republic refused, and Cleveland forfeited his power and left the decision up to Congress. Congress saw the situation in a different light. With tensions building in Asia, they recognized the need for a territory in the Pacific. Therefore, Congress decided to overlook the overthrow, and began talking about annexing the islands to the US (Silva, 134).

A section from the Blount report reads: “the natives when left alone have had a most satisfactory, peaceful and progressive Government, while all the dissensions, riots, and troubles recorded in the annals of these islands have ever been by or through foreigners seeking to wrench the power and wealth from the poor natives, these being ever the peaceful and patient sufferers thereby, not ‘mised,’ but terrorized and oppressed” (Silva, 131). It is noteworthy to mention that this statement stemmed from a white Republican from Georgia, who spent years interviewing both sides, and who was wined and dined by the hoale elite in Hawaii.

Regardless of the staggering evidence in favor of a full monarch restoration, the Republic continued to rule, the Queen was imprisoned for attempting to start a conspiracy against the Republic, and McKinley became president of the US. McKinley saw the value of Hawaii and desired to annex the islands along with other territories such as Philippines and Guam during the Spanish American War in 1898. However, the treaty could not obtain the two-thirds vote that was needed in the Senate. Just as Congress had done what it wanted despite the previous president when dealing with the overthrow, McKinley did what he wanted by going to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who

circumvented the treaty procedures by creating a joint resolution of annexation. This roundabout action created a need for merely a majority of one vote in each House, which was accomplished in July of 1898. “Annexation was accomplished—the fruit of approximately seventy-five years of expanding American influence in Hawaii” (Fuchs, 36). Afterward, the Hawaiian flag was cut up into pieces and handed out to the missionaries’ children as a token to remember their victory over the Hawaiian monarchy. (*Hawaii’s Last Queen*).

While the Haole elite transcended themselves toward their own future, the Hawaiians were withdrawing to a past that had steadily slipped away. Haole culture dominated the islands, that to which Hawaiians were unable to fully adjust. They began to decline, as their past ways could not compete to new and foreign laws. The Hawaiians attempted their culture, that which allowed sex and property relationships to be open, which in turn created a high crime rate by haole law standards. The social order of the haole elite created an extremely difficult obstacle for the Hawaiians to advance in any capitol or educational interest. This separation further perpetuated the Hawaiians’ substandard living situations, where crime prevailed (Fuchs, 68).

Kauanui mentions that the true importance of Hawaiian rehabilitation directly related the necessity of Hawaiian survival to the return to the land, a right that the Hawaiians deserve after being dispossessed after the overthrow. In discussing and deciding annexation, Kauanui notes that “had the US representatives...fully reckoned with this history, they would have had to question the US annexation altogether. The multiple ways they steered away from calling US sovereignty into question were crucial to the formulation of the proposal and help to explain the layered contradictions that

surfaced in the hearings” (85). The Hawaiians had difficulties in attempting to make the proper argument based on their inability to rise beyond the instilled US laws. Because of the complexity of history, this realization of the wrong made it impossible for Congress to come to the recognition that Hawaii had been illegally and forcefully taken.

The fact that the nation was stolen did not stall nor was even mentioned in statehood discussions of the 1950’s. These discussions were not a new idea, however. It is interesting to note that 106 years before Congress approved statehood in 1959, pro-American King Kamehameha III first began discussions with the US government about the annexation of Hawaii to the union as a new state. To further expound on the non-linear attempt at deconstruction of the past, the first bill asking for statehood was submitted in 1919 by Jonah Kuhio (Fuchs, 406).

Although there was Hawaiian interest in statehood over a century earlier, there was much opposition to it in the 1950’s. A 1958 private public-opinion survey on all islands showed that 23 percent of the haoles and 27 percent of the Hawaiians were strongly opposed to statehood. Opponents of statehood in Congress would have been overjoyed to hear these results, because at the time Congress was divided on the issue as well (Fuchs, 412).

Representatives from the North wanted to maintain the political make up of the senate, and therefore many voted against statehood. Congressmen from the South feared that representatives from Hawaii would give more votes to civil rights. Hawaii Senator Daniel Inouye said that the proposed statehood legislation was a “pure and simple civil rights bill, and civil rights bills during those days just weren’t passing.” The argument against the statehood bill, although not said so loudly and publicly, was that if Hawaii

became a state you would have representation by a strange looking people. As one senator said, “How would you like to be sitting next to a fellow named Yamamaoto?” (Scott-Smith, 260). These events can be viewed as quite fascinating, because as much opposition as there is to statehood now by Native Hawaiians, there was just as much opposition from white southern senators because of the racial make up of the island. But that racial make up is what some democrats felt the US needed, and is a fierce component in the current day arguments regarding racial definitions with the newest legislation versus nationality.

“By the mid-1950’s, therefore, Hawaii had become more than just an important naval base. It offered the chance to demonstrate to the emerging nations how the American democratic system was as respectful and protective of freedom for all as was currently claimed in its foreign policy pronouncements” (Scott-Smith, 259). This irony is almost too much to bear. While white republicans opposed statehood because they refused to have strange looking people bringing more weight toward civil rights, their opposition wanted an example to be shown to the communists that America was a melting pot of culture, and that it was a strong and good force in the world, all the while white Americans had wrongfully and forcefully, illegally taken over the country of Hawaii and was marginalizing the Native Hawaiians while profiting from their resources.

Pro-statehood advocates will say that the Hawaiian residents voted in favor of statehood 17 to 1. What they don’t say, is that during the 1950’s, island residents were only offered two options during the statehood movement: keep territorial status or opt for statehood. With the 17 to 1 vote for “yes” on the statehood plebiscite, a skewed version of what really happened appears, and the resistance and opposition to the move was

silenced. It basically came down to settlers wanting statehood, and Native Hawaiians opposing. The true alternative to statehood—complete independence in accordance with the UN--was not offered during the vote (Rosa, 102). There was such an influx of “outsider” struggle in determining the fate of the islands, while no consideration was given to the fact that the US occupied Hawaii, and that should have been the true forefront of whether or not it was even legally plausible to admit Hawaii into statehood.

