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# Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation, and Resistance

Camilla G. Wengler Vignoe

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LIVING ALOHA: PORTRAITS OF RESILIENCE, RENEWAL,  
RECLAMATION, AND RESISTANCE

CAMILLA G. WENGLER VIGNOE

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Ph.D. in Leadership and Change Program  
of Antioch University  
in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

May, 2015

This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled:

LIVING ALOHA: PORTRAITS OF RESILIENCE, RENEWAL, RECLAMTION, AND RESISTANCE

prepared by

Camilla G. Vignoe

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership and Change.

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### **Dedication**

To all the *keiki ‘o ka ‘āina* in Hawai‘i, and wherever you are in the world. May you discover your special birthright and responsibility, our legacy of Aloha to cherish and pass forward.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my dearest kūpuna and mākua who have passed away on my Ph.D. journey:



Great-grandmother Tūtū Mary Kawena Pukui (1895–1986) on her 90th birthday. Grandparents—Faith “Lottie” Charlotte Kalama Wiggin Ukishima (1915–2007) and Edwin Osamu Ukishima (1917–1993). Photo from the Wengler / Ukishima Family album.



Mom—Charlotte Patrice Hideko Kal'āmanamana Ukishima Wengler (1937–2010); photo courtesy of the Wengler Family album.



Reverend Joseph M. Vignoe “Uncle Joe” (1930–2010). Father-in-law Robert “Bobby” F. Vignoe (1932–2014). Photos courtesy of the Vignoe Family album.





“Dad Lindsey” Edwin Robert Naleielehua Lindsey Jr. (1939–2009); photo courtesy of the Lindsey ‘Ohana album. (<http://www.mauiculturalallands.org>)

### **Abstract**

When Native Hawaiians move away from the islands, they risk losing their cultural identity and heritage. This dissertation utilizes a Hawaiian theoretical framework based in Indigenous research practices and uses phenomenology, ethnography, heuristics, and portraiture to tell the stories of leadership, change, and resilience of five Native Hawaiians who as adults, chose to permanently relocate to the United States mainland. It explores the reasons why *Kanaka Maoli* (politically correct term for Native Hawaiians) leave the *‘āina* (land; that which feeds) in the first place and eventually become permanent mainland residents. Some Hawaiians lose their culture after relocating to the United States mainland, giving in to societal pressures demanding conformance, assimilation, and acculturation. Some who have lost their cultural identity are able to later regain it, yet others, resilient, found a way to retain their cultural identity despite the traumatic transition. This study focuses on those who have retained or regained their Native Hawaiian identity after relocating to the United States mainland, and questions, “What caused them to relocate?” and “How do they maintain cultural practices far away from the *‘āina*?” I begin by situating myself as the researcher, review the literature, offer an historical chronology of events that occurred in Hawai‘i, and explain the research methodology. Four Native

Hawaiians who have relocated to the mainland United States as adults and have continued Native Hawaiian cultural practices were interviewed. I painted their individual portraits as well as my own—using the art and science of portraiture—which includes aesthetic writing that focuses on the “good” that is found in within context. I constructed the portraits with data from the interviews, observations, pictures, music, poetic sayings, video clips, sound bites, and my own reflections. The phenomenon of “walking in two worlds” is explored. This study provides examples of leadership in portraying how Native Hawaiians perpetuate *‘ōlelo Hawai‘i* (Hawaiian language, poems, songs), *mo‘olelo* (stories, myths, folklore), *mo‘okū‘auhau* (genealogy), *hula* (Hawaiian dance), and many other cultural practices far away from home. The electronic version of this dissertation is available in the open access OhioLink ETD Center, [www.ohiolink.edu/etd](http://www.ohiolink.edu/etd)

Table of Contents	
Acknowledgements.....	i
Dedication.....	iii
Abstract.....	v
List of Figures.....	xi
Introduction.....	1
Situating Self as Researcher .....	1
My Experience of Relocating to the Mainland.....	2
What Are We Doing Here? .....	6
A Pivotal Moment of Loss .....	7
Encountering Hawaiians Who Didn't Lose Their Culture .....	8
Purpose of the Study.....	11
Research Questions.....	11
Methods Used to Address the Research Questions .....	14
Methods of Analyzing and Making Meaning of Data Collected .....	16
Ethical Issues .....	16
Review of Literature .....	19
Leaving Home .....	19
Loss of Culture .....	22
Synopsis of Tipping Points.....	25
Outmigration and Acculturation.....	34
Leaving Home .....	34
Modern Out-Migration .....	35

Why Hawaiians Leave in the First Place.....	35
The Culture of Aloha.....	38
The Concept of Race Used to Exclude.....	40
Indigenous Identity.....	42
Hawaiian Identity: Who is Truly Hawaiian?.....	44
Hawaiian Identity: Who Qualifies as Local?.....	48
Differentiating Between Race, Culture, Ethnicity, and Identification.....	50
Overview of the Hawaiian Worldview.....	51
Mālama ‘Āina–To Care for the Land.....	51
The Cultural Practice of Aloha.....	53
Retaining the Culture of Aloha.....	56
Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop’s Legacy.....	56
Keepers of the Flame.....	58
Tūtū Mary Kawena Pukui’s Work.....	59
Recent Studies: Hawaiian Language/Cultural Programs.....	62
Walking in Two Worlds.....	64
Gaps in the Literature.....	64
Methodology.....	67
Conceptual Framework of the Study.....	67
Indigenous Methodologies.....	67
Phenomenology.....	70
Ethnography.....	71
Heuristics.....	71

Portraiture .....	72
History of Portraiture.....	72
Goodness .....	73
Context .....	74
Voice.....	75
Relationships .....	76
Interviews, Observations, and Aesthetic Writing.....	76
Interview Questions.....	76
Population.....	77
Data Collection.....	78
Constructing Emergent Themes .....	78
Convergent and Divergent Patterns.....	79
Constructing the Aesthetic Whole.....	79
Ethical Issues .....	80
Interviews and Portraits .....	81
Paka.....	82
Kalani.....	103
Nani.....	126
Mona .....	146
Cami.....	174
Discussion.....	211
Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage .....	214
Native Hawaiian Context.....	216

The Three Piko Concept .....	216
Living Aloha .....	219
Paka .....	220
Kalani .....	224
Nani .....	229
Mona .....	233
Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion .....	238
Summary .....	239
Gaps in the Literature .....	244
Scope and Limitations of the Study .....	246
Implications for Leadership and Change .....	247
Recommendations .....	250
Implications for Future Research .....	253
Conclusion .....	254
Appendix .....	256
Appendix A: Glossary .....	257
Appendix B: References to <i>Ōlelo No 'eau</i> : Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings .....	263
Appendix C: List of Songs .....	266
Appendix D: Permissions .....	269
References .....	277

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Kanaka Maoli Youth Carrying the Traditional Maoli Flag.....	10
Figure 2.1	Statue of King Kamehameha the Great.....	26
Figure 2.2	King David Kalākaua (1836–1891).....	32
Figure 2.3	Queen Lili‘uokalani (1838–1917).....	32
Figure 2.4	Our Keiki Mālama ‘Āina .....	39
Figure 2.5	Kamehameha Schools’ Banner.....	57
Figure 4.1	Paka .....	82
Figure 4.2	Kumu Hula John Kaha‘i Topolinski and His Halau.....	92
Figure 4.3	Kalani .....	103
Figure 4.4	Lu‘au Prep at KS .....	108
Figure 4.5	Ono Hawaiian Food.....	111
Figure 4.6	Kalani’s ‘Ohana.....	113
Figure 4.7	Kalani and Lei .....	120
Figure 4.8	Kalani and Noelani at Founder’s Day 2014 .....	126
Figure 4.9	Nani .....	126
Figure 4.10	Nani at Peace .....	145
Figure 4.11	Mona.....	146
Figure 4.12	Na Mele o ke Kai Logo .....	152
Figure 4.13	The Keiki Division of Na Mele o ke Kai .....	154
Figure 4.14	Ah Lan’s Lei Stand in Hilo .....	157
Figure 4.15	Making a Haku lei .....	159
Figure 4.16	Mona and Kiki in the Early Years of Their Relationship.....	166

Figure 4.17	Mailani, Kiki, and Mona .....	170
Figure 4.18	Mona and Mailani.....	173
Figure 4.19	Mona at Butterfly Beach in Santa Barbara.....	173
Figure 4.20	Cami .....	174
Figure 4.21	Ukishima Family .....	180
Figure 4.22	Faith Wiggin and Edwin Ukishima on Their Wedding day.....	186
Figure 4.23	Wengler Family—the Early Years .....	190
Figure 4.24	5312 Puahia Place.....	196
Figure 4.25	The Kamehameha Cheerleading Squad.....	197
Figure 4.26	Ned and Pua Lindsey.....	203
Figure 4.27	Dave and Cami Vignoe .....	205
Figure 4.28	My Beautiful mom (1937–2010).....	209
Figure 4.29	Imagine Aloha .....	210
Figure 5.1	Papa Mau: The Wayfinder.....	213
Figure 5.2	On the Hokule‘a .....	214
Figure 5.3	Paka in the Back Yard With His Paddleboards.....	220
Figure 5.4	Paka Surfing .....	221
Figure 5.5	Paka and His Oldest son .....	222
Figure 5.6	Paka and Leinani .....	222
Figure 5.7	Fishing With sons.....	223
Figure 5.8	Paka With Sons in Waimanalo.....	223
Figure 5.9	Kalani With Grandson.....	228
Figure 5.10	Kalani With Lei at Prom.....	228



Figure 5.11	Nani: “To Be Not Silent” .....	230
Figure 5.12	Mona’s ‘Ohana (Early Years) .....	234

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Translation of Emails Written in Pidgin, Hawaiian Words, and Acronyms.....109

## Introduction

*Ke ho 'i a 'e la ka 'ōpua i Awalau*

*The rain clouds are returning to Awalau.*

Said of a return to the source. (Pukui, #1698, see Appendix B)

The motivation for this research originally came from my personal life experience as a *hapa*,<sup>1</sup> a woman of Hawaiian, Japanese, and Caucasian-American ancestry, now living in the Central Coast of California. In sharing my own autobiographical background and experiences, it is my hope to give the reader an understanding about how my own lens and worldview informs my research, decisions, and interpretations in this study.

### Situating Self as Researcher

I am the second of eleven children born to Charlotte and Harry Wengler, loving *mākuā* (parents) who raised us with much Aloha in the south-east Waialae-Kahala community of Honolulu, on the island of 'Oahu. A person of Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian descent, who was born and raised in the islands is *keiki 'o ka 'āina* which translates literally as “child of the land” (Kamakau, Pukui, & Berrère, 1976); besides being a social construct that connects all of us, this concept has a rich, complex and special meaning for me as I journey through the Ph.D. in Leadership and Change program at Antioch University.

I am also the great-granddaughter of the late Dr. Mary Kawena Pukui (1895–1986), a native Hawaiian scholar, chanter, dancer, and educator who co-authored *The Hawaiian-English Dictionary* (Pukui & Elbert, 1986); additionally *Tūtū* (grandparent) Kawena composed approximately 150 *mele* (songs), *'oli* (chants), books and poems. She is credited for making sure the Hawaiian language and culture carried forward into the 20th century. Now, more than twenty years after I left the islands to live on the mainland, I received a personal calling from my

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<sup>1</sup> *Hapa* means part or half; A *hapa* is a person of mixed blood. (Pukui & Elbert, 1986)

*‘aumakua* (family god or guardian) to embrace our cultural heritage, to understand, read, and speak the Hawaiian language, and to research Hawaiian history and the concept of Aloha.

Through my research in the Ph.D. in Leadership Program, I have only just begun to comprehend the magnitude of the contributions that our Tūtū made.

**My experience of relocating to the mainland.** I was a young person of mixed ethnicities born and raised in Honolulu during Hawai‘i’s post-1959 statehood era, struggling to discover my identity and purpose. The struggle caused angst and unrest, which motivated me to leave the safety of my island home, the gentle trade winds, a loving *‘ohana* (family), and everything familiar in order to relocate to “the mainland” United States in search of adventure, opportunity, higher education, and a better career future. Like many other youth of generations past and present, I was ambitious and fearless, choosing to set aside the family and cultural values with which I was raised in order to find my own identity and successfully navigate from teenager to adulthood. Who could have predicted that the adventure of relocating to a land 3,000 miles away from my beloved Hawai‘i would cause even more inner conflict?

After relocating, my personal experience was similar to being treated like a foreigner in my own country! I wanted so badly to fit in with everybody else, and yet found it most challenging to adapt, as there was no “island community” here—let alone Hawaiian community—and while I struggled to adjust to my new environment and develop relationships, I often perceived negative messages through my personal communication and interactions with others who lived here; it seemed that here, the people I came in contact with were generally much less accepting of cultural differences than the local people in Hawai‘i.

From early childhood, *keiki* (children) are trained to be *‘olu‘olu* (pleasant, polite) and kind in our dialogue and actions with a diversity of visitors from around the globe and with the

local residents of many ethnicities that make up—what has been referred to as—“the rainbow,” or the cultural melting pot of Hawai‘i’s demographic population. Instead of shaking hands in greeting, Hawaiians and locals traditionally extend *honi* (kisses) and hugs . . . even upon first introductions. I quickly learned that this everyday practice was inappropriate here. I tried to bring what was familiar to me, our *Aloha Spirit* here to the mainland; it’s the gentle and compassionate, easy-going, soft-spoken and sensitive ways of our people—and received constant feedback—verbally, as well as through non-verbal cues—that I would not be taken seriously, because these mannerisms were perceived as “less-than desirable” attributes, “unprofessional” and “weak.” “For real?” I remember thinking and trying to sort it all out, “This is really confusing.”

Extending *Aloha* (love, compassion, kindness) and practicing *mālama* (to care for, respect)—the most important values central to the Hawaiian way of thinking—was clearly not appreciated here . . . in fact it was frowned upon.

Uneducated and without vocabulary, I did not possess the verbal ability to name this invisible phenomenon. I lacked the confidence and courage it takes to defend myself and the values of our lovely Native culture; quite simply, I grew weary of explaining myself and “us” to “them” in this hostile, cold environment. There were no friends that I could talk to who understood how I felt. It became easier to homogenize—a learned survival mechanism flavored with the ideology of, “If you can’t lick ‘um, you might as well join ‘um.”

Angry for being treated like an outsider, I cut my hair short, smothered my Hawaiian accent, and became ruthlessly competitive in business school. After graduation, I landed an office job and became addicted to the rush of adrenaline that a workaholic experiences, a rush invited by one consumed with work . . . this lessened the pain of being separated from my ‘ohana

and everything familiar; besides, it is what my colleagues and I were brainwashed to believe “successful” people had to do in order to get ahead.

In their transition to the mainland, Native Hawaiian youth are often initially shocked to find their new environment to be cold, heartless, and cutthroat competitive; I was no exception, observing that everybody seemed to be looking out after themselves and not each other. After all, as I was told by one of my earliest professors:

It’s a dog-eat-dog world—eat or be eaten. Success means sacrifice: expect to work long, hard hours at a job that starts you at the bottom. It might not be enjoyable or meaningful per se, but do whatever you need to do to climb the corporate ladder and get ahead. Chances are, you may achieve success and be rewarded greatly as I have (been).

The seductive message of this new, unfamiliar world became very clear to me: the instructions were to work very hard and to keep your eye on the prize. The desired end result is to become somebody important, rich or famous; the key is to accumulate things that matter—fame, status, money, houses, luxury cars, the right clothes—the culture of American business often values individualism, over-abundance, and the accumulation of material wealth over relationships, kindness, forgiveness, and peace. The other thing I noticed was that people I was exposed to here were often very critical, comparing themselves to everybody else—who had what, who didn’t, and how much the gap was—not only did they judge materially, but also judged others by the kinds of jobs they held, what they did for work, even how much people physically weighed. Nobody wants to be at the bottom. I thought about our collective culture with all the people I loved back home.

Our *kūpuna* (elders) teach us the Hawaiian worldview of Aloha, to have compassion, to *mālama* each other, to have gratitude, and to *share without holding back*, with those less fortunate, and I was raised with a mixed Hawaiian, Japanese, and Caucasian values system. This new 100% *Haole* (White; Caucasian) worldview was difficult for me to palate because it

clashed in opposition, quite violently to my own world view. Why does it seem like values are so polarized here? Which one was right?

*Pupuka auane‘i, he inoa ‘ala.*

*Homely he may be, but his name is fragrant.*

He bears an honorable name. (Pukui, #3757, see Appendix B)

*Inoa*—n. personal name; in pre-missionary times no distinction was made between first name or names and family name (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972, p. 94).

In the early days of Hawai‘i, personal possessions were few, but highly valued. Poi pounders, woven mats, a man’s *malo* or loin cloth, the stone adze of a canoe maker, the bone hooks of a fisherman, the spear of a warrior—all these were prized. But even more precious was each man’s most personal possession, his name. (p. 94)

*inoā pō*—n. Dream name, as in a name for an infant believed received in a dream; it was thought that if such a name were not given, the child would be sickly or die. (wehewehe.org)

An *inoā pō* is a special name that carries the seal of the spirit world, and chosen by a god, usually a family ‘aumakua. In an ‘ohana that awaited a baby’s birth, an elder would have a name indicated or pronounced in a dream. This was the *inoā pō*, literally “night name” or “name in the darkness” ... a gift and a command from the ‘aumakua. This name must be given the child, says Tūtū Mary Kawena Pukui, “The name given by the ‘aumakua shows a relationship between the god and that person” (Pukui et al., 1972, p. 95).

On a balmy Mānoa (valley in Honolulu) evening in June 1965, Tūtū Kawena awoke from her nap, distinctly remembering a specific name she was to gift to her next *mo‘opuna* (grandchild; great-niece or nephew; relatives two generations later, whether blood or adopted). At the very same time in another part of town, my mother was laboring to bring me into this world. In the wee hours of that Sunday morning, I was born to Charlotte and Harry Wengler and received my Hawaiian name, a very special *inoā pō*: *Ka‘iuhono‘onālani*, “one who is held in high esteem with the chiefs.”

Long ago, my *makuahine* (mother) and *Tūtū wahine* (grandmother—in this case, my maternal grandmother) told me the *mo‘olelo* (story, tale) of my birth. This *mo‘olelo* has much more meaning now, for several reasons. In our culture, it is a rare and special phenomenon to be the recipient of an *inoa pō* at birth. *Tūtū* herself was the recipient of *inoa pō*; it is a beautiful and life-lasting treasure that elders receive from ‘*aumākua*<sup>2</sup> (plural for ‘*aumakua*) for the intended *keiki*. On a personal level, I have been able to reclaim my once lost Hawaiian cultural heritage through this journey, and simultaneously, rejuvenate relationships with my ‘*ohana* and with my ‘*aumākua*; these deeply spiritual connections have assisted me tremendously as a Native Hawaiian scholar. Hawaiians deeply believe that ‘*aumākua* guide and comfort us through life on a daily basis; I have found this to be very true. It is very important for Native Hawaiians—particularly those who have migrated away from the ‘*āina Hawai‘i nui Aloha*—to develop relationships with ‘*aumākua*, to know the stories of our names, and to gift these stories on to our *keiki*.