While the statistics show that not everyone favored statehood, there was a glimmer of hope that followed the ruling. “The coming of statehood, which may have crushed lingering hopes to restore the past, also stirred Hawaiians to look to the future. It was as if the Hawaiians were entering the second phase of immigrant adjustment along with the Filipinos. In that phase, immigrants give up the dream of returning home and plan for the future of their children in the land of their adoption. Internal bickering, carried over from the old country and intensified because of adversity in the first period of adjustment, gives way to growing unity. Feelings of despair, so common for generations among the Hawaiians, were invaded by glimmerings of hope that something might be done to enhance the prestige, power, and wealth of the group. These were the experiences of a growing number of part Hawaiians as statehood approached” (Fuchs, 443). Sadly, that hope had to come in the form of immigration, and the Native Hawaiians were forced to find that same coping mechanisms that immigrants had, but in their native land. Those ethnic Hawaiians, who only made up 1.5 percent of the population in 1959, felt that statehood would threaten their way of life even more with more people and tourism. They were right.

Before that fear surfaced, more hope was given. Reverend Abraham Akaka attempted to bring one last attempt to instill pride and positivity to what was an otherwise devastating decision for the Hawaiians. His sermon dove directly into the hearts and culture of the Hawaiian people. At a special statehood service at the Kawaiahao Church on March 13, 1959, he told his guests, “There are some of us to whom statehood brings silent fears.” He then reminded his people of an old Hawaiian chant, which translated means: “There is a fire underground, but the fire pit gives forth only smoke, smoke that bursts upward, touching the skies, and Hawaii is humbled beneath its darkness...It is night over Hawaii, night from the smoke of my land...but there is salvation for the people, for now the land is being lit by a great flame.” Akaka asked his people to view statehood as a lifting of the clouds of smoke and the releasing of opportunity for all the peoples of Hawaii. Opportunity, he stressed, was induced by the ancient spirit of Aloha, and Hawaii’s mission was to teach that spirit to the rest of the world” (Fuchs, 447).

It seemed that the only way for the Native Hawaiians to survive and rise above the oppression was to deal with the atrocities and use them to their advantage. On Queen Lili’uokalani’s trip to England, she made a profound and telling realization after observing England’s present situation as opposed to the past: “but at the present day all this has gone, the changes introduced by an entirely different civilization have made the former life impossible; the laws of trade, the demands of mercantile life, the advancement of commerce...have effected a revolution...” she continues: “Is England better and happier for the extinction of a style of life read of in history but not to-day existing? At least, by such souvenirs as this manor house, are pictures brought back to one’s mind of a

past, that had much in it of sufficient worth to awaken emotions of sadness that it has gone forever.” (Queen Lili’oukalani, 169).

A positive look remains, although even in present day, remnants of the old kingdom creep into modernity, sometimes with respect, and other times like a slap in the face. For example, in the introduction of “Hawaii’s story by Hawaii’s Queen,” Glen Grant points out that when Kamehameha III was being pressured to forge ties with the British, Admiral Sir Richard Thomas came through to restore the rule to the Hawaiian monarch on July 31, 1843, saying that ‘ua mau ke ea o ka’aina I ka pono’ ...the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness” (Grant, viii). This same phrase became the Hawaiian state motto in 1959.

Racial Dynamics Today

“In Hawaii, it was not so much income or occupation or education which determined one’s friends, voting affiliation, or prospects for power and prestige. In the forty years following annexation, the peoples of Hawaii thought of themselves, not primarily as doctors, lawyers, druggist, or field hands—or even as Americans—but as haoles, Hawaiians, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos” (Fuchs, 42).

Race is the underlying subtext for much of what has happened in Hawaii’s past, and how Hawaii is defined in present day. Race is a prevalent discussion topic, and many newcomers find discomfort at first with how open a racial discussion can be, especially when those newcomers have been brought up to believe that being colorblind equates to being free from racism and stereotyping. Race is also at the forefront of many of the

sovereignty debates, and a difficult and complex topic in deciding the fate of the future of Hawaii.

The Apology Resolution signed by President Clinton in 1993 acknowledges the illegality of the overthrow 100 years prior. It is not, however, a call to action, rather, a statement that shows the US government is aware of the wrongdoing, and is apologetic. What is most telling here, however, is that the Apology Resolution defines a Native Hawaiian as “any individual who is a descendent of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now constitutes the state of Hawaii” (Kaunani, 5). Conversely, The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, which gives about 200,000 acres of land to those who qualify as Native Hawaiians, defines a Native Hawaiian as having “at least one-half blood quantum of individuals inhabiting the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778.” Therefore it seems that the official definition as stated by the Apology Resolution, as there is nothing to gain, relieves the receiver of any stipulation regarding race. Yet when there is something to gain, a blood quantum requirement is put into place, and even then, many people are put on waiting lists that take them past death to ever receive their lands.

In the case of Rice versus Cayetano, a haole man claimed that his constitutional rights were denied when he wasn't allowed to vote on the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. OHA is an organization responsible for land and money allocated for Hawaiians, and therefore the board members themselves are Hawaiian. The haole man cried racism, and cited the 15th amendment guaranteeing the right of all races to take place in a vote. Although the court ruled in favor of OHA, the presence of the claim created a chilling effect to other territories that are fighting for rights, such as American Samoa.

Congressman Faleomavaega of American Samoa said “this raises my concern because legal scholars in the US do not consider our ‘treaties’ with the US to be ‘treaties’ in the technical sense, but ‘deeds of cession,’ which are considered of lesser authority than the US constitution. Therefore, any rights seen as privileging Samoans over other US (9) citizens residing in American Samoa are vulnerable to constitutional challenges of racial discrimination” Kauanui, 8). Therefore if a hoale man complains of racism using the laws put into place to protect the rights of the people who were occupied/overthrown/oppressed/silenced, then it risks those protective laws’ dissipation in a “colorblind” 21st century, which actually reverses progress.