Remembering and sharing these *mo‘olelo* strengthens our relationships, keeps us healthy as a *lāhui* (Hawaiian nation, race) grounded in our culture, and ties us to the ‘*āina*; additionally, these stories keep us connected physically, spiritually and emotionally to one another, to the ‘*āina*, and are vital to teach lessons in discovering who we are as individuals and remembering what contributions our *kūpuna* made as members of their respective communities.

**What are we doing here?** A couple of years ago, my 18-year-old nephew *Makamae* (name means “precious one”) and his best friend *Kameaho ‘okoho ‘iakeakua* (name means the one

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<sup>2</sup> ‘*aumākua* nvt. Family or personal gods, deified ancestors who might assume the shape of sharks, owls, hawks, ‘*elepaio*, mudhens, lizards, eels, and indigenous field mice, caterpillars, rocks, cowries, clouds, or plants. A symbiotic relationship existed; mortals did not harm or eat ‘*aumākua* (they fed sharks), and ‘*aumākua* warned and reprimanded mortals in dreams, visions, and calls. (Beckwith, 1970, pp. 124–43, 559; Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972, p. 38)



chosen by God) moved from Honolulu to live with Dave and me in Santa Barbara. They were looking forward to a new adventure; their goal was to attend Santa Barbara City College, and to play college football. Ultimately Maka wanted to make his family proud of him, as he was the first in his generation to attend college on the mainland. Here is an excerpt from an essay he wrote as an English class assignment:

I woke up one Sunday morning and found that I wasn't in my own bedroom . . . I suddenly remembered that I no longer live at home, that I am a college student living on the mainland in California. I also realized that I had a painful and agonizing feeling in my gut. Suddenly, all of these thoughts come rushing into my head, thoughts like, "What am I doing here?" and "Is this really what I want?" "Why am I going through all this suffering?" and "Is it even worth it?" Homesickness and the culture shock gives me this aching feeling in my heart, and it makes this a tough experience, but overall I know this is the best decision for me.

Two years from now, when I am finished with my education in the mainland, I will look back at what I have accomplished. Not only will I be proud of what I have achieved at SBCC, but my family will be proud as well. Then I will feel that I have accomplished my goal of making my family proud. This college experience is an experience like no other. It is an experience of a lifetime. (Otani-Wengler, 2011)

About five months later, Maka moved back home for good. His friend however stayed, and transferred to a different school where his chances of being selected for a draft would increase tremendously. Kamea still attends college here, and is doing everything he can to achieve his dream of playing professional football.

**A pivotal moment of loss.** One of the very first hulas I learned to dance as a little girl is called My Little Grass Shack (Cogswell, Harrison, & Noble, 1933; see Appendix C).

“My Little Grass Shack in Kealakekua Hawai‘i”

by Bill Cogswell, Tommy Harrison & Johnny Noble; Source: Noble's "Hawaiian Favorites"

Copyright 1933, 1961 Miller Music Corp,

<http://www.huapala.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWlvYpJ5pRo>

It seems funny now, but this song sums up what was going on in my life at this time. I missed my family. I was displaced, a homesick Hawaiian kid far away from everything familiar, yearning to be treated equally, with love, dignity, and respect. It was exactly then that I vowed: I would not give up and go home without first becoming “successful” and making my family proud, no matter how hard things got. Well, in pursuing this “American dream,” I inadvertently turned my back to the Native and collective values system with which I was raised with, ancient beliefs that are steeped in the riches of mindfulness and intuitive knowing, saturated with the values that foster Aloha. We are taught to *mālama* (to preserve, protect, care for) deep, loving relationships with oneself and one another, with *ka ‘ohana* (the family), with our *kūpuna* (ancestors who are both present and those who reside in the spirit world) and *‘aumākua* (spirit guardians), with our *‘āina* (land), and with all living and non-living entities in nature. In the last few years, through my graduate studies, I have finally come back—full-circle—to know for sure, that deep in my heart, these principles are at the very core of my being and among the things most precious to me.

**Encountering Hawaiians who didn’t lose their culture.** In 2006 I began working as a career counselor at a local community college, specializing in student success for non-traditional students. The “non-trad” population is different from the mainstream 17 to 19-year-old teenagers that enroll in college right after graduating from high school, in that it is comprised of individuals 25 years of age and older in transition, seeking higher education as a vehicle for personal transformation and the acquisition of marketable skills to sustain themselves and their families in a new career. Additionally, I worked with distressed international students, many of whom found themselves here in a foreign land, far away from home without a support network

of family or friends, in need of survival resources (i.e., money, food, books), and yet unable to work because of strict restrictions on their F1 visas.

In the fall of 2007, two Hawaiian students were referred to me, best friends that had graduated from a high school in rural Kauai. Many Native Hawaiians from small towns in rural Hawai'i live in impoverished communities and are among the poorest (economically) in the state, with youth often at-risk for falling into delinquency or early pregnancy (Trinidad, 2010). If these students were still local Hawaiian residents, then they were most likely required to pay out-of-state tuition, which is approximately ten times more than in-state California student fees. I wondered how they ended up in Santa Barbara at our community college.

It turns out that these two young men had indeed come from poor families, but they'd beaten the odds: the students excelled academically and in sports, and won scholarships to attend college. Additionally, their *ohanas* (families and extended families) *hui'd* (pulled resources together) with fundraisers and savings in order to send their kids to a mainland college, in fulfilling the dreams of providing their children with a "mainland college experience" and hopefully a better future. Santa Barbara City College was their school of choice because it consistently ranks as one of the top ten community colleges in the nation, and besides, it doesn't hurt that the campus is located less than a quarter of a mile from the beach. Desperate to find work over the holiday break, another Hawaiian student told them that I might be able to help—and so we met—and I listened with an open heart. It was a tough situation: they were stuck here for the Christmas break, thousands of miles away from home in a cold and seemingly uncaring world. Teary-eyed and homesick, the young men were heartbroken about the separation from their families, friends, and homeland during the holidays, but there was no

money left to fly home. I knew first-hand what they were feeling because I found myself in a very similar situation twenty some-odd years ago.



*Figure 1.1.* Kanaka Maoli youth carrying the traditional Maoli flag.  
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Within a few counseling sessions, I was able to help them navigate through the confusing school systems by answering financial aid questions, California residency requirements, and addressing academic concerns. Confidence grew with the incremental successes that come with making friends, working on campus and earning money, participating in intercollegiate sports, and studying hard—which led to doing well on exams. My students invited me to their soccer tournaments, and every so often, I’d attend, watching from afar . . . they were easy to spot by the huge Hawaiian flag that proudly flapped in the wind at every game and after-game beach potluck. I remember walking across campus one day deep in thought, when somebody yelled, “Eh, Aunty! Howzit!” I looked around to see who the “Aunty” was, and suddenly realized, that kid was talking to me! We had become an ‘ohana, these young Hawaiians and me . . . and I was so proud of their accomplishments. They had come so far.

Two years later, those students I helped were now mentoring and referring other newly-arrived Hawaiian students to me. The young men transferred at the same time, to a four-year University with high academic standing and athletic scholarships. Despite their challenges, they found a way to become successful while maintaining their “Hawaiian-ness,” in a competitive environment so far away, and very different from life in the islands.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the reasons why *Kanaka Maoli* (politically correct term for Native Hawaiians) leave the *‘āina* (land; that which feeds) to become permanent mainland residents. I will examine some of the reasons why Hawaiians leave Hawai‘i in the first place, the acclimation process of relocation, and the phenomenon of losing, retaining, or regaining one’s native Hawaiian culture. Some people lose their culture, giving in to societal pressures for conformance, assimilation, and acculturation; some Native Hawaiians who have lost their cultural identity are able to regain it, yet others, like my former students were somehow able to retain their cultural identity despite the relocation, transition, and acculturation pressures. This study focuses on those who have retained or regained their Native Hawaiian identity after relocating to the mainland United States, and questions, “What caused them to relocate?” and “How do they maintain cultural practices far away from the *‘āina*?” I hope my study will provide examples of Hawaiian cultural leadership in portraying how Native Hawaiians perpetuate *‘ōlelo Hawai‘i* (Hawaiian language, poems, songs), *mo‘olelo* (stories, myths, folklore), *hula* (Hawaiian dance), and many other cultural practices far away from home.

### **Research Questions**

My dissertation will explore the continuation of Hawaiian epistemology, which is steeped in the pedagogy of Aloha. My intention is to understand how displaced Native Hawaiians

manage to maintain their cultural values far away from the ‘āina Hawai‘i. I am particularly interested in discovering how Hawaiian cultural values are kept alive over time after individuals have relocated to the mainland.

- What causes Native Hawaiians move away from Hawai‘i, and why do they stay?
- What struggles did they encounter in their journey?
- How does one *live Aloha* in every-day practice when western societal norms dictate otherwise?
- How was Aloha learned, and from whom? How do these individuals define Aloha?
- Knowing how our ancestors lived and practiced Aloha, how do modern day mainland Hawaiians display or illuminate Aloha as leadership through their careers, work, and everyday living?
- Is Aloha taught and shared with keiki to ensure that future generations carry on our Hawaiian traditions and culture far away from home (Hawai‘i)? If so, how?

My findings include research from indigenous Hawaiian epistemology, the pedagogy of Aloha, indigenous leadership, as well as cultural relational leadership theory and practice. My study includes testimony from four practitioners of Aloha, individuals of native Hawaiian descent who were born and raised in Hawai‘i, and now reside in the mainland United States. These individuals self-identify as Native Hawaiian, as *keiki ‘o ka ‘āina* (children of the land), and have found a way to adhere to their cultural practices; I see them as leading change with Aloha, both on large scale as well as in small acts of kindness, generosity, mindfulness, and right action in daily work and in everyday life.

Throughout this study, Hawaiian words are initially introduced and presented in *italics* with their English meanings (in parenthesis), and then integrated into the text as part of the reader’s acquired vocabulary. A glossary of Hawaiian words is placed in the appendix as a courtesy for readers who are non-speakers of ‘ōlelo and may be unfamiliar with its pronunciation. After the first chapter, the English meanings will no longer be presented in

parenthesis after a Hawaiian word is introduced, as the repetitive bolded words and parenthesis tend to distract meaning from the study, particularly if the reader is fluent or somewhat familiar with *‘ōlelo Maoli* (Hawaiian language).

*‘Ike no i ka lā o ka ‘ike; mana no i ka lā o ka mana.*

*Know in the day of knowing; mana in the day of mana.*

Knowledge and mana—each has its day. Another day may bring greater knowledge and greater mana today. (Pukui, #1212, see Appendix B)

In the review of the literature, I consider four main areas: loss of culture, acculturation, the culture of aloha, and retaining the culture of aloha.

In the first section, the loss of culture is examined. Critical to researching loss of culture is the historical context as background for the research. I included a time line of major historical events, and a synopsis of tipping points portraying the succession of synergistic events that almost led to annihilation of Hawaiian language, culture, and people of Hawaiian descent. I discuss historiography pertaining to the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, the irreversible loss of land, as well as to the political and socio-economic demise of Kanaka Maoli, with systemic ramifications on Hawaiian identity and loss of culture. Hawaiian history as told from the viewpoint of Kanaka Maoli is absolutely essential in order to understand loss of culture, and to lay the foundation of my research questions and critical review of methods in this study.

The second section explores the phenomenon of out-migration and acculturation. I recount the history of out-migration from Hawai‘i, including the recent waves of out-migration, and offer reasons why Hawaiians leave the ‘āina in the first place.

In the third section entitled the culture of Aloha, I will define and differentiate between the concepts of race, identity, culture, ethnicity, and local culture. I give an overview of the Native / Indigenous / Aboriginal worldview, which applies four embodied concepts core to

Native leadership: land, ancestors, elders, and story. Referencing Indigenous leadership embodied concepts provides context for the Hawaiian worldview perspective which considers *mālama* (to preserve, protect, care for) and nurturing relationships with *‘āina* (land, that which feeds), *kūpuna* (ancestors; elderly, past and present) *‘ohana* (family), *‘aumākua* (spirit guardians), and *kou kino* (yourself; body) to be of utmost importance.

Aloha is described as a Hawaiian cultural practice, and I explore the practice of *Living Aloha* which parallels the principles in *Living Indigenous Leadership* (Kenny & Fraser, 2012), and is synonymous with the practice of *mālama*. I discuss the importance of *‘ōlelo Hawai‘i* (language, poems, songs), *mo‘olelo* (stories, myths, folklore), and knowing one’s *mo‘okū‘auhau* (genealogy). Lastly, I examine the connection between *inoa* (name), *‘ohana* (family) and *‘āina* (land); these tenets are critical to understanding the Native Hawaiian Culture of Aloha.

The fourth section of critical literature relates to retaining culture. I recognize Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop’s foresight in leaving a trust in her will, an endowment of land and resources that would fund a school educate Native Hawaiian children. She fulfilled her dream to provide a world-class educational institution, so that her people may sustain themselves and their families through industriousness and good careers; her leadership changed the dismal fate of Native Hawaiians to one of hope for generations to come.

In the third chapter, I offer my Methodology/Guiding Questions and Research Procedures, detailing how the study was conducted and the rationale for the selection of methods. Included is literature on the methods that were employed.

**Methods used to address the research question(s).** I begin this chapter by establishing a clear foundation in Indigenous research philosophy. The methodologies of choice, which are in accord with this philosophy are phenomenology, ethnography, heuristics, and, finally, the



method of Portraiture to tell the stories of leadership, change, and resilience of four Native Hawaiians who as adults, chose to permanently relocate to the United States mainland. I define each method (phenomenology, ethnography, and heuristics) thoroughly and explain how each of these methods complements the essential method, Portraiture; the methodologies in synch serve in addressing the research questions in this study.

Data collection included observing and interviewing four practitioners of Aloha, individuals of Native Hawaiian decent who were born and raised in Hawai'i, have permanently relocated to the mainland United States. These individuals have found a way to regain or retain, and adhere to their cultural practices; I see them as leading change with Aloha, both on large scale as well as in small acts of kindness, compassion, generosity, mindfulness, and right action in daily work and in everyday life.

I painted a full portrait of each participant by mindfully selecting choice words, poems, pictures, songs, video clips and sound bites. (Incidentally, the artists (musicians) whose songs I selected were Native Hawaiian as well). I wanted to understand how these dislocated Kanaka Maoli cling to and embrace their indigenous cultural values while acclimating to U.S. Western culture despite societal pressures to conform, assimilate, and acculturate. Through the interviews, I was able to:

- Identify some of the reasons why Kanaka Maoli leave the 'āina in the first place
- Uncover some of the hardships that may have occurred in the relocation and assimilation process
- Discover if cultural bereavement took place
- Understand how the participants learned about Aloha and what *living aloha* means to each of them personally
- Identify the characteristics and deep meaning of Aloha as described and applied as leadership by each person

- Identify how each participant has become a practitioner of Aloha
- Understand how embracing Aloha has helped them become “successful”
- Uncover and document how each participant experiences *living aloha*, and how the teachings of the ancestors are passed on to the next generations
- Determine what problems, if any, have occurred by leading with Aloha and whether discrimination was experienced

**Methods of analyzing and making meaning of data collected.** This study involved data gathering about participants’ experiences of leading through Aloha. Interviews and observation were conducted and recorded with a digital voice recorder, a video recorder, as well as handwritten notes on a note pad to keep field notes. Each interview was transcribed and given to the participant to review. I described each phenomenon with thick, rich description. Multiple case study, phenomenology, and ethnography utilizing “talking story” to interview were the best methods for collecting the information needed for this study. Each person is unique in his or her own way of illuminating Aloha through leadership; a quantitative study would not be able to capture my observations, and rich detail would be lost if statistical analysis were employed. Much data—as well as the very essence of what I am trying to capture—would be missed entirely.

**Ethical issues.** While the intent of this study was to create portraits of Native Hawaiian leaders who practice a form of authentic leadership, I imagine that when working with most native communities, researchers find it vital to establish a relationship with each of the people they intend to observe and interview. The people I interviewed were individuals in my circle of relationships; either former classmates and alumni from the Kamehameha Schools (elementary and secondary school scholarship recipients of endowment from Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop

Estates), or former students at the *hula halau* (schools of hula) I danced with—*Na Mele ‘O ke Kai* (means “The Songs of the Sea”) or *Hula Anyone?*

Before beginning my research, I submitted my Ethics application with a clause that would allow permission for video recording for future scholarship presentations as well as documentary. We established a rationale for an “oral consent agreement” so that interviewees can give consent verbally. Each of the interviewees consented to be recorded and also gave me permission to use their names and images.

In the fourth chapter, I present portraits of the participants, each designed to be individual and artistic representations of the complete research in context and process. I produced a total of five portraits for this study; theoretical discussions and implication are discussed in the section following the portraits.

In the fifth chapter, I compare and contrast emergent themes from my data with the concepts and theories presented in the second chapter of the dissertation.

In the final chapter, I offer comments about how this study fills a gap in the literature and how my findings, analysis, and interpretation may apply to other cultures and other contexts in the spirit of leadership and change. The reader will find a section that includes implication for leadership and change, applications for further research as well, and the conclusion.

## **References**

All References are listed in APA style, as is required for this dissertation.

## **Appendices**

Appendices are provided. Included in the appendices are:

- Appendix A: A glossary of all Hawaiian words used in this dissertation.

- Appendix B: References to *‘Ōlelo No ‘eau*: Hawaiian proverbs and poetical sayings.
- Appendix C: A reference list of songs that were used in this study.

## Review of Literature

*‘A ohe pau ka ‘ike i ka hālau ho ‘okāhi.*

*All knowledge is not taught in one school.*

One can learn from many sources. (Pukui, #203, see Appendix B)

The loss of cultural identity has harmful consequences, and may lead to feelings of isolation, anger, disconnection, aggression, fear, shame, and the loss of empathic possibilities, which is, according to the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, “feeling that others cannot possibly be empathic, losing even the capacity for self-empathy; one feels unworthy of connection, flawed in some essential way, which is often experienced in shame” (Miller, 2013).

### Leaving Home

There is evidence that people become heartbroken during the phenomenon of moving away, bereaving the loss of their culture, familiar physical surroundings, and the close geographical proximity to family and friends (Eisenbruch, 1991; Miller, 2013; Swamy, 2011). In fact, Eisenbruch (1991) coined the term *cultural bereavement* to explain the loss of social structures, cultural values, and self-identity experienced by Asian immigrants (Prendes-Lintel, 2001, p.741). Over time, immigrants may find ways to blend in, homogenize, and become acculturated to the mainstream culture in order to minimize differences in culture. This is precisely where they risk losing themselves: when they forget who they are as a people, where they come from, and their own cultural practices.

Some Native Hawaiians manage to retain or regain their Native Hawaiian culture while living as permanent residents on the mainland United States in spite of being separated by nearly three thousand miles of sparkly, Pacific Blue Ocean and a rich culture. In my study, I explain the phenomenon of losing and regaining or completely retaining Hawaiian cultural identity after relocation to the mainland United States. I hope to honor the journey of all Native Hawaiians

who have permanently relocated to the mainland by telling the participants' stories of courage, resilience, Aloha, and indigenous leadership.