Hanauni-Kay Trask, a Hawaiian activist who at times embodies the very people whom she is fighting against, compares the racialization of Hawaiians by blood quantum to that of the Blacks in South Africa (Trask, 166). A Native Hawaiian with less than a 50% blood quantum cannot receive lands and monies set aside for their culture to be preserved. This shift is a “racial formation” where the politics determine the content and how important racial categories are. Young points to Omi and Winant who say that race still is a “central axis of social relations which cannot be subsumed under or reduced to some broader category or conception” (Young, 84). The de-occupation movement focuses on nationality, not race. Yet according to Young, regardless of nation, race will always be associated with Hawaiianness. This begs the question as to whether or not this changes the way the fight for nationhood or tribal status is perceived and fought.

Young continues in discussing how race is being used by both dominant and marginalized cultures when appropriate for their own gain, which Queen Lili’uokalani observed a century earlier. “And yet this great and powerful nation must go across two

thousand miles of sea, and take from the poor Hawaiians their little spots in the broad Pacific, must covet our islands of Hawaii Nei, and extinguish the nationality of my poor people, many of whom have now not a foot of land which can be called their own. And for what? In order that another race-problem shall be injected into the social and political perplexities with which the United States in the great experiment of popular government is already struggling? In order that a novel and inconsistent foreign and colonial policy shall be grafted upon its hitherto impregnable diplomacy? Or in order that a friendly and generous, yet proud-spirited and sensitive race, a race admittedly capable and worthy of receiving the best opportunities for material and moral progress, shall be crushed under the weight of a social order and prejudice with which even another century of preparation would hardly fit it to cope?" (Lili'uokalani, 310).

While conducting research and interviews in Hawaii, I had several off-camera discussions with Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians. A non-Hawaiian Armenian immigrant gave an example of when he believed he was the victim of "reverse discrimination." He stopped by a Jack in the Box on walk and asked to use the restroom. The two men behind the counter told him "no," so he left. On his way back a while later, he noticed a Hawaiian youth walk in, ask the same two men at the counter, and they gave him the key and pointed to the bathroom. The men were Hawaiian, as was the man who had asked to go to the restroom. The Armenian walked back in, and asked why the man before him could use the restroom and he could not. The two men shrugged, and refused to offer an explanation.

Stories like these appear in newspapers, but not often, as they are stifled when possible so that Hawaii's paradise façade can continue to lure tourists. A story involving

a mainland family made its way to local news. A woman and her husband, along with their two teenage daughters traveled to Maui on a vacation. While at a state park, a Hawaiian girl accosted the two teenage daughters, saying, "Go back to the mainland" and "Take your white ass off our beaches."

When the father of the two girls stepped between them, three young Hawaiian men slammed him against a vehicle, cut his ear, choked him and punched him. The police arrived, and convinced the father against pressing charges. The officers cited the reason as to avoid the high cost of court appearances, and postulated that a Hawaiian judge would side with the Hawaiian assailants (Keller).

Haunani-Kay Trask believes that Native Hawaiians have every right to feel hostile toward whites. Regardless of the lack of acknowledgement from the media on hate crimes, there is animosity that lingers in pockets around the islands. Although there is no justification for violence, the reasoning behind these actions stem from the memories of their ancestors, who may have told stories of the hoale inflicting a wrong and similar violence that they also felt justified in doing.

"Racial violence directed at whites in Hawaii, while deplorable, is minor compared to the larger issues underlying it...The Hawaiian spirit of aloha is pervasive, but you have to earn aloha. You don't necessarily trust outsiders, because outsiders [historically] come and have taken what you have. It's an incredibly giving and warm and generous place, but you have to earn it" (Keller).

In interviews conducted for the film, one haole local said that all of the animosity stems from a lack of education. "Yeah, I'm haole, and if you know your history, you know that the white people came in and overthrew the government, and before that the

Europeans brainwashed Kamehameha, gave him the guns, and had him unite the islands so that they could take over. So now there are white people here because they dominated then. So you like your electricity? You like that haole made car you drive around in on the island? Deal with it.” This hoale view is common, and further perpetuates the divide between the Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians as both groups fight to maintain their identity and place on the islands.

“There is a need to become even more critically aware of a larger US racial ideology that is continually at work and that reorganizes social relations and hierarchies even in a place like Hawaii” (Young, 95). Young compares this ideology to the US master relationship that ignores the fact that Africans were brought to the US as slaves, and instead broadly sweeps the immigrant term to describe the proud melting pot that is the United States. The same thought process exists, and was blatantly a reason for, Hawaiian annexation and eventual statehood. The proud existence of the epitome of a melting pot in Hawaii refuses to attribute that to the plantation labor that brought Asians to further marginalize the Hawaiians. Therefore, as the Native Hawaiians are fighting for independence, the true force of its existence is labeled as civil rights and not the proper function of human rights.

Many Hawaiians are “dealing with it.” There are several groups in place to fight Hawaiian sovereignty. Some groups support the Akaka bill, giving the Native Hawaiians a nation-within-a-nation model to work with, similar to that of the Native Americans, and others want complete independence from the US, the country of Hawaii fully restored, and the culture and land left to the Native Hawaiians to cultivate.

Sovereignty

“It is for them (Hawaiian children) that I would give the last drop of my blood; it is for them that I would spend, nay, am spending, everything belonging to me. Will it be in vain? It is for the American people and their representatives in Congress to answer these questions. As they deal with me and my people, kindly, generously, and justly, so may the Great Ruler of all nations deal with the grand and glorious nation of the United States of America” (Lili’uokalani, 374).