Ancient Hawaiian culture, teachings, and values within a modern context must be viewed holistically and systemically, beginning with our own genesis creation narratives as well as with respect to major historical events from an indigenous perspective—events that give shape to Native Hawaiians' concept of identity today, reveal stories of a people's survival, as well as illuminate the on-going struggle for self-determination. In order to fully comprehend why Kanaka Maoli leave Hawai'i and risk losing their culture, it is critical to set the historical stage and worldview context first, as told in the voices of the people themselves. Historical context from an indigenous worldview plays a predominant role as background for the research and methods chosen to do this study, and necessary to lay the foundation of this critical review of literature.

In reviewing the existing literature and research relevant to this study, I considered four main areas: the loss of culture, acculturation, the culture of Aloha, and retaining the culture of Aloha.

In the first section, I examine the loss of culture. I include an overview of major Hawaiian historical events, along with a synopsis of tipping points portraying the succession of multiple, synergistic events that almost led to annihilation of Hawaiian language, culture, and people of Hawaiian descent. Historiography pertaining to the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy is discussed, which led to the irreversible loss of land, as well as to the political and socio-economic demise of Kanaka Maoli, with systemic ramifications on Hawaiian identity and loss of culture.

The second section explores the phenomenon of out-migration and acculturation. I recount the history of out-migration from Hawai‘i, including the recent waves of out-migration, and offer reasons why Hawaiians leave the ‘āina in the first place.

In the third section entitled the culture of Aloha, I identify pertinent research by first defining and differentiating between the concepts of race, identity, culture, ethnicity, and local culture. I offered an overview of the Native / Indigenous / Aboriginal worldview, describing how this perspective parallels the Hawaiian worldview, which ideally considers nurturing relationships with land, ancestors, elders, ‘ohana, and ‘aumākua to be of utmost importance. I presented a personal definition of Aloha, and described *Living Aloha* as a Hawaiian cultural practice, synonymous with the practice of mālama. I discussed the importance of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and mo‘olelo, and knowing one’s mo‘okū‘auhau. Lastly, I examined the connection between inoa, ‘ohana and ‘āina; these tenets are critical to understanding the Native Hawaiian Culture of Aloha.

The fourth section of critical literature relates to retaining culture. I recognize Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop’s foresight in creating a trust to endow land and resources to educate the children of Hawai‘i. I acknowledged the “Keepers of the Flame”, and highlighted Tūtū Mary Kawena Pukui’s work. I pointed to key events that took place during the 1970s Hawaiian cultural revival, and referred to the most current studies encompassing Hawaiian language and cultural programs, as well as to the effects of Hawaiian pedagogical teachings within Hawaiian communities, and considered the recent development of Hawaiian Leadership models as they pertain to Aloha and retaining Hawaiian cultural practices. A discussion of a phenomenon that Indigenous communities sometimes call *Walking in Two Worlds* follows. This section concludes by identifying any gaps in the literature.

## Loss of Culture

The Hawaiian Islands lie in the eastern half of the North Pacific (Kuykendall & Day, 1948, p.3); more than 2,400 miles from the closest continental land mass, it is one of the last spots on the globe to be populated (Barnes, 1999). Eight major islands make up Hawai‘i: Hawai‘i, Maui, ‘Oahu, Kaua‘i, Moloka‘i, Lana‘i, Ni‘ihau, and Kaho‘olawe.

Although nobody knows for sure exactly when the first Hawaiians arrived, human remains have been found in the islands that date back to approximately 150 BC. The dominant theory is that the people are from Polynesia, the region within a geographic triangle that connects New Zealand, Easter Island, and the northern point of Hawai‘i (Barnes, 1999; Emory & Grant, 1999) and that they arrived in small groups sometime around 2000 years ago, 500–750 AD according to Dunford (1980), searching for food and a new place to settle (p. 21).

They migrated from Asia to the Southeast Asian Peninsula and then continued across the sea into Indonesia. From there they followed an easterly route across Melanesia and Micronesia to the vicinity of Fiji. From this juncture one strand headed south to New Zealand. Another headed north, through the Society Islands, to the Marquesas, and then on to Hawai‘i. (Barnes, 1999, p. 8)

Later, other people arrived from Tahiti over a thousand years ago (Dunford, 1980). These people collectively, our ancestors, came to be known as Hawaiians. Expert sailors, they skillfully navigated in double-hulled canoes using Polynesian nautical techniques which involved analyzing the location of the stars, studying wind patterns, tidal flow, and ocean currents.

“They travelled back and forth to Tahiti for a few hundred years, and then those trips stopped. The people of Hawai‘i did not see people from other lands for many, many years” (Dunford, 1980, p. 22). These indigenous people lived sustainably and even prospered on the isolated islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean until 1776, when the first Western visitors arrived.



Most Western historians begin Hawaiian modern history with the arrival of world explorer Captain James Cook on January 20, 1778 (Kuykendall & Day, 1962) as he was the first known European to arrive; they credit Captain Cook with “discovering” and naming Hawai‘i *The Sandwich Isles* after his voyaging sponsor, the Earl of Sandwich. Griener (2007) attests that the people of Hawai‘i have two histories: the aforementioned story and the second history “Hawaiians call “pre-Cook” . . . and it is during the “pre” times that true Hawaiian beliefs were grounded” (p. 35).

The Hawaiians embraced an oral tradition that preserved their stories through chants and dance, legends of creation, mythology, genealogy, and stories of travel from faraway lands that were passed down for centuries, from generation to generation. Additionally, the moon cycle was especially important in ancient culture. By observing the moon, each person knew exactly what kind of work they would be doing on their *‘ahupua’*a (slice of land), on that particular day. The waxing moon (increasing light between new and full moon) dictated planting plants that produce the edible part above ground, and the waning moon (decreasing light—full moon to new moon) dictated planting plants that produce the edible parts below ground. It was customary for children to learn about the phases of the moon by reciting a *mahina ‘oli* (moon chant) before the age of six (Handy & Pukui, 1972).

Hawaiian epistemology is based upon the *Kumulipo*, the story of creation that speaks about the creation of the islands and the inhabitants, the birth of the gods, how humans came to be, and the relationship of man to the ‘āina or land (Hare, 2005). Consisting of over 2000 lines, the *Kumulipo*—which translates into “the dark source”—is a *mele ko‘ihonua* (genealogical song), an *oli* (chant) of genealogy that was originally composed by Keaulumoku, an ancestor of Queen Lili‘uokalani in the 1700s (Hare, 2005). Memorized and passed down in oral tradition

from generation to generation, the Kumulipo was chanted by *kahuna* (priests) at special events, such as the birth of great *ali'i* (chiefs), and at the festival of *Lono, the Makahiki*. It is believed that the Kumulipo was chanted at the arrival of Captain Cook in 1776, as he was thought to be the god Lono (Holmes, 2012).

Genealogical chants were performed on rare occasion, and ali'i court chanters were specifically trained to perform these 'oli perfectly, so that the integrity of the chant remained intact. Today only a select few individuals have learned to chant the entire Kumulipo from memory. The chant was penned by King Kalākaua (ruled 1874–1891), who used the opportunity to trace his lineage back to the gods through the Kumulipo, to prove his chiefly right to the throne. Later, during her house arrest at 'Iolani Palace, Kalākaua's sister Queen Lili'uokalani (ruled 1891–1893) translated the Kumulipo into English, which was then published in 1897. “The most massive part of the chant is a genealogy which enumerates thousands of ancestors of the Hawaiian royal family” (Hare, 2005).

*Kumu hula* (master hula teacher) Pualani Kanaka'ole Kanahale, Professor at the University of Hawai'i, National Living Treasure, and daughter of Aunty Edith Kanaka'ole (one of the “keepers of the flame”), wrote a beautiful poem naming the Kumulipo as “the organic inception of all family systems,” articulating the inter-relationship with sky, earth, ocean, land, animals, man and gods. She describes the moon cycle as “the principle motivator of the earth,” how the sun and rain nourish the earth, while the wind, oceans and rivers “provided mobility for things and objects incapable of movement,” and how the Hawaiian were most appreciative and respectful, as they understood themselves to be “beneficiaries of this primal cadence and flow with the rhythm of the universe.”

The ***KUMULIPO*** is the reality of our dim past, the foundation for our present and the pathway into the future. It is a cognizant reminder of our ancestors, their

intelligence, failure, defeat and conquest. This chant is a gift which encourages the warrior within us to awake to the contests and challenges, which continue to confront us today, by using ancestral intelligence and experiences with our own intelligence. It is the genealogy which connects the Native Hawaiian to land, sky and ocean.

*Pualani Kanaka 'ole Kanahele*

The Kumulipo charted the beginning of time and the passing of time for the Hawaiians. Seasons dictated by the sun, moon, and tides naturally informed them when it was time to work or play, what should be planted, harvested, or fished and when those activities should take place. It was a sustainable, mindful way to live. Time for the ancient Hawaiians was not a standard measure in years like it is today by the Christian calendar; the first protestant missionaries did not arrive until the early 1800s, and the calendar as we know it was integrated and adapted soon thereafter.

**Synopsis of tipping points.** This next section summarizes historical tipping points that reflect changes in language, as well as socio-political, religious, economic, and education systems that led to the loss of Hawaiian cultural practices.

What appears to have happened over time is that visitors to the islands stayed; as they became permanent residents and policy makers, ethnic inequality became normative (Okamura, 2008). The rulers of Hawai'i received advice from greedy and power-hungry individuals they had trusted; sadly, they were eventually strong-armed into making adverse political decisions that caused the decline and eventual end of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Decisions that privileged bankers, lawyers, and "expert" witnesses became law; this caused irrevocable systemic changes in Hawai'i's social systems forever, shattering the foundation of a people on every level of their existence: spiritual, socio-political, educational, economical, as well as severely compromising health and mental stability. Even the Hawaiian value system was fractured. Messages of inferiority continued to permeate a once strong nation of people who now, could no longer trust

the government that had overthrown their queen, taken their land, and sold it for profits to outsiders. The people could no longer grow *kalo* (taro) on their ‘āina—for it was no longer theirs. Neither were they allowed to cast nets to fish when the moon dictated . . . or dance the hula . . . or speak their own native language—for fear of getting caught and being severely punished. With no genetic immunity, diseases tragically stole the lives of beloved young ones who should have lived long, full and prosperous lives. Within a century, Hawaiians had become a minority in their own homeland.

This historical timeline begins with the birth of *Kamehameha* the Great, and ends when Hawai‘i becomes the fiftieth state.

Hawaiian legends claimed that a great king would one day unite the islands, and that the sign of his birth would be a comet. Halley’s Comet was visible from Hawai‘i in 1758. Although no one is absolutely sure because the Christian calendar hadn’t yet been introduced, it is believed that Kamehameha (1758?–1819) was born in Pu‘ukoholā on the island of Hawai‘i shortly after the comet appeared.



Figure 2.1. Statue of King Kamehameha the Great.

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According to what was recorded orally and then transcribed, Kamehameha was probably a young warrior about twenty years old in 1778 when Captains James Cook and George Vancouver sailed their ships *Discovery* and *Resolution* into Kealakekua Bay on the Big Island of

Hawai‘i during the annual season of the *Makahiki*, a festival honoring the god *Lono* as *Lono-ika-Makahiki* who sailed away long ago and promised to return. At that time, there had not been visitors from other lands for hundreds of years. The ships’ enormous white billowing sails resembled the legendary white *kapa* (tapa) banners of Lono; the ships’ arrival during the Makahiki season, when emotions and spiritual awareness are heightened; the knowledge that the bay—*Kealakekua*, where Cook landed—actually means “The pathway of god” . . . all of these reasons caused the Hawaiians to believe that Captain Cook was Lono who had finally returned.

The Makahiki celebration lasted approximately four months, during which time spiritual cleansing and making *ho’okupu* (gift) offerings to the gods occurred. War during the Makahiki was forbidden. The people were not allowed to work, and instead, participated in feasting, singing, and hula dancing, as well as games, land and water sports. Cook, Vancouver, and their crews were treated like gods, like the parents of royalty. They were given gifts, feasts were held in their honor, and the Hawaiian hosts offered their guests the very best of everything, but the extended outpouring of hospitality proved to be both exhausting and economically draining.

When the Makahiki celebration came to an end, the visitors remained . . . and overstayed their welcome. Eventually, an argument escalated over unfair trade and the accusation of thievery. “About a score of natives were killed in the fray” (Kuykendall & Day, 1962, p.19); Cook and four of his marines were tragically killed ashore. “Many natives were killed and a number of houses were burned during the week that followed. Peace was finally restored. The expedition left to continue its explorations on the coast of America and Asia, and did not return to the Sandwich Isles” (p. 19).

In 1778 there were an estimated 400,000 to 1,000,000 Hawaiians living in the islands. By 1822, less than fifty years later, less than 200,000 pure Hawaiians were left alive (Noyes, 2003).

In 1782 Kamehameha began uniting the separate Hawaiian Islands; over the course of 25 years Hawai‘i was finally united as a single nation. Under Kamehameha’s leadership, the battles amongst the island chiefs were finally over, and the Hawaiian people lived peaceful, productive, and prosperous lives.

In 1819 when Kamehameha died, his son, Liholiho (1797–1824) was proclaimed Kamehameha II, the second king of Hawai‘i; he is best remembered for bringing an end to the *kapu* (taboo) system, thus overthrowing the foundation of traditional Hawaiian religion: the ‘*Ai Noa* (freeing of the eating taboo)—when he sat down with Queen Ka‘ahumanu and his mother Keōpūolani and ate a meal together; ordering the destruction of *heiau* (Hawaiian temples) and images of the gods. Ironically, Liholiho never officially converted to Christianity because he refused to give up four of his five wives and his love of alcohol. Honolulu’s first Christian house of worship was built and dedicated at the location of the present Kawaiaha‘o Church. In 1823 Keōpūolani, the queen mother, received a Christian baptism on her deathbed; she was the first Hawaiian in Hawai‘i to be baptized in the Protestant faith.

Around the same time the first Hawaiian language lesson, *The Alphabet*, was printed on the Mission Press. Excited by the new technology of literacy taught by the missionaries, King Liholiho sent out Hawaiians to teach the new skill of reading to his subjects in the rural country districts. Commerce and economic systems were shifting with the introduction of money as a medium of exchange for goods and services. The first sugar and coffee plantations were started as cash crops by American businessmen. In November 1823, Kamehameha II and Queen

Kamāmalu commissioned the British whaling ship *L'Aigle* to carry them to London. While in England, the royal family contracted the measles, to which they had no immunity. Queen Kamāmalu died on July 8, 1824. Grief-stricken, Kamehameha II died six days later (Steward, Tune, Racoma, & Williams, 2001). By 1828 there were only 188,000 pure Hawaiians left alive (Noyes, 2003).

Lahainaluna Seminary was established as a teacher training college in 1831, and it became the first college west of the Mississippi River. Anatomy, trigonometry, world geography, Greek and English were taught there in Hawaiian. The first Hawaiian newspaper, *Ka Lama Hawai'i* (means “The Light of Hawai‘i”), was established and printed at Lahainaluna. For over 100 years thereafter, Hawaiian language newspapers flourished in Hawai‘i and served to record traditional Hawaiian literature, history, and culture (‘Aha Punanaleo, 2006) . . . ironically, during this time of enlightenment, by 1836 there were only 108,000 pure Hawaiians left alive (Noyes, 2003).

The first edition of the Hawaiian Bible was printed. Many Hawaiians had converted to Christianity, which was practiced through the Hawaiian language while maintaining knowledge of traditional Hawaiian religion. By 1841, Hawai‘i rose to become one of the most literate, if not *the most* literate, nations of the nineteenth century (‘Aha Punanaleo, 2006).

Punahou, an elite English-language school was established for the children of missionaries to “protect them” from the influences associated with high fluency/literacy in Hawaiian developed in other schools. The Native Hawaiian ali‘i also wished to enroll their children in an elite English language immersion program at Punahou, which did not practice Native Hawaiian literacy. Race and class eventually divided Hawai‘i, based on the language of education. More English immersion-type education for those aspiring to achieve upward

mobility brought neglect of Hawaiian language schools. Hawaiian language was seen as universally as secondary to English, resulting in the loss of confidence among Hawaiian people in themselves, the weakening of academic strengths of Hawai‘i’s population, and tension between descendants of the missionaries and the native Hawaiian community (‘Aha Punanaleo, 2006).

The land division known as *The Great Mahele* divided Hawai‘i’s lands among the king and chiefs. This land agreement was an attempt by Kamehameha III in 1848 to guarantee that the Hawaiian people would not lose their tenured land, but it opened the door to free enterprise, as the Mahele allowed “Crown Lands” to be sold or leased to foreigners. Meanwhile, in that same year, an epidemic of measles, whooping cough, and influenza took the lives of about 10,000 people, mostly native Hawaiians.

In 1851, Kamehameha III signed a secret agreement that placed the islands under the protection of the United States; he died in 1854 after reigning for almost 30 years, and was succeeded by his brother Alexander Liholiho, Kamehameha IV. Around the same time, a smallpox epidemic left more than 5,000 people dead.

More contract laborers were imported from Asia to work on sugar plantations. A form of broken conversational Hawaiian called *‘ōlelo pa‘i‘ai* (Pidgin) was spoken on the plantations. Intermarriage with Hawaiians was encouraged as a means to curb the rapid depopulation of Hawai‘i due to introduced diseases. ‘Ōlelo pa‘i‘ai use increased toward the turn of the century as immigration grew, adopting more English terms as the English speaking minority exert increased political influence (‘Aha Punanaleo, 2006).



In 1863, Alexander Liholiho (Kamehameha IV) died. He was succeeded by his older brother Lot Kamehameha, Kamehameha V. The first leprosy patients were taken to Kalaupapa peninsula on Moloka‘i in 1866.

When Kamehameha V passed away in 1872, William Lunalilo was elected king, however just a year later, he died of tuberculosis at the age of 40. David Kalākaua was then elected king during a period of major economic growth. King Kalākaua and his party departed to San Francisco for a goodwill tour of the United States (Comeau, 1996), which eventually led to a trip around the world to promote international relations. Upon his return he initiated a Hawaiian cultural revival focusing on Hawaiian literature, dance, and music, all dependent on the Hawaiian language and strongly supported by the Hawaiian language press and schools. Soon thereafter, elected officials forced a new constitution upon Kalākaua that resulted in rescinding the right to vote for lower class Hawaiians and all non-European immigrants. The same elected officials took further action to weaken the Hawaiian public medium schools through attacks on the public education budgets including the salaries of their teachers (‘Aha Punana Leo, 2006).

In 1876, the U.S. Senate ratified the Reciprocity Treaty, which allowed sugar and other products to enter the United States from Hawai‘i without customs duties. By 1878 there were only 48,000 pure Hawaiians left alive (Noyes, 2003).