The Queen let her plea be known, as many other Kanaka Maoli were writing their own resistance in their native tongue. Noenoe Silva’s work unearths a silenced resistance to colonialism in the form of documents written in Hawaiian. Silva also cites the killing of Captain Cook as an example of the Hawaiians to resistance from the West. This struggle has been left out of the history books, which Ngugi wa Thiong’o attributes to “the biggest weapon wielded...by imperialism...is the cultural bomb. The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people’s belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves” (Silva, 2).

History is often written by the victors, Dipesh Chakrabarty says that “the deletion of passages works to produce and reinforce Western practices of historiography, thereby denying the reader possible glimpses into another worldview.” That same historiography that Silva points to as “one of the most powerful discourses that justifies the continued occupation of Hawaii by the US today” (Silva, 9). Hawaiians are delving into their past and discovering the work of resistance by their ancestors, and basing their strength on

that of the past. Lurching forward into the present, those passages, documents, along with official documents and treaties, have awakened Native Hawaiians to a claim that they feel they deserve—a claim to self-determination—a sacred notion that was stolen, and much work is being done to get that back.

The complex history of Hawaii, coupled with the present day complexities and surmounting obstacles such as military, tourism and statehood, present a fierce battle of warriors that the Native Hawaiians must face to achieve their goals. The Hawaiians themselves are presently divided as to how these goals will be achieved. One end of the spectrum introduces a piece of legislation known as the “Akaka Bill,” and the other is a complete removal from the United States into a self-governing country as recognized by the international community.

The Akaka bill is currently before the US congress, and would give the Native Hawaiians federal recognition within US federal policy for Native Americans. Hawaiian Democratic Senator Daniel Akaka revises the bill that was originally introduced by Representative Neil Abercrombie. The Akaka bill, if passed, would give Hawaiians indigenous status and therefore a special relationship with the US, and most importantly, a right to limited self-determination. This bill would create sections of Hawaii strictly reserved to function as a nation-within-a-nation, and would change the legal status of Native Hawaiians who choose to be a part of the tribe (Kauanui, 2).

Many oppose this legislation, however. Many believe that the Native Hawaiians did not have a say in the creation of the bill, and that one US federal representative should not be speaking for an entire people. This bill would help alleviate the burden of court cases against Hawaiians, charging them with racist attempts to control federal

funding for Native Hawaiians, but many believe there are other ways to solve that issue. Also, those who seek complete independence feel that this bill would limit or even completely extinguish their right to seek out international recognition, which would give Hawaii full self-determination, rather than “limited.” Kauanui states that in addition to these controversies, local non-Hawaiian residents are opposed, as it would greatly alter their lifestyle. And finally in an ironic twist, many Republicans in the US senate disagree with the bill because it would give the Native Hawaiians distinct rights. The same party who vehemently opposed to annexation and later union joining of Hawaii are now continuing that mentality by opposing the rights granted to a people whom that same party did not want to be a part of the US in the first place.

Akaka’s bill would protect against race-based lawsuits because Federal recognition would change Hawaiian from a racial category to a political one, and therefore no racial challenges could be enforced. On the surface, this seems like a feasible remedy, but as Kauanui points out, “Federal protection is now being sold to Hawaiians as a defense against average citizens who challenge the Hawaiian trusts that the US never upheld in the first place, trusts that are based on the theft of a nation” (11). That particular quote embodies much of the frustration felt with the struggle for sovereignty and puts a perspective on just how complex this issue truly is.

Supporters of the Akaka bill want protection of the federal funding for Native Hawaiians. In the aforementioned cases of Rice versus Cayetano, where in which OHA was challenged by the Supreme Court in ruling that the limitation of voters for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to only ethnic Hawaiians was unconstitutional. The court cited the 15th amendment’s prohibition on racial discrimination on voting rights being violated. If

the Akaka bill passed, Native Hawaiians would become a protected people, and therefore cases such as these could not penetrate their funding rights. It is interesting to note that an amendment that was created to protect minorities from the whites who once disallowed universal suffrage is now being used against minorities to protect whites.

Sheer Rhetoric also becomes problematic, as the Akaka bill privileges a race—the Hawaiian race—and not a tribe. The bill would have to change the Hawaiian race to the Hawaiian tribe, which would be unconstitutional. Further dissent points out that the federal government does not bestow the power to full sovereignty on new tribes, especially those who have become acclimated to mainstream culture (Heriot and Kirsanow). Hawaii's case would seem null and void given that the 50th state has been perpetually immersed in modern American culture. This is apparent as a Tahitian chief at the occupation march, covered in tribal tattoos and wearing only a loincloth, wore Oakley sunglasses and a small fanny pack around his waist to hold the keys to his car.

If the Akaka bill is not the way in which Hawaiians should achieve sovereignty, then a more radical movement set in place may be an option. Many believe that tribal status is not enough, and the true return to land is the only way to achieve the deserved right to self-determination. The Hawaiians are in pain from their past, and many cannot see past that. Representative Mele Carroll believes that Hawaiians are stuck. She believes that they cannot continue to fight with each other; they cannot continue to play the victim. Instead, she believes, they need to heal that pain by coming together to work toward a goal, recognizing that there is no way to avoid the reality of their situation, the modernity that encases them, and to work within and beyond those obstacles.

Since Hawaii's sovereignty wasn't lost via "conquest" cession or adjudication, the rights to nation state status are still valid under international law. The term "conquest" seems misleading, as if implying that if a nation successfully "conquers" another, then their presence there is validated. Legally and from history, the UN gives colonies the option to choose their own political status because of the UN General Assembly resolution 1514: "All peoples have the right to self determination; by virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development" These options are: integration within the colonizing country, free association with that country, or complete independence from that country (Kauanui, 190).

"The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights consists of a preamble and thirty articles that grant rights to all people. Articles 15, 17, and 21 are examples of rights owed to the Hawaiians that have been violated by the US. Article 15 assures that there shall be no arbitrary deprivation of nationality. The last Queen of Hawaii gave up her rule to the US under duress, and her act was not representative of the Hawaiian people's giving up their nationality. Thus, it seems fair to charge that Hawaiians have been arbitrarily denied their nationality. Article 17 protects people from the arbitrary deprivation of property. When Hawaii became a territory, land changed hands but this was without regard to the Hawaiians. Large portions of the lands that were supposed to reserved for Hawaiian homelands were leased. The Hawaiian homelands acreage makes up only a small portion of the islands and less than one quarter of these lands has been disturbed to Hawaiians. Article 21 assures that the will of the people will be the basis of the authority of the govt. The denial of self determination of the Hawaiian people

violates this provision” (Smith, 1828). The problem then lies in the enforcement of these international laws. As people literally die while waiting for their land, these laws have been put into place to protect them. However, they are not being properly used and therefore the system remains vehemently flawed.

Hawaiian activists proclaim that their culture has always been incredibly resourceful and scientifically advanced. Visitors from the 18th and 19th centuries lamented that the Hawaiians were “the most industrious people [they] ever saw,” and that they were “people who were such “dexterous fishers, that a day’s outing in a given area would routinely result in ten or twelve canoes deeply loaded” (Stannard, 44-45). This sophistication produced thousands of tons of fish every year; enough to sustain the population. Native Hawaiian Kealoha agrees that the scientifically advanced Hawaiians were incredibly resourceful (*Stopping The Wind*), so much so that if their culture were to reassemble, the Hawaiians could re-learn their ancestors way in order to survive into the future.

With a firm grounding in history and documented proof of the illegality of the Kingdom’s fate, the Hawaiians look to that future, both the US government and beyond to the international community, to which they believe will answer their pleas for justice to prevail. It basically comes down to a matter of human rights. As Smith points out, Human rights are a way for indigenous people to seek their own rights and freedoms. As the UN declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is put into practice, these opportunities for freedoms and rights will blossom (Smith, 1832). Human rights in the Hawaiian fight have been grossly overlooked, and must be used to advance the culture. Even as American citizens, they have been denied land and resources, are not allowed to

have self-determination nor have their basic needs met, as evident in the tent towns that dot the public beaches. Furthermore, their cries for change are muted by American imperialism.

Unfortunately, the imperialistic ideology creates barriers that stand in their way, and as Young quotes Okamura as saying, "...because of the overdependence of Hawaii's economy on tourism, it may well be too late for the necessary changes to be initiated that can give power and control to the people of Hawaii" (Young, 93).

Glimpses of Progress

Perhaps, for the present day, activists can look to smaller victories for inspiration, such as the fight and win over the island of Kaho'olawe. Blackford speaks to the restoration of Kaho'olawe becoming the catalyst for the resistance from the Native Hawaiians to colonialism. It was a symbol of the strength of the people, a symbol, much like the texts of opposition from their ancestors, of the ability to be firm and victorious.

"The work to heal the island will heal the soul of our people" (Blackford, 545). Before the Westerners arrived, Kaho'olawe was a spiritual center and navigation marker, and a source of sustenance (Blackford, 549). Representative of Kaho'olawe, Mele Carroll, speaks to the integral part that the island plays in Hawaiian culture. Hawaiians consider Kaho'olawe a wahi pana (sacred place) that was birthed by Papa (sky father) and Wakea (earth mother). The Hawaiians also considered the shores a place of refuge.

Kaho'olawe was actually put into Western hands by Hawaiians. The wording of the following quote is telling to the constant fight between victimization, distortion of

history, and frustration by Hawaiians as to how to fix all that has been broken. “Eager to raise funds for its operations, increasingly influenced by westerners, and not at the time overly concerned about the island’s cultural or spiritual importance, the Hawaiian government leased all of Kaho’olawe to Robert Wyllie, the kingdom’s minister of foreign affairs, and Elisha Allen, the chief justice of the kingdom’s supreme court, in 1858.”

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the military ended ranching on the island when it took it over for bombing practice (Blackford, 550).

By 1970’s, Native Hawaiians were heading the rebellion against military use of Kaho’olawe, even attracting attention from the mainland. “Their actions became part of the native Hawaiian renaissance, a movement that sought the return of lost lands, the revival of Hawaiian culture, and political Sovereignty” (Blackford, 555). Kaho’olawe became a “preeminent symbol” of the Native Hawaiian’s oppression.

The fight for Kaho’olawe escalated to the point where two people died while protesting. This extreme case shows how significant the restoration was for Hawaiians, as well as raises the question of how far one should go to make a point, and at what cost? Many believe that the two protestors did not die in vain, because in the end, Kaho’olawe was a victory for Hawaiians and their fight for sovereignty.

The PKO (Protect Kaho’olawe ‘Ohana) filed suites in 1976 to the federal court against the secretary of the Navy and secretary of defense for the violation of clean air, water, historic site and freedom of religion laws. The judge ordered the Navy to comply with the order, and eventually consented to make new rules for the use of Kaho’olawe. By 1980, the Navy had to agree to clear 1/3 of all ordinance from the island so that the PKO could begin to restore spiritual cultural values gunnery (Blackford, 563-4). This

was a telling victory for the sovereignty movement on a smaller scale, as well as an example of the military and political entity not always siding with each other. Finally In 1994, the federal government gave the state Kaho'olawe's claims and agreed to have the unexploded ordinance cleared and complete restoration finished within ten years.

I spoke with Paul Higashino, the Restoration Ecologist for the PKO. He told me that workshops are developing for the physical restoration of the island. They only use indigenous plants, and continue to perform cultural planting, such as taro, bread, fruit, and sweet potato. The ultimate goal may end up being that the food crops could supplement the people who may live there one day. But first they must undo 200 years of goat and sheep overgrazing, and the desecration caused from Navy bombs.