In 1887, King Kalākaua was forced to sign the Bayonet Constitution under the threat of death. This legal document was created by anti-monarchists in the king’s own cabinet to strip power from the monarchy and put it in the hands of the legislature and cabinet. King Kalākaua departed on the U.S.S. *Charleston* for San Francisco in 1890; less than two months later, he died in San Francisco. He would be Hawai‘i’s last king.



*Figure 2.2.* King David Kalākaua (1836—1891). Retrieved from: [http://archives1.dags.hawaii.gov/gallery2/main.php?g2\\_view=tags.VirtualAlbum&g2\\_tagName=Royalty&g2\\_itemId=488](http://archives1.dags.hawaii.gov/gallery2/main.php?g2_view=tags.VirtualAlbum&g2_tagName=Royalty&g2_itemId=488) and *Figure 2.3.* Queen Lili'uokalani (1838—1917). Retrieved from: [http://archives1.dags.hawaii.gov/gallery2/main.php?g2\\_view=tags.VirtualAlbum&g2\\_tagName=Royalty&g2\\_itemId=470](http://archives1.dags.hawaii.gov/gallery2/main.php?g2_view=tags.VirtualAlbum&g2_tagName=Royalty&g2_itemId=470)  
Source: Source Hawaii State Archives Digital Collections

His sister, Lili'uokalani inherited the throne after Kalākaua's death. She worked tirelessly to replace the Bayonet Constitution with a new law that would restore power to the monarchy and grant voting rights to all Native Hawaiians and Asians. American and European businessmen felt threatened by the queen's proposed new constitution and organized to overthrow the queen to ensure protection of their interests and investments. This is how the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom happened.

Queen Lili'uokalani attempted to proclaim a new constitution, restoring powers to the throne that were deleted in the constitution of 1887. On January 14, 1893, a royal opposition group composed of Americans and Europeans formed a "Committee of Safety" to force a coup d'état to overthrow the Hawaiian Kingdom, depose the Queen, and gain annexation to the United States. They voiced concern for the "safety and property of American citizens;" the U.S. Government responded by sending a company of Marines and Navy sailors to resolve the problem. Lili'uokalani was deposed on January 17; she had hoped the United States would later restore Hawai'i's sovereignty to the rightful holder (Dougherty, 1992). Meanwhile, a provisional

government called The Republic of Hawai‘i was established; Sanford B. Dole was named president of the republic.

Queen Lili‘uokalani gracefully gave up the thrown to avoid bloodshed of her people, and pledged allegiance to the republic. She was publicly humiliated, arrested, and sentenced to five years of hard labor in prison by a military tribunal and fined \$5,000. The sentence was reduced to a one-year house arrest—imprisonment in her upstairs bedroom at ‘Iolani Palace—where she composed many songs including *Ke Aloha o Ka Haku* (The Queen’s Prayer) and began working on her memoirs. In 1896, The Republic of Hawai‘i gave Lili‘uokalani a full pardon and restored her civil rights. Lili‘uokalani made several trips to the United States to protest against the annexation by the United States and attended the inauguration of President McKinley.

When Spain declared war on the United States in 1898, the U.S. Congress responded by ordering troops to be stationed at Camp McKinley near Diamond Head. Hawai‘i became an incorporated territory of the United States government, who took control of 1.2 million acres of land that were held in trust by the monarchy and known as “Crown Lands.” This is the source of the “Ceded Lands” issue and dispute in Hawai‘i today. President McKinley signed a joint resolution of Congress that annexed Hawai‘i to the United States; Hawai‘i’s sovereignty was transferred; Hawai‘i became a territory of the United States, and the U.S. Senate confirmed businessman Sanford B. Dole as governor of Hawai‘i.

Queen Lili‘uokalani unsuccessfully entered claims against the United States totaling \$450,000 for property and other losses, claiming personal ownership of the crown lands. Lili‘uokalani was finally awarded an annual pension of \$4,000 and permitted to receive the income from a sugar plantation of 6,000 acres, which was actually the private property of her late brother Kalākaua. The queen died without restitution in 1917, at the age of 79.

In 1921, in an attempt to make amends for the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy and forced colonization of Native Hawaiians, the U.S. Congress passed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act which set aside 200,000 acres of island property to be used as “homestead lands” for Native Hawaiians with 50% or more blood quantum (Kauanui, 2008).

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese military conducted a surprise attack against the U.S. Naval base at Pearl Harbor. The U.S.S. *Arizona* and several other ships were sunk. More than 2,500 lives were lost.

In 1959 when Hawai‘i became the 50<sup>th</sup> state, the federal government returned “Ceded lands” that were once property of the Hawaiian Monarchy—and created OHA (Office of Hawaiian Affairs) in 1978—to preserve Native Hawaiian culture, protect the rights of these Indigenous people, enhance the lifestyles of Native Hawaiians . . . and to manage the ceded land revenues for the “betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians” (Bolante, 2003, as cited in McCubbin & Dang, 2010). Some Native Hawaiian organizations contend that these lands belong to the Hawaiian people, and that any use of or possession of them by any other body is not legal. In any case, OHA provides opportunities for Native Hawaiians—in terms of education, health care, and early childhood education programs, charter schools, indigenous teaching methods and curricula, as well as scholarships for Native Hawaiians to pursue higher education (McCubbin & Dang, 2010).

### **Outmigration and Acculturation**

*‘Au i ke kai me he mau ala.*

*Cross the sea as a bird.*

To sail across the sea. (Pukui, #2737, see Appendix B)

**Leaving home.** There is evidence suggesting that Hawaiians began immigrating to the U.S. mainland in the late 1700s during the height of the whaling industry.

There is little known about the Hawaiians who traveled to California during the Gold Rush, or those who intermarried with American Indian tribes and were said to have been “absorbed.” Nor do we know about Hawaiians that settled in British Columbia (Barman, 1995; Koppel 1995), or the groups who moved to the state of Utah for religious community. (Kauanui, 1998, p. 692)

The story of *Henry ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia* (1792–1818) is fascinating—a boy whose parents were slain in front of him during the civil war when Kamehameha the Great was uniting the islands. As he ran to escape with his infant brother on his back, a soldier threw a spear that instantly killed his brother. ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia was caught and taken as a prisoner of war. In 1807, he seized the opportunity to travel on a merchant ship headed for New Haven, CT. Upon arrival, series of missionary families took him in; he worked, studied, and learned English. ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia became a student of the Foreign Mission School, whose goal was to train its Native boarders to return to their homeland and preach Christianity. ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia, a Hawaiian living in New England, began writing his own spelling book, grammar, and dictionary in Hawaiian, at a time when ‘ōlelo was an unwritten language. ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia became a Christian; he studied Hebrew and Latin, and began translating the Bible into ‘ōlelo. Henry ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia and his missionary friends planned to travel to Hawai‘i to complete their mission, but he died in 1819 from illness a year before they were to sail to Hawai‘i and his books were lost forever (‘Aha Punanaleo, 2006).

**Modern out-migration.** Hawaiian communities have migrated to and settled on the continental United States mainland in increasing numbers over the last 65 years (Halualani, 2002). It may be surprising to learn that according to the 2010 U.S. Census, there are more Hawaiians living on the mainland than in Hawai‘i. Since the 1950s, Hawaiians have migrated away from the islands and created growing communities in the continental mainland United States, particularly in California, Washington, Oregon and Utah, among other areas.

**Why Hawaiians leave in the first place.** After Hawai‘i became colonized, there have been at least three significant waves of outmigration (Kauanui, 1998; Wright, 1979) stemming

from the lack of jobs at home and the challenges of providing a home due to the stringent rules of blood quantum required by Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in securing a Hawaiian homestead (Halualani, 2002).

The First Wave of outmigration happened between 1948 and 1969. In the 1959 post-statehood era, many Hawaiians lost their jobs when sugar plantations, pineapple and coffee refineries closed due to the decreased demands in Hawaiian exports that the U. S. could obtain much cheaper, elsewhere.

Much of the land in Hawai'i was reserved for the U.S. military, for reasons described in the timeline. A "disproportionate number of Hawaiian men joined the armed forces;" proportionally speaking, that was "double the {U. S.} national average" (Wright, 1979, p. 18). Hawaiian men joined the military, and mainland Hawaiian communities developed after World War II; Hawaiian men found that they could support their families through the military, as well as receive training and education with the GI bill. Many were sent to the mainland for training and never returned home; among those who did return home, many had difficulty finding jobs (Kauanui, 1998).

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) of 1920 required 50% blood quantum for one to be recognized as a Hawaiian and receive benefits. It made sense economically therefore, for some to move away and stay on the mainland. Some Hawaiian women moved to the mainland for educational opportunities and ended up marrying outside their culture and living permanently on the mainland. Those who stayed in Hawaii often sought to marry Caucasians, Japanese, and Chinese in hopes of attaining a brighter future which often resulted in an elevated socio-economic status (Wright, 1979).

The second wave of emigration took place during the 1970s as the state of Hawai‘i turned to the tourist industry as a “cash cow” to boost the economy. Hawai‘i’s then Governor George Ariyoshi’s economic strategy was to increase dollars to the islands through national and international tourism campaigns. It worked. Within a very short span of time, millions of tourists flocked to Waikiki; in order to accommodate all these people comfortably, hotels and shopping centers had to be built . . . but on what land? Developers “evicted, dispossessed, and displaced many Hawaiians and other locals from lands to make way for the buildings of subdivisions, hotel complexes, and golf courses . . . by 1979, 95% of locals were driven out of the housing market” (Kent, 1993, as cited in Kauanui, 1998, p. 684). Of the displaced locals, Hawaiians were the most dispersed of any other ethnic group in their own home state (Kauanui, 1998; Wright, 1979). Meanwhile, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands failed to equitably distribute homestead lands to “proven” Hawaiians; many died while on the Hawaiian homestead’s waiting list for the chance to own property. Hawaiians struggled to land sustainable jobs in their own home state (Halualani, 2002).

The third and most recent wave of migration by Hawaiians began in the 1990s and continues today. Halualani (2002) points to evidence of the expense of living in Hawaii (food, housing) and the lack of decent paying jobs. Kauanui (1998) argues that the high cost of living coupled with seasonal, low-paying jobs in the tourism industry is to blame for the outmigration of Hawaiians in the 1990s. That, along with “continued civil rights abuses of Hawaiian land trust obligations, and the state and the U. S. governments’ refusal to recognize Hawaiian assertions of sovereignty” (p. 684) contributed to the growing poverty among Native Hawaiians, and made day-to-day living in paradise challenging, particularly when there was such economic disparity amongst the residents of Hawai‘i, based on race.

Additionally, claims for Hawaiian Homestead lands were denied, stalled, or disqualified. Hawaiians found that they could better support themselves and their families on the mainland never returning home (except to visit). Many Kanaka Maoli struggle to maintain or regain Hawaiian cultural traditions and practices. “Off-island” Hawaiians have produced three generations of mainland Hawaiian ‘*ōpio* (youth; young people) and their own distinctive Hawaiian culture on the mainland (Halualani, 2002). I suspect that now, it would be safe to say there are at least four generations of mainland Hawaiian ‘*ōpio*.

### **The Culture of Aloha**

*O ke aloha ke kuleana o kāhi malihini.*

*Love is the host in strange lands.*

In old Hawai‘i, every passerby was greeted and offered food whether he was an acquaintance or a total stranger. (Pukui, #2453, see Appendix B)

As I began researching Aloha as a cultural leadership model, I discovered that the extant literature pertaining to aloha is deeply rooted in Hawaiian epistemology (Hanohano, 2001; Meyer, 1998) as well as to the worldview of Native Hawaiians from an indigenous perspective (McCubbin & Marsella, 2009). The most recent research regarding the issues surrounding Kanaka Maoli utilizes ‘*ōlelo maoli* (Hawaiian language) because the research is coming from an emic (insider) approach within Hawaiian communities. In fact, as I researched using Hawaiian words that the speakers of Hawaiiana use—such as ‘*ōlelo* (language), *Maoli* (Native Hawaiian), ‘*ōiwi* (Native, native son—comes from *iwi*, which means bone), *lāhui* (Hawaiian nation / race), and *Kanaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian), I discovered many dissertations written completely in ‘*ōlelo maoli* and not translated into English! This is when I knew I had to learn to understand, read and speak at least some ‘*ōlelo*.



I attended Hawaiian cultures and language classes online, and made key discoveries. For example, “*Kanaka Maoli*” is the politically correct indigenous term for Hawaiian Native; “Hawaiian” is a term that English speakers gave the native people of Hawai‘i. We know this because in the Hawaiian language, all words end in a vowel. My learning was enhanced by reading indigenous and Hawaiian literature in the form of journal articles and books, viewing documentary films, and researching Hawaiian history and culture. Additionally, I became acquainted with, and continue to explore the critical and theoretical contributions of my Tūtū, as well as the works of other well-known native researchers and scholars.

The very essence of ancient and modern Hawaiian culture has its foundations in Aloha, a concept that Westerners have reduced to a single word interpreted to mean ‘hello’ or ‘goodbye’. The gifting of *lei* (garland; necklace of flowers, leaves, shells, given as a symbol of affection) or wearing a *pua* (flower) behind the ear has also been trivialized by tourism; the *mana ‘o* (mindfulness, thought behind the action) is actually the proclamation of indigenous ideology: we are *keiki ‘o ka ‘āina* (children of the land) belonging to the same *‘ohana* (family); we *mālama* (take care of) each other.



Figure 2.4. Our keiki mālama ‘āina. Photo courtesy of the McKelvy ‘Ohana Album.

Below is a link to a video that perhaps captures the sentiment of giving and receiving lei from a *kama ‘āina*’s (native-born; host’s) perspective: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGAIHkmd8G4>

Aloha is a way of life for the native people of Hawaiian blood, connecting us to one another, to our ancestors, to our children, to our ‘āina and to all that exists. “At the deepest level, Aloha means love, but in the broadest context” (Lindsey, 2010). Aloha is universal and can be found in almost every culture, yet the word “Aloha” is indescribable in English and in any other non-Hawaiian language; and the concept is quite illusive as individuals who authentically *live Aloha* describe it in so many different ways.

In this study, I explain how some keiki ‘o ka ‘āina continue to *live Aloha* far from the sands of their birth. How did these individuals experience the phenomenon of losing and regaining or retaining Hawaiian cultural identity in today’s modern capitalist society where individuality, multi-tasking, high earnings, power and accumulation often indicate “success”? In this next section entitled “the culture of Aloha,” I will first define race, identity, culture, ethnicity, and local culture. I will give an overview of the Native / Indigenous worldview, describing how this perspective parallels with the Hawaiian worldview perspective which considers nurturing relationships with land, ancestors, elders, ‘ohana, and ‘aumākua to be of utmost importance. I will give a personal definition of Aloha, and describe how the ideal of living Aloha is a mindful, purposeful way of choosing to live, synonymous with the practice of mālama as an ancient Hawaiian cultural practice. I will discuss the importance of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, mo‘olelo, and knowing one’s mo‘okū‘auhau. Lastly, I will examine the connection between inoa, ‘ohana and ‘āina—all critical tenets to understanding the Native Hawaiian Culture of Aloha.

**The concept of race used to exclude.** Race is based on physical or biological characteristics to classify people. Race is socially constructed, a concept used to classify people for social, economic or political reasons (Cokley, 2007; Helms, 2007; Phinney & Ong, 2007;

Spickard & Borroughs, 2000, as cited in McCubbin & Dang, 2010). “Race is one of the principle forms of human classification . . . it has all of these negative and positive attributes built into it . . . they function as a common class code in our society” (Hall, S., 2009). Hall argues that race—when used as a method to classify people—operates as a conduit of power and exclusion, sorting the world into superior and inferior human beings based upon biologic, genetic, or physical markers.

In his article entitled *On being Hawaiian enough: Contesting American racialization with Native hybridity*, Ledward (2007) invites us to question our own socially constructed ideas of: What does a Hawaiian look like? What markers contribute to a Hawaiian-looking person? Who decided these characteristics matter? What is the relationship between looking Hawaiian and being Hawaiian? What does it mean to be a Hawaiian when one is not “Hawaiian looking?” He examines the feelings of Hapa Hawaiians—Hawaiians of multi-identity/mixed-heritage living in Hawai‘i and “off-island.” “Hawaiians are imagined to be a homogeneous group, yet there is much diversity within the Hawaiian community” (p.107). Ledward’s research offers insight into his own personal experience and family histories of contemporary Hawaiians whose lives “reflect hybridity and multiplicity”:

The creation of a monolithic Hawaiian culture is rooted in the convergence of scientific and touristic depictions, which privilege phenotype over other components of identity. The stories of research participants reveal how color consciousness, racialization, and not feeling “Hawaiian enough” complicate matters for the lāhui Hawai‘i (Hawaiian community). (p.107)

Generations of American influence—and racial thinking in particular—continue to impact the way Hawaiians are seen and the way we see ourselves. Scientific, historical, and anthropological representations of Hawaiians in the early 20th century, as well as depictions from the tourist / travel writing industry combine to form stereotypes that presume an overlap

between “race” and “culture.” While “looking Hawaiian” cannot possibly be a reliable indicator of Hawaiian-ness,

people, both non-Hawaiians and Hawaiians alike, tend to assess cultural and ethnic identity based on phenotypic qualities. Dark complexion, dark hair, brown eyes, a wide nose, and fuller lips are common markers . . . often lead to assumptions of one’s Hawaiian-ness. These markers are initial signifiers that are tested against other attributes, such as names, behavior, cultural knowledge, and location of residence. (Ledward, 2007, p.111)

Discussions of Hawaiian identity by other mixed Hawaiians speak to this idea of racialization within the context of indigeneity and oppression (Holt, 1964/1995; Kanahale, 1986; Osorio, 2006; Weaver, 2001; as cited in Ledward, 2007, p.111). Racialization and its enduring effects on modern-day Hawaiians persevere. Kauanui (2002) points to an historical moment when the United States government imposed a policy on the indigenous people of Hawai‘i, and Hawaiian identity became a race issue, measurable terms blood quantum. Referring to mixed ancestry among Hawaiians, she reports, “The mixed-race status of Hawaiians is both a desired outcome of assimilation, and also a condition that disqualifies them from land rights and other benefits” (Kauanui, 2002, p. 119).

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA), for example, established a “spectrum” or “continuum of Hawaiian-ness,” thereby allowing Hawaiians with 50% blood quantum or more to claim benefits such as homestead land and housing. Individuals entitled are often waitlisted for decades; spouses and children with less than 50% Hawaiian blood are ineligible to inherit those benefits and must move from the property once the beneficiary is deceased (Buyers, 2006). Perhaps this is one reason that Hawaiians leave Hawai‘i for the mainland—because they can no longer afford to live in the islands.

**Indigenous identity.** Identity is conceptualized as a developmental process (Helms, 2007; Phinney & Ong, 2007, as cited in McCubbin & Dang, 2010). Rather than a “static,”

“singular unchangeable identity” that one has (Essed, 1996, p. 129), identity can be “ambiguous and change over time and in different contexts” (McCubbin & Dang, 2010, p. 270). “Identity work,” Sinclair (2007, p. 89) writes, is “changes in self-perspectives that no longer fit, requiring the individual to release deep-seeded beliefs about him or herself.” Identity work can be a painful process (Miser, 2011).

*Ua ola loko i ke aloha.*

*Love gives life within.*

Love is imperative to one’s mental and physical welfare. (Pukui, #2836, see Appendix B)

Kenny and Fraser (2012) identify four embodied concepts core for Native leadership: land, ancestors, elders, and story. From the beginning of time, not only leaders, but also tribal peoples all over the world have lived by a shared code of ethics that embraces these values as sacred, and embodied as leadership. We know this to be true by our creation stories and oral histories that have been told and retold for generations, well before our languages were scribed. Additionally, Kanaka Maoli believed that health, wellness, and prosperity depended upon *lōkahi* (unity, agreement, harmony)—that is harmony—between *Kanaka* (self and others), *‘āina*, and *ke akua* (God; Higher Spirit) (Meyer, 1998; Noyes, 2003; Rezentes, 1996). Identity problems arise after colonization and integration, when Western and Indigenous values clashed and Western laws were imposed upon Indigenous people (Smith, 1999).

The World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) passed a resolution in 1977 declaring that only indigenous peoples can define who is, and who is not, indigenous. The official definition states that:

Indigenous people shall be people living in countries which have populations composed of different ethnic or racial groups who are descendants of the earliest population which survive in the area, and who do not, as a group, control the national government of the countries within which they live. (Razak, 2003, p. 153)

*Kanaka Maoli* therefore, are identified as *Native, Indigenous peoples*. It should be noted that Indigenous peoples are also referred to as “First Peoples,” “Native Peoples,” “First Nations,” or “Aboriginals,” because their ancestors were the original inhabitants of their lands (Razak, 2003; Smith, 1999).

Scholars wrestle with issues that arise around indigenous identity development. McCubbin and Dang (2010) ask, “What is indigenous identity without the context of colonization? How does one become decolonized?” (p. 272). One method is to look to the past at traditional ancestral cultural practices before westerners arrived (Smith, 1999). In order to examine imposed measures associated with Hawaiian identity, it is crucial to look not only at definitions of race and identity, but also to analyze the racialized contexts and colonial laws that impacted indigenous peoples’ lives. This makes sense considering how Native Hawaiians have wrestled with identity development after Western contact, and struggle to keep Aloha culture alive, particularly after migrating to the mainland U.S.

**Hawaiian identity: Who is truly Hawaiian?** The Hawaiian origin story and scientific evidence explain that the first people to migrate to the ‘āina called Hawai‘i arrived in double-hulled canoes between 150 and 350 A.D. from the South Pacific. Today, “Contemporary Hawaiians as well as non-Hawaiians appear to be searching for a clear definition separating the descendants of the earliest Hawaiian ancestors” from the later generations of immigrants and descendants (Rezentes, 1996, p. 15).

Present day Hawaiians are different than their ancestors. Before the arrival of western visitors in 1776, our ancestors were united politically, religiously, socially, and culturally (Kanahele, 1986). According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, 1.2 million people identified as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (NHPI), either alone or in combination with one or

more races. In the state of Hawai‘i, 355,816 people identified as NHPI. Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders make up 14 percent of California’s total population, as 286,145 people identified as NHPI, either alone or in combination with one or more races; in ten years, California’s population of NHPI increased 29.2 percent from the 2000 census. The HNPI data reporting on the Native Hawaiian population however, is inaccurate because once again, Native Hawaiians are put in the same racial category as Polynesian (Samoan, Tahitian, Tongan, Tokelauan, Other Polynesian), Micronesian (Guamanian or Chamorro, among nine other categories of Micronesian), Melanesian (Fijian, Papua New Guinean, Other Melanesian), and Other Pacific Islander populations.

Similar to the problem of lack of distinction between racial categories, and the misunderstanding between ethnic categories, the term “indigenous” can be problematic as well, argues Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999). It tends to “group distinct populations whose experience under imperialism has been vastly different” (p. 6). It is therefore problematic to comprehend true numbers for Native Hawaiians respectfully, because of our unique history based upon colonization: Hawaiians are indigenous to Hawai‘i, the Hawaiian Kingdom was overthrown by the U.S. Government and annexed as the 50th state in 1949. Subsequently, Kanaka Maoli found it insulting and hurtful when the U.S. census lumped Hawaiians into a category with “Other Pacific Islanders” without regard to the racialized contexts and imposed U.S. colonial laws that specifically impacted the lives of our people.

The question of Hawaiian identity often comes down to blood quantum; the U.S. Government and other state agencies use official birth certificates, marriage certificates, and death certificates to confirm who is Hawaiian or not. Halualani (2002) points to political

inequalities that exist within the Hawaiian community due to the imposition of proof of blood quantum:

Who counts as a “real Hawaiian” or what criteria makes a person “Hawaiian enough” are questions couched within a discourse of authenticity stemming from an American ideology of racial purity. “Pure-bloods” are . . . looked to as genuine repositories of cultural knowledge; the lack of intermarriage implies a lower degree of assimilation. They hold the cultural power, the last links to the indigenous. Separate, yet connected, are the mixed-bloods or “*Hapas*” (part Hawaiian) . . . somehow (seen as) removed from their native history, tradition, and culture . . . living reminders of modernity’s sweep over the Hawaiian culture. (p. 199)

Today, the majority of Hawaiians are hapa by ancestry; we may or may not be “recognizably Hawaiian.” Ledward (2007) argues that racialization causes fragmentation on both personal and collective levels. Deciding what “a Hawaiian” is or how much “more Hawaiian” one person is over another causes real harm, especially when used amongst Hawaiians. This is especially true with cultural experts who may identify as “Hawaiian at heart” or “Hawaiian in spirit” yet not born with Hawaiian blood. My great-aunt for example, Aunty Pat Namaka Bacon—the *hānai* (adopted) daughter of Tūtū Mary Kawena Pukui—has been deeply immersed in Hawaiian language, dance and culture for well over 80 years. She has conducted international hula seminars, and for many years, served as a judge in the Merrie Monarch Hula Competition as well as in the Kamehameha Schools Annual Song Contest. Aunty Pat has been honored for her work translating songs, interpreting rare texts, and researching at the Bishop Museum for over 40 years. Today, nobody would question her authority when it comes to Hawaiian culture, language and hula, but historically, that wasn’t always the case because Aunty Pat is pure Japanese.

Dr. Puakea Nogelmeier—now a Hawaiian language professor at the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa—was an 18-year-old Caucasian from Minnesota when he began learning whatever he could from elders such as Tūtū Kawena and other native speakers who extended



aloha and fostered his passion in ‘ōlelo. He completed bachelor’s degrees in Hawaiian Language and Anthropology, graduate work in Pacific Islands Studies and Anthropology, and has formal training (*‘ūniki*) as both *‘ōlapa* (dancer) and teacher. Kumu Nogelmeier currently trains researchers and translators to help make Hawaiian legacy materials available to the public. Both Aunty Pat Bacon and Kumu Puakea Nogelmeier—non-Hawaiians—devoted their lives to the study and practice of all aspects of Hawaiiana and are among the most knowledgeable living cultural experts. Some argue that they are “more Hawaiian” than many Hawaiians who don’t know their culture . . . others would disagree because simply because they weren’t born with an ounce of Hawaiian blood.

Ledward (2007) and Kauanui (1998, 2002) illuminate the politics of cultural identity within our own Hawaiian community. In her paper *Off-Island Hawaiians: ‘making’ ourselves at ‘home,’* Kauanui (1998) argues:

Hawaiians who live in Hawai‘i are privileged over those who live elsewhere. While Hawaiians leave their ancestral homeland for a variety of reasons (mostly economic), they receive treatment resembling second-class status within the Hawaiian community. Ironically, these families and individuals have to work harder and longer at maintaining a connection with their roots and their culture. (p.113)

In ancient times, rank, ancestry, birthplace, and ability were used to measure social status and identity from a Hawaiian historical perspective (Kamakau, 1992; Ledward, 2007). Today, indicators of “Hawaiian-ness” come from our sense of spirituality which anchors us to the ‘āina and connects us to *ke akua* (God(s), goddesses) and the spirit world of *pō* where our ancestors dwell. Ledward (2007) posits that Hawaiian identity “is based on aloha, kinship and genealogical ties, so we embrace diversity and multiplicity within our communities . . . unlike American society, which often pressures individuals to choose one piece of ethnic heritage over others” (p. 113). He recommends that we learn from each other’s experiences of being Hawaiian:

In the interest of Hawaiian well-being, power resides in our diversity. Two hundred years of intermarriage and cultural exchange with *malihini* (strangers, newcomer, tourist, guests) have taught us much. Confidence in our enduring collective spirit preserves us and keeps us Hawaiian; we can, together, be Hawaiian enough to face future challenges and persist as a unified *lāhui* (nation). (p. 138)

**Hawaiian identity: Who qualifies as “Local?”** Two other words that are used for identification in the islands are *kama ‘āina* (child of the land) and *malihini* (stranger, newcomer, tourist, guests). These words are used by people of the islands to differentiate between a person born and raised in the islands from another who has recently arrived. “Kama ‘āina” and “local” have common points, but the two terms are not necessarily interchangeable (Leong, 1997, p. 2).

Regardless of race, people born and raised in Hawai‘i and long-term residents consistently use the word “local” to describe themselves; populations are differentiated in terms of *local people* and *tourists*, or *malihini*—people who have not lived in Hawai‘i for an extended amount of time. Without question, Native Hawaiians are *local to Hawai‘i*; so are the generations of people that are born and raised in the islands.

In Hawai‘i, locals are those who are born and raised on the ‘āina or have lived there for a significant amount of time. They may or may not be of Hawaiian blood, but they have certainly over time acculturated to local culture which embraces the aloha spirit and includes respect for Hawaiiana, community contribution, *mālama kūpuna*, *keiki*, and ‘āina (protecting and caring for our elderly, children and land), acceptance of others, and a slower pace of life.

*Ke ēwe hānau o ka ‘āina.*

*The lineage born of the land.*

A native Hawaiian who is island-born and whose ancestors were also of the land. (Pukui, #1691, see Appendix B)

My question is: are Native Hawaiians still local once they've moved away from Hawai'i? Do they continue to identify as kama'āina? For myself, I will always identify as local kama'āina, because I am Native Hawaiian, keiki 'o ka 'āina born and raised in Hawai'i, having lived the first half of my life in Honolulu, Hawai'i. My ancestors' bones are buried throughout the 'āina. I embrace and live by *The Aloha Spirit*; frequently go home to visit whenever I can. Hawai'i will always be my home. Often though, I am not treated like a local by locals when I ask for the kama'āina discount, a discount (and huge savings) that is honored for all locals (except for displaced on the mainland locals). I have to remember to slow down, speak Pidgin, and show proof when asked, with my Hawaiian identification card, that indicates the address of my parents—the home in which I was raised. Why must I prove my authenticity to a local who may not even be of Hawaiian blood—in order to receive the kama'āina discount—just so I can afford to come home?

Culture is a unique social system of values, beliefs, and attitudes found in any given group of people. Individuals are raised within a culture or multitude of cultures, in which values, beliefs, and attitudes are incorporated. Some of these values, beliefs, and attitudes are deep-seeded and never questioned without risk of punishment, others can be negotiated. Culture informs us how we receive give and receive messages, and how we perceive the world in which we live.

E. T. Hall (2010) likened culture to an iceberg in his “iceberg model,” in that the external, tip of an iceberg is like the visible (or conscious) part of culture—customs, food, music, dance, and rituals. The internal, invisible, bulk of an iceberg that rests below the water's surface is like the unseen (or unconscious) part of culture—beliefs, values, thought patterns, and more. Hall suggests that the only way to learn the internal culture of another is by actively participating in

their culture. At first, the culture's external behaviors are apparent. As one spends more time, the internal culture begins to reveal itself.

Ethnicity is the shared cultural practices, perspectives that distinguish one group of people apart from another. Ethnicity includes shared cultural heritage, ancestry, as well as a shared of history, language, religion, and forms of dress. Ethnic differences are taught and learned.

**Differentiating between race, culture, ethnicity, and identification.** Race, culture, ethnicity, and identity are important concepts to differentiate. The problem is the lack of distinction between racial categories, as well as a misunderstanding between ethnic categories: *race* refers to physical characteristics of a group of people; *ethnicity* refers to a group sharing *culture* and common ancestors; *identity* is what group a person chooses to identify with (Ledward, 2007; Leong, 1997; McCubbin & Dang, 2010).

Ethnic groups are often lumped together under one category without distinction between racial categories—for example, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese are viewed as *Asian*. Similarly, Native Hawaiians have been grouped as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI) along with Filipinos, Tongans, Samoans, Fijians, and Laotians as *Pacific Islanders*, although we speak different languages and are very different in terms of culture, customs, and race. Regardless, Native Hawaiian is the only Pacific Island group that was colonized by the United States and annexed into the union. Hawaiians are forced to accept an homogenous identity label (NHOPI) assigned by a government that simply does not recognize its unique history or take responsibility for replacing the country's religion and national language, shaming and imprisoning their last queen, overthrowing the kingdom, and imposing U. S. government, taxes, and capitalism as best practices. Until 1997, the U.S. Census and other federal agencies

legally designated ‘Asian Americans’ and ‘Native Hawaiians’ as the same race—‘Asian and Pacific Islander’; in 1997, Native Hawaiians finally achieved recognition as a separated category—‘Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander’ (McCubbin & Dang, 2010).

**Overview of the Hawaiian worldview.** The Hawaiian genesis is known as the Kumulipo, a complex and many layered story beginning with the relationship between *Papa* (Mother Earth) and *Wākea* (Father Sky). The story of brothers *Hāloanakalaukapali‘i* and *Hāloa* describes the relationship of man and the ‘āina, and the significance of *kalo* (taro). In the Hawaiian tradition, the elder siblings take responsibility for the younger ones, while it is the duty of younger siblings and keiki to honor, love, and respectfully service their elders. This tradition is modeled through the story of Hāloa. The older brother Hāloanakalaukapali‘i, the root of the *kalo* plant, provides Hāloa with *kalo*, which is the staple food of the Hawaiian people. Hāloa respects to his older brother by taking care of the *lo‘i* (taro patch), creating irrigation systems, harvesting the plants at maturity, and carefully replanting to continue the cycle. It is Hāloa’s duty to teach his keiki and *mo‘opuna* (grandchildren) to *mālama ‘āina* (take care of the land) as well. This behavior of interdependence between brothers—between man and *kalo*—is what the Hawaiians mean when they *mālama* (to deeply care for, respect); to *mālama* is to be mindful, to live with hearts filled with *Aloha* (love, compassion, kindness); this I have come to believe, is truly the basis of Hawaiian epistemology.

*He ali‘i ka ‘āina, he kauwā ke Kanaka.*

*The land is a chief; the man is its servant.*

Land has no need for man,

but man needs the land and works it for a livelihood. (Pukui, #531, see Appendix B)

**Mālama ‘Āina—To care for the land.** The Kumulipo and the story of Hāloa illustrate the deeply rooted concept of *mālama ‘āina* in Hawaiian culture. In her (1998) thesis entitled

*Native Hawaiian Epistemology: Contemporary Narratives*, Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer (Professor of Education, University of Hawai‘i at Hilo) describes seven themes that comprise Hawaiian epistemology, one of which is mālama ‘āina. She references our kūpuna and their intelligence and indigenous wisdom, evident in their loving relationship to the land, which is very different from what we are taught in western American culture: “We have become steeped in the western mindset which ascertains that exclusion, property, ownership and accumulation of goods comprise a higher state of being.” (Meyer, 1998). “Nothing could be further than the truth in relationship to indigeneity and what will sustain us over time.”

In ancient Hawaii, the ‘āina was divided into sections called *ahupua‘a*, like slices of a pie that ran from *mauka* (the mountains), to *makai* (the sea). An ‘ohana lived on a further subdivision called an ‘*ili*; there were many ‘*ili* in every *ahupua‘a*. In this manner the *ahupua‘a* gave the people everything they needed: fishing near the shoreline, land for growing taro, sweet potatoes and bananas, wood, flowers, fern, and feathers from the birds could be gathered in the mountains. Anyone could use whatever was in their *ahupua‘a*; waste was not an issue because people were respectful to take only what was needed to be sustainable. If ever there was extra, they shared with one another; everything was used efficiently, with zero waste. The ancient Hawaiians mālama ‘āina—were thankful for abundance, and took care of scarce and precious resources. If the villagers needed something that they could not get in their own area, neighbors in another *ahupua‘a* would share what they had. The only thing that the people could not take freely was *wai* (fresh water). Not unlike today, there were many *kapu* (rules) around water, and for good reason. Water was important for drinking, bathing, and most importantly, the taro patches. As was aforementioned in the story of Hāloa, *kalo* is central and deeply rooted to concept of mālama ‘āina in the ancient Hawaiian culture and was not just the staple of the

Hawaiian diet; its significance in abundance meant healthy families—physically, mentally and spiritually—as well as strong island communities.

Besides mālama ‘āina, concepts of self and interactions with kūpuna, ‘aumākua, ‘ohana (family past and present), and *ke akua* (God, goddesses) are deeply intertwined. It is impossible to talk about one tenet separately, without introducing ideas about the other four—while each is critical to Hawaiian culture, boundaries are fluid—from the Hawaiian perspective, because they blend synergistically and harmoniously.

### **The Cultural Practice of Aloha**

The word “*Aloha*” broken down means: *Alo*—“face to face” or “in the face of” + *hā*—“breath” or “life” or “breath of life.” *Aloha* means (literally) “In the face of life.” Practitioners of aloha greet each other with a *honi* (kiss). We put our foreheads together, we inhale and exhale, exchanging breath—recognizing and honoring the very essence of life—the *mana*, the divine spirit that joins us through our shared breath. So when we say “*Aloha*,” it can mean many things—it is an authentic greeting of both humility and gratitude, recognizing the divine in the other, that which joins us with one another, with the ‘āina, with our elders past and present, with the spiritual world; in the deepest and purest sense, *Aloha simply means love*.

Aloha is most difficult to describe. No two people articulate meaning exactly the same way. Aloha as a concept, is an ancient cultural, relational, and spiritual practice; a way of living. It is an ancient value system, a spiritual way of life that Hawaiians ideally, choose to live.

One of the most important markers of cultural identity for all peoples is their language (Razak, 2003; Smith, 1999). Hawaiian language, or *‘ōlelo maoli*, is the foundation of our culture, rich in oral tradition—stories, proverbs, poems and chants that have been passed on from one generation to another for hundreds of years. Therefore, learning and continually using

*‘ōlelo Hawai‘i* sets the stage for individuals who are serious about retaining or regaining cultural identity.

Practitioners of aloha mindfully practice *‘ōlelo maoli*, and have some knowledge of their inoa and mo‘okū‘auhau. Knowledge of these has a direct impact on Hawaiian well-being and identity because it solidifies one’s relationship with *‘ohana* and with the *‘āina* where a family lived and contributed to the community there. It is critical to learn the language, cultural practices, and story behind one’s name, particularly if one is challenged by geographic distance to living on the land of their birth and upbringing, and unable to visit *‘ohana* regularly for support. An exercise in researching the family name allows people to reconnect with their *‘ohana*; it provides purpose and space, inviting elders to naturally share their knowledge with us.