Although a victory, uncleared ordinance still lingers on the island, making it a very dangerous place. The navy originally proposed for 100 percent of the ordinance on the surface to be cleaned, and 30 percent Tier 2 (depth of four feet). However, the Navy only cleared 70 percent of surface ordinance, and about 30 percent of the island didn't get cleared at all. When it comes to whether or not the Hawaiians will someday fully receive sovereignty, Higashino says, "I don't lose sleep over it. We're all on this earth for x number of years, and I see my role to support the state is to take care of this resource, this island, and how to make it a better place for the next group that comes along." As PKO continues to work around the ordinance to restore the culture with cultivation of the land, perhaps the next group and generations will benefit from the island.

Another wonderful example of the Hawaiians fighting for justice is the water shortage struggle in Nahiku on the island of Maui. This small community in the rainforest off of the winding road to Hana receives far less water from their dried up

stream than they can function. When the corporations moved into the islands, some set up along creeks, and soon installed a diversion that altered the flow of water from their source in the mountains to the water plant, which redistributed the water to other locations such as resorts and golf courses, leaving the streams that stretch to the villages dry.

The Nahiku Community Association is standing up to the water commission and demanding that the water taken from their streams be put back, so that their culture can survive. The association meets regularly to discuss the issue, and welcomes state representatives to help give them a voice. I attended a meeting, and was overwhelmed with a great sense of Hawaiian pride, strength and culture, and a true embodiment of the fight that Hawaiians persevere through in the name of justice and humanity.

The complexity of modernity stood out at this particular meeting when a Native Hawaiian and Nahiku resident took to the microphone. He had worked for the water company for over 20 years to support his family; the same company that was taking the water away from himself and his fellow Hawaiians. He was torn between existing in his reality and standing up to a wrong. The president of the community assured him that his fellow Hawaiians understood that the commitment to feed your family came first, and that his passion and understanding did not go unnoticed. They vowed to work together, as Hawaiians, to come up with an answer and restore the water.

Another recent victory is that of the dismissal of the Superferry. The state proposed a high-speed catamaran to accommodate inter-island travel in 2005. However, the giant vessel had not undergone required environmental testing. Because of that and

the proposed multi-million dollar restoration programs for island ports, people began to object.

By 2007, after several court cases had already commenced regarding the vessel, the Hawaii Superferry started service to Maui and Kaua'i. By October 9 of that year, and following another four-week trial, the court ruled that the Superferry must conduct an environmental review before start of project. Governor Linda Lingle issued a proclamation convening a special session of Legislature to consider legislation allowing immediate resumption of ferry service on Oct. 23, 2007, and proceeded to sign "Act 2," which amended the existing law to allow "large-capacity interisland ferry companies" to operate while environmental review is prepared. Several more court cases commenced yet again over the constitutionality of the exemptions, and the Superferry grew to become a new symbol of the Hawaiian fight (Dayton, TenBruggencate).

"You can't just think in present tense and maintain status quo. You've got to think in future tense, what are the needs of the future generations, and how do we address those needs responsibly while simultaneously maintaining a good quality of life in the present and into the future," Jacqui Hoover, president of the Hawai'i Leeward Planning conference said. This mentality is crucial for Hawaiians to come together and work toward a victory. However, the circular reasoning embedded in Hawaiian culture may provide a roadblock in this forward, linear thinking. "In our language, the past (*ka wa mamua*) is the time in front of before; the future (*ka wa mahope*) is the time that comes after. In the words of one of our best living Native historians, Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, "The Hawaiian stands firmly in the present, with his back to the future, and his eyes fixed upon the past, seeking historical answers for present-day dilemmas. Such an orientation

is to the Hawaiian an eminently practical one, for the future is always unknown whereas the past is rich in glory and knowledge” (Trask).

Those who protested the Superferry were thinking of the future of their island, while they dove into the water with their surfboards, kayaks, or solely their bodies. The U.S. Coast Guard used force to secure waters around the harbor where the protestors created a human blockade that had prevented the 350-foot-long vessel, the Alakai, from entering the harbor (TenBurggencate, Daysog).

After the passengers and cars were finally disembarked, the company issued the following statement:

"We are extremely disappointed for the passengers who were booked on the voyage to Kaua'i and those who were scheduled for the return trip to O'ahu. We have received 22,000 people attending our open houses on O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i and the island of Hawai'i and those who booked more than 20,000 voyages on the Alakai. Community members on all islands have been looking forward to the launch ... And, we are sorry to see that minority dissident groups have chosen to oppose a service that the people of Hawai'i have overwhelmingly embraced." (Ten and Sog)

Afterward, the court ruled that the law that allowed Superferry to operate during an environmental review is improper because it is a special law created just for Superferry, and the vessel was dismissed from the state for good.

I'm white, you're not.

“Social Responsibility begins in individual responsibility”

“There are, in fact, no races that need help; only individuals, citizens.” (Shelby Steele, 34, 42).

One of the most frustrating aspects of this project personally, is that I can finish this paper and this film, and wipe my hands of it if I so choose. I know that it is my duty to tell the story, but then my obligation has been fulfilled. I could look away, having the luxury of never dealing with that kind of fight again. The souls who took their time to tell me their stories, to give me the truth, to trust me with their identities and information—they have to live this frustration every day. They cannot turn away from it. They fight for something that is so inhumane it’s preposterous to even fathom that they have to fight this hard at all.

A stark realization overcame me on the flight, as I soared across the Pacific on my way to the truth. I was reading Laura Edles’ article on “Rethinking ‘race’, ‘ethnicity’ and ‘culture’: Is Hawai’i the ‘model minority’ state?” She points to Rohrer who says “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” (59).

Then Edles says “most importantly, this white response to ‘haoleness’ – to reject any association with white history and power—is typical of ‘haoleness’ (on the ‘mainland’ as well as in Hawai’i). White people want desperately not to be blamed for the past or what white folks may be currently doing; they want to be seen as ‘individuals’. The problem is, of course, that we are not all ‘simply who we are’ (‘individuals’)—‘flat, cardboard cut-outs with no history, no context, no relationships to power, no nothing’. White people try desperately to ‘wiggle free’ from their historical, structural, and symbolic location—but this in itself is also a reflection of white privilege.”

Just as the ancestors of my own race felt that they were entitled to oppress a people, I feel entitled that I have a right to explore a topic that deeply interests me because of my personal experience there. I can fly to Hawaii, shoot interviews, and fly home. But unlike the members of my race who chose to perform such unjust actions on the Hawaiians, I know that it is my job to protect the people who took the time and patience to teach me. It is my job to protect them from exploitation, and to use their words as a tool for awareness into their plight.

Although I've never been accused of racism, this project opened the dialogue to accusations toward me of white guilt. This is a concept that will take an entire research paper and documentary, but I will touch upon it here. After being accused of having white guilt, I researched the topic, and found that "...white guilt, in its broad sense, springs from a knowledge of ill-gotten advantage. More precisely, it comes from the juxtaposition of this knowledge with the inevitable gratitude one feels for being white rather than black in America. Given the moral instincts of human beings, it is all but impossible to enjoy an ill-gotten advantage, much less to feel at least secretly grateful for it, without consciously or unconsciously experiencing guilt...White Americans *know* that their historical advantage comes from the subjugation of an entire people. So, even for whites today for whom racism is anathema, there is no escape from the knowledge that makes for guilt. Racial guilt simply accompanies the condition of being white in America" (Steele, 499).

My first response would be--why should I feel guilty for something of which I was no part? Why is it impossible for someone who happens to be white find interest in exploring other cultures? Why are most cultures in academia only explored by their own

members? Wouldn't it be interesting to get some outside perspective? Yet, there is some truth to this particular definition. Yes, I agree that my being born white and middle class automatically gives me advantages and opportunities that some minorities in lower class situations would have to work harder to receive. Do I praise God for this? Absolutely not. I find it unfortunate that society exists in this way, but to this I have no guilt. This is the way things are. I can do my part, help to tell peoples stories, because I feel that to whom much is given much is expected. But never do I find joy in the fact that I am not a darker color. If anything, I find my own race a bit dull, lacking deep culture and identity, which Rohrer agrees with and constitutes as the reason that white people tend to appropriate other cultures.

The most disheartening idea regarding the concept of white guilt is that, it justifies in theory that when a white person is doing anything for a darker skinned person, it is purely out of guilt. If I let two women who are black in front of me in line to board a plane, I'm not being nice because I saw what heavy loads they were carrying. I have white guilt. If I want to travel to a place to which I have a deep connection, and have been exposed to a frustrating and fascinating fight, and choose to create a film to explore that fight, it must only be because I have white guilt. Because white people did that to Hawaiians, and I'm white, therefore I feel bad about it. I find this preposterous. I understand that, unfortunately, many minorities have been treated extremely unfairly by white ignorance, and therefore have developed a barrier. But I believe it is possible that white guilt was a concept made up by a black scholar who couldn't wrap her head around the fact that many white people are more integrated in a new generational culture where race is embraced, acknowledged, and not a factor of negative action. Perhaps, based on

her years of feeling oppressed, coupled with her parents and grandparents experiencing the Civil Rights movement, it just can't be fathomable that a white person would want to do anything nice for a black person unless they were guilty of something.

Yet during this shoot in Hawaii, my haoleness was never an issue. The interviewees welcomed me, and took advantage of the opportunity to tell their story. Conversely however, my haoleness was the reason that I had the eye opening realization that something very wrong had happened. Race is something we will never escape from, never be freed from. It is something we need to learn how to work with and appreciate, and slowly work to unwind the negative tropes that accompany all races by other races, in any capacity. It might stall progress to use the same assumptive ideology to attempt to explain white actions, instead of understanding that there may not be, in fact, an ulterior motive.

“That whites are now stigmatized by their race is not poetic justice; it is simply another echo of racism's power to contaminate by mere association” (Steele, 39).

How about this: no more playing victim, no more playing oppressor. Let's take this opportunity to work together in a slow and steady roll toward progress so that our children can work beyond the confines of societal complexities to make real changes. I would like to think that in a constantly evolving society where races can finally (in some capacity) integrate more so than ever before, and the amount of people that understand that all men are created equal is slowly growing, we have to address this injustice in order to fix. Granted, there will always be racism; there will always be ignorance. But it can be fought. And the only way to do that is to use our resources and experience toward a

greater understanding. The US has failed to become a melting pot, and for good reason. Now we can look at each other's cultures, acknowledge them, understand them, and appreciate them. Refusing to become a melting pot forces us to accept and understand and respect each other's cultural differences instead of throwing a blanket over the entire problem and move on without addressing issues because history will inevitably repeat itself.

This is proven in "...shifts in discourse over time, and among social groups, e.g. away from 'racial' terms—e.g. 'coloured' to 'Negro' to 'Black', 'white'—and towards 'ethnic' terms, e.g. 'African American', 'European American', reflect changes in how people think about and perceive social identity and categorization" (Edles, 45). Perhaps the categorical effects of our subconscious can dissipate as true appreciation, instead of appropriation or judgment, can prevail. This may be perceived as an extremely Shangri-la perspective, but as I stated in the introduction, I refuse to accept things the way they are until I know that I have done everything within my power to change them.

Research involved for the production of the project/Account of production process

After obtaining vital information and research regarding Hawaii's rich and complex history, the sovereignty movement, race relations, and how they are intertwined, the real work began once arriving on the island of O'ahu. Interviewees were quite difficult to contact while still on the mainland, but I discovered that once contacted again with a Hawaiian address, they were much more willing to speak with me.

In order to find these interviewees, I took several approaches. The first was a cold call or cold email, using contact information gathered through previous research. For example, after reading through Hawaiian materials, certain sovereignty organizations would present themselves. I would find the main contact information from that organization's website, and the cold call or email would commence from there, using the script that was approved by the IRB (Institutional Review Board).