*Ali‘i* (chiefs) were able to verbally trace their lineage all the way back to the gods. By studying mo‘okū‘auhau, we come to know our own roots and the contributions that our kūpuna made as members of their respective communities. An ancient proverb states that “when *kamali‘i* (our children) know their roots, their *na‘au* (intestines, bowels, guts; mind, heart, affections) will tell them right from wrong.” Being able to articulate the story of one’s inoa is powerful in helping us discover who we are and where we come from, and it is most critical to *practicing Aloha*. These tools ground us with ancestral strength and ancient wisdom that will forever stand the test of time, especially in a world of uncertainty, and when “walking in two worlds.”

*Living Aloha* is *pono* (goodness, right, morally correct, authentic). Native Hawaiians and part Hawaiians (like me trying to regain our culture) strive to live Aloha, because Aloha is at the root of our culture; Aloha is our native heritage, an inherited responsibility that was passed on to us from generations before, from the beginning of time. Living Aloha is quite difficult. It feels



natural to retaliate when someone says something cruel or does something hurtful! It is easy to make others feel “less than” in order to boost one’s own ego. If living Aloha is practiced in a spiritual sense, in an ideal sense, then individualism, power, materialism, or living in gross excess cannot exist in the Land of Aloha. Clearly, it is much easier to live Aloha in Hawai‘i where practicing Aloha is the cultural norm. That said, living Aloha anywhere begins with slowing down, having patience, and breathing; it requires us to strive to live in a state of grace, as compassionate, spiritual beings in harmony—practicing mindfulness, humility, courage, and gratitude.

Ideally, living Aloha commands us to have intimate knowledge of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, mo‘olelo, and mo‘okū‘auhau. Through the oral tradition of ‘ōlelo and mo‘olelo, Hawaiians were able to pass information for centuries, about who their ancestors were and where their ‘ohana came from. Living Aloha means being in touch with the world around us, having compassion for the people and all things that we come in contact with, developing meaningful relationships in order to mālama ourselves, our families, our kūpuna and one another. As *keiki ‘o ka ‘āina* (children of the land), we embrace the collective mindset of aloha ‘āina by joining in the responsibility of mālama ‘āina and sharing that knowledge with our keiki at an early age, knowing that she works hard to provide beauty, nourishment, sustenance, and recreation. Therefore, the philosophy of Aloha calls us to walk gently and respectfully, take only what is needed, to share what you have, and replenish what was taken so that future generations will enjoy what we have today . . . ever mindful that our ancestors have passed this wisdom onto us.

The “Aloha Spirit” is the coordination of mind and heart within each individual (Paki, 1972; Veary, 1990); as keiki ‘o ka ‘āina, it is our sacred duty to *practice aloha* no matter how far we migrate from Hawai‘i Nui Aloha (our beloved home of Hawai‘i).

A—stands for *akahai*, meaning kindness, to be expressed with tenderness.

L—stands for *lōkahi*, meaning unity, to be expressed with harmony.

O—stands for *‘olu‘olu*, meaning agreeable, to be expressed with pleasantness.

H—stands for *ha‘aha‘a*, meaning humility, to be expressed with modesty.

A—stands for *ahonui*, meaning patience, to be expressed with perseverance.

### **Retaining the Culture of Aloha**

*E lei no au i ko aloha.*

*I will wear your love as a wreath.*

I will cherish your love as a beautiful adornment. (Pukui, #333, see Appendix B)

**Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop’s legacy.** Bernice Pauahi was born in 1831. In 1883, Princess Ruth Ke‘elikolani, 57, passed. The great-granddaughter of Kamehameha I, a true defender of native Hawaiian customs and traditions, and a major landholder in Hawai‘i, Princess Ruth gifted most of her lands to her dearest cousin and best friend, Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop. Just one year later however, Bernice Pauahi Bishop, 53, Hawaiian philanthropist and wife of businessman Charles Reed Bishop, also passed away.

Although she was the last surviving heir of the Kamehameha Dynasty, and had no children of her own, Pauahi considered all children of Native Hawaiian descent to be her responsibility, her children. Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop had the foresight to leave a trust in her will, an endowment of land and resources that would fund a school to educate Native Hawaiian children. Through her will, a grief-stricken Charles Reed Bishop fulfilled his wife’s dream of providing a world-class educational institution, so that her people may sustain themselves and their families through industriousness and good careers; under her leadership, Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop changed the dismal fate of Native Hawaiians to one of hope for generations to come.

The Kamehameha Schools was founded and endowed by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop and her husband Charles Reed Bishop. Kamehameha Schools (KS) is a private charitable educational trust endowed by the will of Hawaiian Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop (1831–1884), the great-granddaughter and last direct descendant of King Kamehameha I. During her lifetime, Princess Pauahi witnessed the rapid decline of the Hawaiian population. With that decline came a challenge to preserve the Hawaiian language and culture she held dear. Princess Pauahi believed that education would be key to the survival of her people. In an enduring act of Aloha, she bequeathed 375,000 acres of ancestral land, instructing the trustees of her estate to use the land to educate her people. Today, her endowment supports an educational system that has, and continues to serve thousands of Hawaiian learners in Hawai‘i and across the nation.

(<http://www.ksbe.edu/about/>)

Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estates (BPBE) is the largest private landowner in the state of Hawai‘i, comprising approximately 9% of Hawai‘i’s total area. Revenues from these lands are used today to operate the Kamehameha Schools, which were established in 1887 according to Princess Pauahi’s will.



*Figure 2.5.* Kamehameha Schools’ banner. Retrieved from: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jima/3812586303/> Used under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>)

KSBE has campuses on each of the major islands, and is one of the largest employers in the state of Hawai‘i. Kamehameha Schools graduates have expressed eternal gratitude for their

founder's generosity, good will, and leadership, and have indeed succeeded in becoming industrious men and women with opportunities to attend college and enjoy gainful employment; in providing for their families, and as leadership in serving their communities.

### **Keepers of the Flame**

In the hundred or so years between the mid-1800s and the mid-1900s, the landscape of Hawai'i nei began to change radically. More visitors arrived, mandating their new ideas of religion, education and politics, introducing commerce and disease. Without immunity to measles, small pox, leprosy and influenza, the population of pure Hawaiians deteriorated to near extinction. Western influence dominated every aspect of life causing severe poverty amongst the indigenous Hawaiian population. *Heiau* (Hawaiian temples; pre-Christian places of worship) were burned as the people were forbidden to pray to their own gods. Speaking Hawaiian language was banned in public places, schools, and even homes; dancing the hula—also punishable by law—had gone underground. Most disturbing was the psychological damage caused by the overthrow of our beloved *ali'i* (queen) at the end of the 1800s, the abolishment of the Hawaiian kingdom, along with the loss of 'āina and her precious resources now owned primarily by permanent visitors.

A few *kūpunahine* (female elders) like Mary Kawena Pukui (my great-grandmother), *'Iolani Luahine*, and *Edith Kanaka 'ole* took great personal risks to revive Hawaiian language and culture when it was in peril of being lost forever. These women recognized today as “The Keepers of the Flame” (Kamae & Mahaffay, 2009), *Leaders of Aloha* because of their passionate, unwavering commitment to teaching traditional Hawaiian dance, song, art, culture, language, and way of life to the next generations of Hawaiians, as well as to anyone else who wanted to learn. Their courageous actions were pivotal during the Hawaiian Renaissance, the

resurgence of Native Hawaiians' reclaiming their traditional cultural heritage, practices, and indigenous identity that began some forty years ago.

**Tūtū Mary Kawena Pukui's work.** On April 20, 1895 in Ka'ū, the southernmost district on the Big Island of Hawai'i, *Mary Pa'ahana Keali'i-Kanaka 'ole* (a native Hawaiian woman) and Henry Nathaniel Wiggin (originally from Massachusetts) became the proud parents of a little baby girl (Handy & Pukui, 1972; Pukui, 1983). According to Uncle *La'akea* Sukanuma, my mother's cousin and grandson of Tūtū Kawena, her full name is *Mary Abigail Ka-wena-'ula-o-ka-lani-a-Hi'iaka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele-ka-wahine-'ai-honua Na-lei-lehua-a-Pele* (Wiggin) Pukui; her name translated means "The rosy glow in the sky made by Hi'iaka in the bosom of Pele, the earth consuming woman; The crimson lehua wreaths of Pele (personal communication, January 19, 2011). She preferred to be simply known as *Kawena*.

In the Hawaiian tradition of old, after being weaned, the *hiapo* (firstborn) went to live with the grandparents, to whom he or she was *hānai'd*, or adopted (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972). So at her birth in 1895, Kawena was given by her *haole* (White; Caucasian) father to his Hawaiian Mother-in-law.

Kawena's mother mildly protested, "But *haoles* don't give their children to others!" "Your mother has only a few more years. Let her have the child!" was the rejoinder. The grandmother knew no English and was wise in her ancestors' lore; though a devout Christian, she made silent little prayers to her ancestors' gods. Kawena had the opportunity to master Hawaiian and to learn something of the old culture, and she has been ever grateful for her father's generosity and tolerance. (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1979, p. xvi)

For the first six years of her life, Kawena lived with her beloved Tūtū until *Nali'ipoaimoku* passed away, and she was returned to her parents. During the next few years as the Wiggin 'ohana moved from Na'alehu to Ka'ū to Puna, and eventually to Honolulu, "Kawena found the Hawaiian language and culture less and less respected or even tolerated. Ka'ū was

remote, on the political and economic periphery of the islands, but in Honolulu, the Euro-American way of life was being aggressively advocated,” (Duckworth, as cited in Pukui, 1983, p. x). Kawena attended the Hawaiian Mission Academy; in those days, only English was permitted to be spoken in school. A year before she passed away, my mother told a story about (her grandmother) Tūtū Kawena as a teenager:

Tūtū’s classmate—a pure Hawaiian girl—had a hard time understanding what the teacher was saying. So she whispered in Hawaiian, asking what the teacher meant. Kawena, fluent in both English and Hawaiian, leaned over and responded back in Hawaiian, verbatim, what the teacher had said. The teacher walked over to where the girls sat, verbally reprimanded them, and struck Kawena as an example of punishment to the other children who would dare to speak Hawaiian in school. The injustice infuriated Kawena and stayed with her for the rest of her life, fueling her passion to carry on her later work as a translator and transcriber. She did not return to school the following term. (C. P. Wengler, personal communication, June 13, 2009)

Kawena loved learning; at fifteen years old, she began jotting down proverbs and sayings, collecting folk tales and stories told by her by family and friends. In 1910, Kawena met Laura Green, a neighbor with an “understanding of Hawaiian language and a keen appreciation for Hawaiian culture. She was impressed by Kawena’s interests and noticed her remarkable memory and talent for expressing complex Hawaiian concepts in English,” (Duckworth, as cited in Pukui, 1983, p. x). Laura encouraged Kawena to record and translate her stories, and sent them to her cousin Martha W. Beckwith, a professor at Vassar College in New York, where the stories were published in three small volumes: *Hawaiian Stories and Wise Sayings* (1923), *Folk-Tales from Hawai‘i* (1928), and *The Legend of Kawelo and Other Hawaiian Folk Tales* (1936) (p. xi).

Kawena taught ‘ōlelo at Punahou School, and later worked at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum from 1938–1961 as both an ethnological assistant and translator, and later as an

associate in Hawaiian culture, and informant for anthropologists. She returned to Ka‘u, Hawai‘i, to research with Dr. and Mrs. Handy.

Tūtū Kawena generously invited scholars into her home where she taught Hawaiian language, culture, dance, and music. Throughout her life, more than 50 scholarly works have been published; most notably, Tūtū co-authored the *Hawaiian-English Dictionary* (1957, revised 1986), *Place Names of Hawaii* (1974), and *The Echo of Our Song* (1974), a translation of old chants and songs. The two-volume set of *Nānā i ke Kumu: Look to the Source*, was a project written and published in 1972 for social workers and doctors at Queen Kapi‘olani Children’s Center; this invaluable resource explains traditional Hawaiian customs and traditions which may have been perceived as mysterious and strange to western ideology and clinically-trained professionals. *‘Ōlelo No ‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings* (1983) is a treasure containing a lifetime collection of nearly translated and annotated Hawaiian proverbs and poetical sayings.

In addition to her published works, Tūtū Kawena’s knowledge was preserved in her notes, oral histories, audiotape recordings, and film clips from the 1950s and 1960s, which are housed as a sacred collection at the Bishop Museum Reference Library. Among other kūpuna, Tūtū Kawena has been credited for sparking the Hawaiian Renaissance of the 1970s. In her long life of service to the community, and especially to the Hawaiian people, Tūtū Kawena has been the recipient of many civic, cultural and educational awards from such groups as the Rotary Club, the Hawai‘i State Legislature, the American Society for State and Local History, the City and County of Honolulu, and the Board of Trustees of the Kamehameha Schools and the Bishop Museum. Most notably, she was honored with these awards in her lifetime:

- 1963—Elected to the Board of Governors of the Polynesian Cultural Center

- 1966—Women’s Dormitory at BYU named in her honor “Hale Pukui”
- 1974—Honorary degree of Doctor of Arts and Letters; The Church College of Hawai‘i
- 1977—“Living Treasure of Hawai‘i” The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai‘i
- 1977—First recipient of the Makua Award; Institute in Gerontology, University of Hawai‘i
- 1995—Inducted into the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame

Mary Kawena Pukui was, without question, a leader: “Hawai‘i’s foremost Hawaiian scholar and source of Hawaiian knowledge” (Kanahele, 1986) and the “most sought out *kumu* (teacher) of Hawaiian knowledge” (Kamae, 2009).

If it wasn’t for Tūtū Kawena’s dedication and love for her people and culture, much would have been lost as Hawai‘i transitioned from Hawaiian kingdom to United States territory to statehood. Her gift to the world is pure Aloha—sharing her deep knowledge of all things Hawaiian, and her willingness to pass that knowledge and understanding on to all of us.

**Recent studies: Hawaiian language/cultural programs.** In 1970, a Hawaiian studies program was established at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Native Hawaiian educators Wilson, Kanaka‘ole and Kanahele collaborated in 1978 to design and implement a Hawaiian Language and Cultures Bachelor of Arts program at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. Most recently, the Hawai‘inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge was established in 2007 on the UH Mānoa campus; it is one of the largest schools of indigenous knowledge in the United States, and is managed by Dr. Maenette K. P. Ah-Nee Benham. The University of Hawai‘i offers undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs in Hawaiian language and Hawaiian studies,



and is a venue for Native Hawaiian scholars to educate, research, write, and to contribute to the existing body of knowledge from an emic (insider's) point of view.

Additionally, the Hawai'i inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge has produced excellent teachers that are passing their knowledge not only to children at the K—12 level, but the curriculum they teach requires parents and guardians to learn Hawaiian cultural practices and speak 'ōlelo maoli as well . . . so the whole family becomes involved in the learning process.

Much has been written about the Hawaiian language revival movements that began in the 1990s and have resulted in Native Hawaiian immersion schools throughout the state. Ah-Nee Benham and Cooper's (2000) *Indigenous Education models for contemporary practice: In our mother's voice* was not only foundational in opening dialogue amongst Indigenous educators; it was pivotal in creating systemic change within Hawai'i's education systems. Kahakalau (2004) utilized action research and passion to teach in a way that engages youth resulted in an award-winning K—12 program and one of the first Hawaiian charter schools on Hawaii Island. Kawai'ae'a, Housman, and Alencastre (2007) wrote a multi-generational case study about language revitalization. Kana'iaupuni and Kawai'ae'a (2008) developed HIER (Hawaiian Indigenous Education Rubric), a tool for teachers to measure effectiveness in teaching from a native perspective. Trinidad's (2011) case study using grounded theory and (CIPP) Critical Indigenous Pedagogy of Place (CIPP) found that CIPP can serve as a major conduit to the sociopolitical development of Native Hawaiian youth as it helps them become change agents in their communities.

As a result of the revitalization movement and these scholars' collaborate efforts, intensive Hawaiian language and culture programs were designed, created, and implemented so that individuals, families, and youth can return to their roots. According to Kawai'ae'a,

Housman and Alencastre (2007), 25 years ago there were less than 50 native speakers of Hawaiian under the age of 18; the revitalization efforts were successful in that today there are thousands of youth speaking and writing in Hawaiian. Many programs and resources can be found online, and are publicly available so that anyone—Hawaiian or Non-Hawaiian, no matter where they reside—can learn Hawaiian language and culture for little or no cost.

### **“Walking in Two Worlds”**

Finally, I must reference the phenomenon known as “Walking in Two Worlds.” This is the leadership work that requires us to build bridges of connectedness, to navigate through today’s mainstream societies and default culture, yet remain true to our Indigenous identity, values, and culture. The journey is not an easy one. There are many dilemmas and much to consider. “Each context is different. In addition to walking between two worlds, we must now walk among many worlds. The global context and virtual contexts offer even more complexities” (Kenny & Fraser, 2012). I couldn’t agree more.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

How are Native Hawaiians keeping their culture alive in places far away from Hawai‘i nei? Researchers have studied the lived experience of other ethnic groups that have relocated to the mainland United States (reference, Filipinos, Hmong, Japanese, East Indian). Not much has been written about the struggle to keep aloha alive, far away from the ‘āina.

Valid and reliable instruments such as the Hawaiian Ethnic Identity (HEI) scale have been used to identify and measure behaviors that are uniquely Hawaiian (Crabbe, 2002). Kaulukukui and Nāho‘opi‘i (2008) developed an inventory of exemplary Hawaiian leadership behaviors, noting that that leadership behaviors are “observable, values-based, and culturally dependent” (p.101). The authors embrace a wide range of traditional and indigenous leadership

theories and report that “one of the most important dimensions of cultural variation in leadership behaviors is individualism versus collectivism” (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Derr, Roussillon, & Bournois, 2002; Triandis, 1993; as cited in Kaulukukui & Nāho‘opi‘i, 2008, p. 97).

“The exemplary Hawaiian leader has a strong self-identity rooted in his or her genealogy and the rich background of Hawaiian culture.”

Anonymous participant (Kaulukukui & Nāho‘opi‘i, 2008, p.96).

It is my belief that Kanaka Maoli who do not lose their cultural heritage after moving to the mainland United States must embody Hawaiian leadership behaviors, and I am interested in telling their stories of lived experience. As Hawaiian culture is very collective in nature, the individuals in my study have created communities of Aloha by cultivating relationships, creating opportunities to share, practicing their culture, and passing on knowledge to their keiki. They play Hawaiian music, participate in hula and ocean sports, they prepare and share Hawaiian cuisine, and they speak (or learn to speak) ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. I found that that mainland Hawaiians communicate frequently with ‘ohana members, connect with other displaced Hawaiians, make friends in the communities where they live, and fly home often, because building and nurturing relationships is foundational to the Hawaiian values system.

I found a host of other researchers who, like me, are concerned about the future and well-being of our people. Hokoana (2010) found that Native Hawaiians, unlike non-Hawaiians, believe that having a good understanding of their culture assists them to be successful in college, and that students feel better assisted when Native Hawaiian pedagogy is integrated into program services. Griener’s (2007) Project Demonstrating Excellence study resulted in a proposed multi-faceted Hawaiian studies curriculum for children living California; the main purpose of the program is to teach a community of mixed ethnicities the valued traditions, cultural practices, history, and beliefs in order to preserve Hawaiian culture.

There does not seem to be much in the literature about first generations of Hawaiians that have relocated from the islands to other places, and their struggle to maintain cultural identity, far away from the sands of their birth. I believe my intended study can bridge the gap in the current literature and bring to light why Native Hawaiian people leave the ‘āina, and how some of them have found a way to regain or maintain their cultural heritage and lead with Aloha far away from the ‘āina.

In the third chapter, I describe the methods I used to study the experiences of Hawaiian participants who are actively experiencing different ways to regain or maintain the cultural heritage by *living Aloha* away from “home.”

## Methodology

*E lawei ke a 'o a mālama a e 'oi mau ka na 'auao*  
*He who takes his teachings and applies them increases his knowledge.*

(Pukui, #328, see Appendix B)

### Conceptual Framework of the Study

**Indigenous methodologies.** Indigenous research paradigms naturally celebrate Indigenous ways of knowing such as spirituality, connectedness to nature, and place deep importance on relationships to earth, one another, ancestors past and present, as well as all living and non-living things; these elements are often missing from standard methodologies originating in non-Indigenous contexts.

Attention to personhood, context, and valuing knowledge is noted by Kenny (2005), who provides a framework for Indigenous research including important tenets that embody Native belief systems by:

- Honouring past, present and future in interpretive and analytical research processes including historical references and intergenerational discourse;
- Honouring the interconnectedness of all life and multi-dimensional aspects of life on the Earth and in the community in research design and implementation; and
- Honouring the spiritual, physical, emotional and mental aspects of the person and the community in research protocols, methodologies and analyses. (Kenny, 2005)

Additionally, standard non-Indigenous research paradigms often fail to consider the values and ancient knowledge systems of peoples who have been colonized, oppressed, and marginalized (Chilsea, 2012; Kahakalau, 2004; Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Smith, 1999), groups that are often “represented as Other and fall under broad categories of non-Western, third world, developing, underdeveloped, First Nations, indigenous peoples, third world women, African American women, and so on” (Chilsea, 2012, p. 2). When misused, dominant Euro-Western

methodologies can further silence, marginalize, and exclude the voices and views of the very populations that well-intended researchers wish to serve!

According to Chilsea (2012), Indigenous research contains four dimensions. It:

- targets a local phenomenon instead of using extant theory from the West to identify and define a research issue;
- is context-sensitive and creates locally relevant constructs, methods, and theories derived from local experiences and indigenous knowledge;
- can be integrative, that is combining Western and indigenous theories; and
- in its most advance form, its assumptions about what counts as reality, knowledge and values in research are informed by an indigenous research paradigm. (p. 13)

These dimensions of Indigenous research prioritize people and their knowledge over the research process. This is what sets Indigenous methodologies apart from dominant Western ones. In order to choose or critique methodologies, the Native researcher should be able to:

- explain strategies for decolonization;
- appreciate the need for researchers to interrogate the “captive” or “colonized mind” and engage in multiple epistemologies that are inclusive of voices that have suffered colonization;
- critically appreciate the influence of Euro-Western history, culture, philosophy, and theoretical perspectives on research; and
- compare and contrast postcolonial-indigenous paradigms and Euro-western paradigm assumptions about the nature of reality, what counts as knowledge and ways of knowing, and value systems in research. (Chilsea, 2012, p. 2)

Chilsea (2012) and Smith (2012) discuss deconstructing Western scholarship by integrating decolonization and indigenization tactics into dominant research methodologies, as well as advocate research design from a postcolonial-indigenous approach. Kenny (2005) argues that “the involvement of Aboriginal participants and communities should be incorporated into all aspects of the research process,” and that “Aboriginal people should be the ones who determine the issues or topics to be researched,” (p.11) as well as take part in the design and development of the integral parts of the research project. From a practical standpoint, it is imperative that the

Indigenous researcher engage in deep learning about history, culture, and values from the worldview of the post-colonized peoples themselves, and then ideally integrate their stories and experiences, in their voices, into well-designed research that has both merit and worth; the research will become shared knowledge which will hopefully serve and benefit them, their communities, and our society as a whole.

In Native communities, “there are protocols involved of being respectful, of showing or accepting respect and reciprocating respectful behaviors, which also develop membership, credibility and reputation” (Smith, 1999, p. 19). In Maori culture for example, the researcher’s protocol is to ask permission by seeking the advice, wisdom, and viewpoint from *kūpuna* (elders) in the ‘ohana before research begins. I was most fortunate to spend time in the islands with, and gain support from Uncle La‘akea Suganuma, Uncle Peter Hanohano, Aunty Pat Bacon, Uncle Sean and Aunty Dodie Brown, our dear family friend James Vegas, and my brothers Kealohamākua and Ka‘umi Wengler. I enjoyed a day connecting with the ‘āina deep in the Honokowai Valley and with “Mom” Puanani Lindsey as we shoveled dirt, moved rocks, pulled up invasive weeds and replanted native, endemic plants. Each of these kumu are cultural experts in various disciplines of Hawaiian culture and fluent in ‘ōlelo Maoli Hawai‘i; they have generously offered their *mana ‘o* (thoughts; suggestions) and precious time to help me in this study.

With Indigenous research as the foundation of my study, I employed the specific research methods and methodologies of heuristics, phenomenology, ethnography, and Portraiture to explore the lived experience of Kanaka Maoli who have out-migrated from Hawai‘i as adults, and have chosen to live permanently and raise their families in the continental United States. In this chapter, I briefly described the methods, the interviews, interview questions, and population

of interest. I then detail the chosen methods in order to address the research questions, giving extra consideration to the main method Portraiture.

I carefully selected methods that fit with my foundation in Indigenous research and the nature of my own specific inquiry, the research questions; these methods conceptually support and frame the study: phenomenology, ethnography, heuristics and Portraiture. Portraiture is my method of choice specifically because in my view, it is in accord with Indigenous research philosophies, and fits my study. In my study, Portraiture provides a platform to accommodate a combination of qualitative methods including phenomenology, ethnography, and heuristics. Phenomenology reveals stories about the lived experience of my participants. Ethnography reveals the strong cultural component of the Hawaiian culture; and heuristics allows me, as a Hapa, to demonstrate my own awareness and reflexivity on the topic and research questions.

### **Phenomenology**

Phenomenology is the analysis of consciousness and experience (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 6). It requires us to “stop taking things for granted” (p. 41), to step outside of ourselves in order to observe, and to be mindfully conscious in our research. Phenomenology is a research method used to gather data and obtain knowledge about how we think and feel about a situation or phenomenon. Its focus is what goes on within a person in an attempt to get to and describe lived experience in a language as free from the constructs of the intellect and society as possible (p. 96). Phenomenology as a method allows space for researchers to understand and describe human experience as it is experienced, perceived, remembered or conceptualized. More than any other form of inquiry, phenomenology “attempts to get behind the most elementary experiences of everyday life” (p. 97); it is a method researchers use to examine described phenomena and analyze the hidden inner structures and systems beneath.



## **Ethnography**

Ethnography is “the study of cultures, people, behavior, and socially constructed norms that apply to a group of people. Ethnographic knowledge takes on three interrelated forms: description, interpretation, and explanation” (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 118). Like phenomenology, ethnography requires mindfulness in translating human experience into phenomena. “Ethnographic research is one of the most difficult forms of inquiry to apply to one’s own environment” (p. 118) because the researcher—although immersed in the subject matter—must be interested in detail, yet remain detached from this same subject matter.

## **Heuristics**

Unlike other phenomenological methodologies, heuristics actually requires the researcher to be open, receptive, and attune to involvement, and “all facets of one’s experience with one’s experience” (Moustakas, 1990; Rogers, 1968; as cited in Kahakalau, 2004); the research questions and meaning are derived through a process of self-inquiry, self-search, self-dialogue, inner awareness, and self-discovery (Kahakalau, 2004). Heuristics as a research method tends to be autobiographic in nature because the research questions in the study have deep personal meaning and significance for the researcher.

There are six phases that make up the basic heuristic research design:

- Initial engagement
- immersion into research topic and question
- incubation
- illumination
- explication
- “culmination of the research” in a creative synthesis. (Kahakalau, 2004, p. 23).

## Portraiture

Portraiture is a unique form of Narrative Inquiry.

Narrative Inquiry invites the reader into a story ... the goal of narrative inquiry is not to isolate, reduce or simplify, but to elaborate complexities and relationships in the service of understanding human life. Narrative inquiry is hermeneutic in nature because it is contingent upon the perception and interpretation of the researcher. The writer/researcher selects aspects of a narrative to highlight elements of a research context in order to portray a holistic picture of research participants, issues, and settings. (Kenny, 2005, p. 416)

In the art and practice of Portraiture, the researcher creates portraits, which are “designed to capture the richness, complexity, and dimensionality of human experience in social and cultural context, conveying the perspectives of the people who are negotiating those experiences” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 3).

Portraiture is a qualitative method that seeks to capture the essence of human experience. The portrait is sketched and shaped from dialogue between the artist and subject, “each participating in the drawing of the image; the encounter between the two is rich with meaning and resonance and is crucial to the success and authenticity of the rendered piece” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 3).

Portraiture “blends literary principles, artistic resonance and scientific rigor;” it bridges “aesthetics and empiricism, appealing to intellect and emotion, seeking to inform and to inspire, joining the endeavors of documentation, interpretation and intervention” ((Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. xvi). This method of phenomenological/ethnographic research was invented by Dr. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, a sociologist, ethnographer, biographer and professor at Harvard University.

**History of portraiture.** Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot credits the artists, scholars, philosophers, and social scientists that came before her in blending art and science, story and

philosophy, ultimately influencing her invention of portraiture. She mentions Lionel Trilling who had the audacity to embrace “the intersection of aesthetics and empiricism,” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 6) and William James, whose artistic writing incorporated logic, reasoning, and abstract. She refers to John Dewey as someone who “underscored the need not only to capture the cognitive, social, and affective dimensions of educational encounters, but also find frameworks and strategies for representing the aesthetics of teaching and learning” (p. 6).

Finally, Lawrence-Lightfoot acknowledges anthropologist Clifford Geertz for stating that portraits are designed to “deepen the conversation” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 29); that imagination is imperative when drawing or portraying a culture, and that we construct interpretation by utilizing “thick description” to paint the ethnographer’s experience. Indeed, “thick description” has become synonymous with the art and science of portraiture.

**Goodness.** Inspired by the artists, philosophers and researchers before her, Lawrence-Lightfoot’s (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) creation of modern portraiture appears to be a bold resistance to the dominant voices and cannons in social science inquiry at the time. “I was concerned about the general tendency of social scientists to focus their investigations on pathology and disease rather than on health and resilience” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 8). *Pathology* is a clinical term used in psychology for determining the conditions and processes of a disease. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot’s concern brought light to the fact that qualitative investigations conducted from a Western lens frequently magnify broken systems and what is wrong in a society, often producing “unfortunate and distorted results” and “neglecting evidence of promise and potential” (pp. 8–9). She cites,

The documentation of pathology often bleeds into a blaming of the victim rather than a complicated analysis of the coexistence of strengths and vulnerabilities (usually evident

in any person, institution or society). The locus of blame tends to rest on the shoulders of those most victimized and least powerful in defining their identity and shaping their fate . . . the focus on pathology seems to encourage facile inquiry. (p. 9)

With Portraiture, the researcher searches for what is right, good, and healthy; she works to examine the subjects' perspectives and establish balance, aesthetics, and themes of goodness.

This description of portraiture, and the documentation how the participants define goodness and exemplify goodness fits beautifully with how I envision portraying individuals who lead change by *Living Aloha*—each in his or her own unprecedented way of acting out goodness while operating in outsider-imposed systems of post-colonial Hawai'i. Using narrative and thick description, I sought and analyzed expressions of goodness—defined as Aloha by the participants in my study.

**Context.** My preparation for this study has afforded me opportunities to study Hawaiian history in depth, the Hawaiian culture and language, and to inquire about the significance of Aloha as a spiritual foundation of values and existence. The research brought me back home to Hawai'i, to build and strengthen relationships, to seek opportunities for dialogue and inquiry, to consult with elders in my 'ohana and to rejoin the native Hawaiian community. In Portraiture, context is foundational in planning, framing and creating a portrait; the researcher must be ever present, mindful of her own thoughts and reflections when observing and recording the participants. Data must be collected contextually.

In observing and recording human experience in context, the portraitist's work joins with the practices and craft of other phenomenologists, ethnographers, and a variety of other researchers. But the portraitist makes deliberate and specific use of context in several ways that reflect her focus on descriptive detail, narrative development, and aesthetic expression, as well as her interest in recording the self and perspective of the researcher in the setting. (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 44)

Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot details five ways in which context is present in Portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, pp. 44-59):

- *Internal context* or physical setting
- *Personal context*: the researcher's perch and perspective
- *Historical context*—this involves journey, culture and ideology
- *Aesthetic features*, which include symbolism and metaphors, and
- *Shaping context*, meaning the actors are shaped by the context but they also give context its shape.

**Voice.** Lawrence-Lightfoot examines six ways in which the portraitist uses voice to develop a portrait: voice as witness; voice as interpretation; voice as preoccupation; voice as autobiography; listening for the subjects' voices; and finally, voice in conversation (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 87). The researcher is able to stand back, to perceive, and give voice to things that often go unnoticed. She must be able to interpret, to make sense of the data, to search for meaning through facts of the who, what, where, and when; to reflect, offer introspect with thick description in vivid detail. Voice as preoccupation refers to the interpretive lens through which the researcher sees and records what is happening.

The voice "reflects the life story of the portraitist" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p.95). In fact, the portraitist's authentic reference to her own life story enhances the reader's trust; the researcher offers pieces of her own life story "as a way of informing the reader how it will likely influence the way" she will see, hear, engage the informants (p. 96). In Portraiture, it is crucial for the reader to hear the story through the researcher's autobiographical lens and carefully crafted framework; the researcher listens for patterns in dialogue while developing a relationship with her interviewees, and gives them voice through the portraits—ever mindful that

her voice seeks to describe, reflect, interpret, and bring light to goodness. “The portraitist works very hard *not* to simply create a self-portrait” (p. 105).

**Relationships.** Portraits are “constructed, shaped, and drawn through the development of relationships” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 135) between the portraitist and person(s) of interest. Building productive and cooperative relationships is foundational to Portraiture, because data is collected as trust is built and knowledge is being constructed through the relationship building process. Self-understanding and the construction of knowledge develops from the experience of connecting. “At the center of relationships, portraitists hope to build trust, and rapport—first through the search for goodness; second through empathetic regard; third, through the development of symmetry, reciprocity, and boundary negotiation with the actors” (p. 141).

**Interviews, observations, and aesthetic writing.** Four adults of Native Hawaiian descent currently residing in California participated in one or two “talk-story” sessions; each session took approximately one to two hours, depending on how long the participant wanted to *wala ‘au* (talk story). Each of the participants chose a location to meet that was familiar and comfortable: their own homes, a restaurant, or a nearby park. One of the interviews was conducted over the phone while the participant drove. In addition, I add my observations, which is in accord with ethnographic research practice, and my reflections per heuristic inquiry.

**Interview questions.** Initial interviews included open-ended questions addressing *inoa ‘ohana* (family name; where they come from in the islands), what their parents did for work, and what brought them to the mainland in the first place. I asked questions to identify age, marital status, family structure, employment, and address issues of multi-ethnicities and multiple self-identifications, acculturation, hardships, opportunities, and whatever else the participant wanted

to talk about with regard to living on the mainland. It was important for me to know what Aloha means to them, and how they continue to practice *living Aloha* on the mainland. Finally, I wanted to know where they call home, what causes them to stay on the mainland, and if they ever planned on moving back to Hawai‘i.

The interviews were transcribed and given to the interviewees. The interviewees had the opportunity to clarify, delete text, and/or add on to the previous interview in a second interview. Second interviews were also transcribed and sent to the interviewees for review; changes were made accordingly. On request, each interviewee submitted photos that were used to enhance their individual portraits.

**Population.** This study was conducted utilizing a purposeful sample of four individuals of Native Hawaiian descent who were born and raised in Hawai‘i, relocated to the mainland United States as adults, and have chosen to permanently reside on the mainland and raise their families. At the time of interview, the individuals were approximately between the ages of 45–65 years old. I chose participants that were referred to me from others upon hearing of my research, participants with whom I had already established a relationship prior to the study—classmates and alumni from The Kamehameha Schools, and former students from my hula halau,

*Na Mele ‘o ke Kai and Hula Anyone?* When I initially described my research project, the participants appeared to be genuinely interested and willing to participate. What makes this population unique is that although they live far away from the ‘āina Hawai‘i Nui Aloha, they instinctively found a way to retain the *Spirit of Aloha* through Native Hawaiian cultural practices, share their knowledge with others in their respective communities, and pass the ancient wisdom to their children; I see them as leading change with Aloha, both on large scale as well as

in small acts of kindness, compassion, generosity, mindfulness, and *pono*—right action in daily work and in everyday life.

**Data collection.** I used multiple methods for data collection in my research: audio and video recordings, as well as written transcripts of the interviewees, photographs of the interviewees and their family members captured on digital camera, and hand written notes. I blogged my observations and reflections in an online journal, and included contextual information, an important aspect in Portraiture. I worked on analyzing and making meaning of the data that was collected, and sorting themes that emerged. Searching for convergent threads, highlighting metaphors and constructing coherence out of themes that at first may appear unrelated is part of the “disciplined, empirical process—of description, interpretation, analysis, and synthesis—and an aesthetic process of narrative development” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 185). The researcher arrives with an intellectual framework, which resonates with her own “autobiographical journey—those aspects of her own familial, cultural, developmental, and educational background that she can relate either (consciously or unconsciously) to the intellectual themes of the work” (p. 185).

**Constructing emergent themes.** Lawrence-Lightfoot describes five modalities of “synthesis, convergence and contrast” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 193). They include: repetitive refrains, resonant metaphors, cultural and institutional rituals, triangulation of data threads from various sources, and revealing themes that are contrasting and dissonant.

- *Repetitive refrains* are emerging themes that are seen and heard, and repeated over and over by different interviewees in various settings.
- *Resonant metaphors* are themes constructed from words and phrases that seem to resonate with meaning and symbolism.
- *Cultural and institutional rituals* include routines and are celebrated in social circles.
- *Triangulation* is when the artist weaves together data threads to construct themes.



- The researcher pays attention to *contrasting and dissonant* bits of data, makes connections and constructs meaning from data threads where no coherence is apparent.

**Convergent and divergent patterns.** Once major themes were sorted and renamed, the researcher works to interpret meaning. Patterns emerge—some obvious, others subtly appear simply by trying to make sense of it all and by being so immersed in all the bits and pieces of data. The process of organizing the data has been described as “analogous to assembling a jigsaw puzzle” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 245). I discussed the themes that emerged with my participants in the second interview, and in emails that were sent to the participants when their portraits were completed. Each participant had the opportunity to read his or her own portrait and comment via email.