Other interviewees stemmed from those initial interviewees, for example, as I was wrapping up with one particular subject, she recommended that I speak with her constituent for another perspective. Once contacted with that credible source, another interview was cemented. These patterns continued for the entirety of the production. I would meet with the interviewee and discuss the film, answer questions, and fill out the necessary paperwork. We could then conduct the interview, which would last anywhere from 30 minutes to one hour. I would ask the appropriate questions and follow up questions that pertained to the sovereignty movement and race relations on the islands.

I accomplished the task of meeting my goal of 15 interviewees that represented the issue from all sides. The 15 interviewees consisted of sovereignty movement advocates and leaders, both Native Hawaii and non-Native Hawaiian. Also included were dissidents from Native Hawaiian blood and non-Native Hawaiian blood.

I felt confident in my research prior to arriving on the island so that my questions were well thought out, and any references to the past were understood and opened a greater and richer basis on which to create further questions and dialogue in order to achieve the most accurate and credible amount of information.

As aforementioned, there was a spiritual element involved in this entire project. The islands decided the fate of the outcome, and guided me through to make sure that the story was told. The story mainly stems from the interviewees themselves, but there are additional elements included in the film. For archival footage, I researched at the Hawaii state archives and library. I gathered b-roll footage (shots that show supporting elements to what is being said) while on hikes, captured tourist life on the beach, and documented the juxtaposition of geography within the racial dynamics of the island. I ventured to the Bishop museum to gather footage of cultural artifacts and information. I conducted the walking tour of downtown Honolulu to capture 'Iolani palace and the Kamehameha statue, and attended two luaus to film the cultural dance and music. I also traveled to the neighboring island of Maui to shoot the valley where Kamehameha won his battle over Maui, and to document the Nahiku Community association's water rights struggle, where I was invited by the State Representative as a special guest.

While on the islands, I captured the daily footage and interview, categorized it, and continued to make contacts and conduct further research. When I had to leave, I arrived back on the mainland to begin the editing process. There, I spent the remainder of the semester editing the footage daily, recording narration, inserting text, and any of the other processes involved in the tedious editing process. In addition to that, I continued to keep in touch with my interviewees to get updates, confirm facts, and sent them raw footage upon request. Actions in between the editing process include composing the final paper, continuing research, meeting with my committee as well as other faculty members regarding the topic, and gathering feedback from said individuals.

Conclusions

Hawaiians believe that children are born with two spirits. One spirit births from the 'aina (land) which provides the child with a connection to the islands, and the other is a personal spirit. Perhaps this thought could be the basis for the constant conflict embedded in modern Hawaii: the land and the past versus modernity and the self. The struggle and want to return to the land versus a look toward dealing with the reality and moving forward into the future. This thought also embodies the conflict between the embedded and ancient culture versus the modern luxury of conveniences.

My work in Hawaii was filled with adventure and the constant accumulation of deeper knowledge and truth. And with that truth came the frustration and complexity of a movement much greater than any of us. An entire culture, suppressed. An entire people, oppressed. People forced to live an existence that feels foreign to them because of mistakes that their ancestors and their oppressors made while the Western culture penetrated the islands.

As an outsider looking in, I believe that I could provide a more balanced, somewhat objective look at the issue. As one of my interviewees Kealoha points out, it is difficult for him to look for an answer because he is in the middle of the conflict.

“To authenticate a work, it becomes therefore most important to prove or make evident how this Other has participated in the making of his/her own image; hence, for example, the prominence of the string-of-interviews style and the talking heads, oral witnessing strategy in documentary film practices. Called “giving voice” (Minh-ha, 134).

I believe that the fight, both for the Akaka bill and for independence, is real. The people are determined, and they have valid and strong ammunition. The battle will be won if they can use their ammunition to take down the giant forces of American imperialism. Otherwise, they must look inward toward their communities, and make small steps toward self-governance in the capacity that modernity allows.

The distinct differences in Hawaiian culture versus Western culture provide a map to explore a deeper level of how things came to be, and how to work within the frames of reality to achieve goals. First, Hawaiian culture is a circular one. Land, sky, water, giving to the people as the people give back by nurturing them. Western culture is quite linear; the land gives, and to give more the development of industry helps to maintain the culture, and the culture grows upward in advancement, leaving behind the roots of where it began. Second, The Hawaiians worshipped hundreds of Gods, considering all land, water, and sky sacred. Those gods took care of the people and the people honored those gods. In Western culture, there is one God, and one book that is often times misinterpreted to provide the justification the Western world needs to carry out acts. Third, in present day we find many groups fighting for Hawaiian sovereignty in the ways they see fit, and toward goals that they feel are necessary, therefore less work is getting accomplished because there are too many voices fighting each other. The Western culture has one group—the haoles, who are focused on capitalism, and the constant need to achieve the American dream, no matter what the cost. Therefore finally the ideas are lost in the mix of the Hawaiian fight, whereas the idea of the West has been clear—establish, profit, maintain.

I wish my friends well on their journey to achieve their right to self-governance. I will do all that I can to spread their story, and I acknowledge that that is my place, and that this is not my fight. I would like to see some kind of sovereignty accomplished as a new mark of progress, whether it be the water restored to Nahiku or the PKO to complete their clearance the rest of the ordinance from Kaho'olawe so that Hawaiians can enjoy a piece of their culture and their victory. It has not been and will not be an easy climb, and sadly I do not know whether or not the ultimate goal of independence can be reached knowing the fierce claws of American imperialism, but I can hope, and pray to Pele the volcano god, that happiness and victory will be bestowed.

“The cause of Hawaiian independence is larger and dearer than the life of any man connected with it.” --Queen Lili'uokalani, 302.

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Master of Arts

Media, Culture and Society

Thesis/Project Defense May 18th, 2010

Stopping The Wind—An Exploration of the Hawaiian Sovereignty

Movement