**Constructing the aesthetic whole.** Lawrence Lightfoot refers to dimensions that must be included in weaving the portrait to construct the aesthetic whole: conception, structure, form, and cohesion (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 247). Conception refers to the overarching theme and themes that support and shape the developing narratives. Structure is the framework that organizes themes. Form offers beauty and aesthetics, and brings the narratives to life. Coherence refers to the order, logic and aesthetics of all the parts in relation to the whole portrait.

Balance is important when considering the aesthetic whole. The researcher must ask herself, “Has equal attention been given to every theme?” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 270). Although the researcher is an active participant in painting the portrait, she must remember to balance her voice with those of the participants, ensuring that their stories remain pronounced. I used quotes from the participants utilizing their voices to physically support the structure and themes, as well as lyrics, music, pictures and poetic sayings to add to the form as aesthetics.

**Ethical issues.** While the intent of this study was to create portraits of Native Hawaiians leaders who practice Aloha (a form of authentic leadership), I imagine that when working with most native communities, researchers find it vital to establish a relationship with each of the people they intend to observe and interview. The people I interviewed are part of a convenience sample—they are individuals in my circle of relationships; either former classmates and alumni from the Kamehameha Schools (elementary and secondary school scholarship recipients of endowment from Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estates), or former *haumana* (students) from the hula halau I danced with—*Na Mele 'O ke Kai* and *Hula Anyone?* We were able to further build our relationships through this study.

I submitted my Ethics application before beginning my research; the application included a clause that allowed permission for video recording for future scholarship presentations as well as documentary publication. A rationale for an “oral consent agreement,” was established; this is in accord with Indigenous research practice so that the interviewees could give consent verbally. Each of the interviewees fully consented to being recorded, agreed to having their pictures taken, and verbally allowed me to use their names.

## The Portraits

The portrait of “Paka” is a pseudonym for the participant in my first portrait; Kalani, Nani, and Mona, as well as my own portrait are each portrayed separately below. Each portrait is designed to be an artistic representation of the complete research context, process, and results utilizing the art and science of Portraiture. Emergent themes, theoretical discussions, and implications for future research are discussed in the fifth chapter, the results section following the portraits. Excerpts taken directly from the individual interview sessions have been transcribed and are included in the corresponding portraits. A list of songs used to accent each portrait can be accessed in Appendix C, following the references.

“Ku’u Home o Kahalu’u”

Words and music by Jerry Santos; performed by Olomana © 1976.

<http://islandmusicnetwork.com/sheet/kuu-home-o-kahaluu/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI0hkdyU1tY>

I remember days when we were younger  
 We used to catch ‘o‘opu in the mountain stream  
 ‘Round the Ko‘olau Hills we‘d ride on horseback  
 So long ago it seems it was a dream

Chorus: Last night I dreamt I was returning . . . and my heart called out to you  
 But I fear you won’t be like I left you . . . Me kealoha ku’u home o Kahalu’u

I remember days when we were wiser  
 When our world was small enough for dreams  
 And you have lingered there my sister  
 And I no longer can it seems.

Change is a strange thing, it cannot be denied  
 It can help you find yourself or make you lose your pride  
 Move with it slowly as on the road we go  
 Please do not hold on to me we all must go alone.

I remember days when we were smiling  
 When we laughed and sang the whole night long  
 And I will greet you as I find you . . . with the sharing of a brand new song

Final Chorus: Last night I dreamt I was returning . . . and my heart called out to you  
 To please accept me as you’ll find me . . . Me ke aloha ku’u home o Kahalu’u

## Paka



Figure 4.1. Paka. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

### “Island Style”

Words and lyrics printed with permission by John Cruz and Liliko‘i Records ©; copyright 1996.

Acoustic Soul Album released in 1996; John Cruz was the winner of two Nā Hōkū Hanohano

Awards for Contemporary Album of the Year and Most Promising Artist of the Year.

<http://www.johncruz.com/lyrics.php?id=12>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuAQ8YjgN4o&feature=youtu.be>

Chorus: On the Island, we do it Island Style,  
from the mountain to the ocean from the Windward to the Leeward side.

On the Island, we do it Island Style,  
from the mountain to the ocean from the Windward to the Leeward side.

Mama's in the kitchen cooking dinner real nice,  
 Beef stew on the stove, lomi salmon with the rice.  
 We eat & drink and we sing all day, kanikapila in the old Hawaiian way.  
 We go Grandma's house on the weekend clean yard, 'cause if we no go,  
 Grandma gotta work hard.

You know my grandma, she like the poi real sour. I love my grandma every minute, every hour.

He is a soft spoken man of Filipino and Hawaiian descent, who describes himself as simply, “a man of the ocean.” He grew up in the islands and throughout his entire life, has always lived near the beach. For generations, the sea has, and continues to provide recreation, nourishment, and sustenance for his family. The ocean is a timeless, fluid space . . . in Hawai‘i, the salt water heals—relaxing, warm as bath water in the summer, yet refreshingly cool in the winter months. In California, the water is much colder all year ‘round . . . same Pacific ocean, just different coastlines, with 2,500 miles of deep blue sea, underwater mountains and caverns, live reef and waves, as well as innumerable varieties of fish, sea creatures, and exotic sea plants co-existing harmoniously and tumultuously between the shores.

Jumping into the ocean here in Santa Barbara, California is thrilling, invigorating, and really cold! Hawaiians know that this simple act can make a person feel ALIVE! Whole again, cleanse the spirit, and allow one to instantly reconnect with oneself, with one another, with the *‘āina* (land, earth, nature), with *nā kūpuna* (our ancestors living here on earth, as well as those who dwell in the spirit world).

He's loved ocean sports ever since he was a little boy: surfing, fishing, paddling, swimming. Hawaiian music played softly in the background. As we sat in his home talking story at the dining room table, a gentle off-shore breeze blew in from the lanai carrying with it the faint and lovely fragrance of assorted flowers: ginger, gardenia, and was that plumeria? I couldn't help but notice that the walls were covered with varying sizes of pictures framed in koa wood, some fringed with dried lei or ti leaves, pictures of their 'ohana taken over the years:

happy children posing with the fish they caught, the sand forts they built, laughing and splashing at the beach. Instead of cars, his garage stores an impressive collection of watersports tools and toys—a space filled to the brim with a vast assortment of gear used to enjoy the beach, the surf, and the waves. Wetsuits and fins of all sizes hang on hooks, amongst various piles of massive paddleboards and well-ridden surf boards, long and short; kayak, wake boards and sand-covered boogie boards, complex fishing poles and simple rods of varying lengths, everything stacked neatly, ready for action. I may have even spied a small canoe . . . all evidence that clearly, it gives him no greater joy than to share his love of the beach with his ‘ohana, to teach his sons to respect the ocean, and to spend time with family relaxing at the shore, any free time they have together. Paka and his wife extend this aloha by hosting *pau hana* (work finished) backyard barbeques on Friday nights after our intense hula practice, where friends drop by to share a tasty meal of the fish they’ve caught, cold beverages, relaxed conversations filled with laughter, and *kanikapila* (backyard jam sessions).

I first met Paka over thirteen years ago, at a rehearsal for an upcoming show. In those days, our hula hālau was comprised of a fleet of nearly a hundred students—*kāne* (men) and *wāhine* (women) of all sizes, ethnicities, and ages—individuals who had over the years, transformed into strong, disciplined, and skilled dancers. The students’ ages ranged from *‘ōpio*, our youth as young as four years old to our *tūtū*, who were in their eighties. Here in the central coast of California, under the direction and careful guidance of our *kumu* (teacher), the *haumana* (students) learned the ancient art of hula in a modern context, while practicing *ahonui* (patience) and *lōkahi* (teamwork, to make peace and unity; to be in agreement).

“The halau is a hula school that you learn the basics of the feet and hands and (most) importantly, what has been passed down from your teacher, your teacher’s teacher.” Robert Cazimero, Na Kamalei: The Men of Hula (video clip: 9.36–9.53)

For the most part, I remember Paka being a shy, quiet, and humble sort of person who didn’t say much and mostly kept to himself . . . until Kumu commanded that the k̄āne step up to dance. After learning several new hulas and months of practicing on their own, the men finally got their act together and had perfected their numbers. It was show time. Performing for a crowd of nearly 800 guests, they presented as solid and confident, captivating all. The sheer number of k̄āne executing with precision, grace, strength, and certainty brought the house down with thunderous applause. As the audience cheered, Paka beamed with pride, his smile lit up the stage. Their performance was unforgettable . . . *maika ‘i loa* (very good) . . . a job well done.

**Background.** I learned that Paka and his step brothers belonged to a large blended and extended ‘ohana living between the Waipahu and Ewa Beach areas. He was born on the island of ‘Oahu in the late sixties at “Queen’s,” located in downtown Honolulu. Queen’s Hospital (now called Queen’s Medical Center) is the largest private, non-profit hospital in Hawai‘i, founded in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV. His parents split up when Paka was just an infant; his father moved to the mainland and eventually remarried. “So I never really knew my dad,” he told me. His mother also remarried, and their ‘ohana grew to include step brothers and sisters, numerous aunties, uncles, and cousins.

**Love and respect for the ocean.** Like a lot of *keiki k̄āne* (male children) growing up “in the country” (far outside of Honolulu city and suburbs), Paka lived a simple life, learning to surf and appreciate the ocean at an early age:

Well, I love surfing . . . surfing is my life . . . I'm attached to the ocean. I was born to the ocean. I love to fish, free dive, you know, spear fish . . . anything to do with the ocean. I have this (special) kind of connection to the ocean.

**Learning from kūpuna.** As a boy, he carefully observed his mother and step-father when they took him fishing, but he actually learned how to catch fish from his grandfather's second wife, a grandmother who took them in, treating the children as if they were her own flesh and blood; a tūtū who fished old style, with just a split bamboo pole—and who was able to enter secret, unknown fishing ponds. His face radiates light as he speaks of his beloved grandmother, who had long since passed away. “She had access to Pearl Harbor, way inside West Lock . . . which is military, so you cannot go . . . and that's where all the fish was . . . so we had access and she taught us still . . . that's something that I'm not ever gonna forget,” he laughed. As he told this story, I smiled inside, secretly honoring his wise grandmother, an island woman who had gained inside access to Pearl Harbor military base. She had resourcefully found a way to bring food to the table while simultaneously teaching her grandson the ways of old, even though the beaches of the ancestors had been confiscated and controlled by the U.S. military for decades.

**Hard times growing up.** When I asked Paka details about his early years, a dark shadow passed over his face. Suddenly the clock on the wall began ticking loudly as we sat in an uncomfortable silence. He didn't say anything for a long time, and then when he did speak, his voice became somber. Those shadows that crossed his face—reflect without words—what I imagine to be the pain of growing up in paradise without a father, without enough to get by. In our conversations about his childhood, Paka always chooses to take the high road, refusing to speak badly about his elders, and instead saying nothing, even though reliable sources on the inside confirm stories of promise and neglect, as well as physical abuse disguised as “discipline.”



**The ‘āina provides.** Their family didn’t have much money, and there were so many mouths to feed. Sometimes when he came home from school, there would be nobody home, and upon a thorough search, no food in the refrigerator or cupboards. “Nevah have money, no more nothing to eat,” he shrugged. “So what did you do?” I asked. He looked away, lowering his eyes to the floor and said that he’d “just throw on a pot of rice, then head down to the beach and hopefully, catch some fish for dinner.”

There was something simple and beautiful in what he said he had done, because this is how our people lived for hundreds of years, long before people from other cultures arrived, long before not having money for food was ever a problem. I felt ashamed, reflecting on my own privilege in that I never knew what it was like to come home to an empty house (Mom was always home with the little ones), much less having to catch my own dinner . . . sure, as a kid there were plenty of times I cooked dinner for our family, but besides washing and cooking rice, all I had to do was peek in the cupboard, the refrigerator, open a few cans, and turn on the stove. If I had to catch our dinner, I can assure you, we’d probably all starve. Paka and I were Hawaiian keiki of mixed ancestry, growing up in the 1970s; we lived only 25 miles apart on the same island at the same time—both of us came from huge families who lived close to the beach, and yet we experienced totally different realities growing up.

**Some things change, some remain the same.** Some thirty or so years later, some things have changed, some remain the same. Paka and his wife live on the central coast of California; they have solid careers and earn enough to provide a good life for their children. He told me that he is determined to be a good father and a positive role model for the boys. Paka still loves to fish, passing the knowledge and survival skills Tūtū taught so long ago. It brings him much joy to teach his own keiki to respect to fish. I’ve witnessed their interactions on numerous occasions

over the years; it is evident that the father and sons truly enjoy hanging out together. With pride, each brings his catch, contributing to the ‘ohana’s next meal. Paka told a story about an early fishing trip when he and his wife took their young sons down to visit family in San Diego:

We even bought them their own little poles. They took to it real quick . . . which made me really happy. Once they were fishing, I couldn’t even stop ‘em. They were fishing through the night, until we ran out of bait! And since the store was closed, and the kids wanted to keep fishing, I was just all, “Oh, what else we got?” You know? I was like, “Uh, we got a can of corn.” (He smiles, shaking his head in disbelief.) “Try hook the, you know, hook a little piece of corn on there and throw ‘em out, maybe they might bite.” And sure enough, the damn thing was . . . they (fish) were coming (he laughs), for the corn!

### **The World of Work**

Paka attended Waipahu High School in the early to mid-eighties, and took a part-time job working at Dole Cannery and Plantation in downtown Honolulu, close to Honolulu Harbor.

“That place would stink,” he recalls, “we catch the bus, come home reeking like the pineapple . . . couldn’t get that smell out of our clothes, even our hair.” I knew exactly what he was talking about, because we drove past the cannery every morning as my father took us to school. I vividly remember leaving 6 am mass at the downtown Cathedral and heading toward Kapālama Heights where Kamehameha Schools were located. We’d drive Ewa bound (west), along Ala Moana Boulevard as it turns into Nimitz Highway, the industrial area beginning with Honolulu Harbor filled with neatly stacked, rusty metal freight containers in front of enormous freight ships docked to the left. Then we’d pass the pineapple cannery on the right, with its massive smokestacks that seemed to touch the sky, their sole purpose was to produce ominous-looking grayish black clouds that billowed out 24/7, polluting that stretch of highway for miles with the rancid, sickly-sweet chemical smell of processed pineapple.

While his classmates were slaving under the merciless sun—picking and packing during the hot summers and pineapple harvest seasons—Paka was lucky enough to work indoors in the

printing department, labeling the contents of boxes intended to ship whole pineapples, as well as cans of cut fruit and juice, to the near and far corners of the globe. Dole Food Company (formerly Hawaiian Pineapple Company, a.k.a. HAPCO) eventually expanded past the shores of Hawai‘i, and is today, the world’s largest producer and marketer of high-quality fresh fruits and vegetables. Founded in the early 1900s by James Dole, a young New England businessman (and non-coincidentally the cousin of Sanford Dole, first governor of the Republic of Hawai‘i after the overthrow of Queen Lili‘uokalani), Dole Cannery was one of the largest businesses in Hawai‘i, employing thousands of local people over the years; in fact, my own father worked at the Honolulu plant in their management trainee program for a short while, after he graduated from college and arrived from Missouri in the early 1960s. Decades later, lower production and labor costs in Southeast Asia, South America, and Africa caused the decline in Hawai‘i’s pineapple industry, and cannery operations closed in 1991, less than five years after Paka left his job there. The Dole Cannery in Honolulu has since been converted into a retail shopping mall that houses 18 state-of-the-art movie theaters, Home Depot, Costco, and Best Buy.

After graduating from Waipahu High School, “I went to work, like most local people did,” Paka recalls, joining his uncles in the construction business working for the American Fencing Company. Again, I noticed the disparity between us; my parents expected us to go to college, whether we wanted to or not, college wasn’t an option. Upon graduation, most of my classmates from Kamehameha intended on continuing their education—either in within the University of Hawai‘i (UH) system—or elsewhere; they enjoyed discussing, deliberating, and comparing financial aid and scholarship packages from the local and mainland schools they had been accepted. I asked what his parents did for a living while he was growing up, because sometimes children end up following their parents’ footsteps into similar career paths. It turns

out that his mother had taken college courses and graduated from a particular program that qualified her to eventually work for a lawyer as a paralegal; his stepfather was employed as a security guard, working odd hours sometimes late into the night. Neither of these occupations appealed to Paka, and back then, the idea of possibly attending college seemed so farfetched—and still does—for so many local kids who fall into certain demographic populations of Hawai‘i. “Just went straight to work, basically. Nevah have time. Nevah had the time, nevah had the money to go to college . . . or maybe not even the drive, I don’t know.”

**Searching for more—Is this all there is?** At some point, hard physical labor for menial wages wasn’t enough, and boredom set in; there didn’t seem to be anything to look forward to. Like a lot of young adults who find themselves stuck in a rut without goals or direction, Paka and his step brothers ended up drinking beer and hanging out after working hours with some guys who turned them on to “stuff.” What happened to him commonly happens to so many of our young people—not only in Hawai‘i, but around the nation and world. In the beginning, what starts as “nothing serious” turns into a sort of degenerative lifestyle cycle, which inadvertently ends up sucking the life out of our youth and their ambitions, dreams and all.

I asked how he, a local boy, ended up on the mainland:

I came up here in 1996. I was 28 years old. I was up to no good, actually. Like most local boys . . . rascal local boys, they just fall through the cracks, yeah. So I had to *hele* (go, move on) because I wasn’t . . . I wasn’t going anywhere. I was going nowhere fast.”

**Reuniting with makua.** So Paka contacted his father that he never knew growing up. I can only imagine how difficult that must have been for him, but he didn’t let on. Paka said his father understood the struggle he was going through, and offered support, so much so that after several heartfelt conversations between the two of them, Paka decided to make the move from Hawai‘i to California to live with his dad. It turns out that in fact, his father had actually moved from Hawai‘i to Los Angeles himself, twenty-some-odd years ago—at the age of 30, for *exactly*

the same reason Paka did—leaving the islands and his family in hopes of starting a new, clean life. Paka remembers those hard conversations and the aftermath:

I told him that I was gonna come up here, and um, you know, I wanted to see what it was like . . . and He said OK. I told him that I—I was up to no good. That I was trying to straighten out my life. So I came up and I, uh, I liked it. And I never looked back. Paka ended up moving in with his dad, just outside of Santa Barbara.

Fortunately, his 10 years' of industry work experience paid off in that he immediately found work in his field, with a local fence company. To me, it sounded like the move to the mainland turned out good for him, and he agreed completely: "I nevah have . . . I nevah have girlfriend, so my time was spent: work, surf, fish, and that was it . . . just trying to keep busy, get my head back on straight."

**Transformation.** At some point Paka got bored with his work once again, and decided he wanted to advance his career. In 1999, he enrolled in trade school to become an elevator technician. This meant working in the trade as an apprentice during the day, studying at night, and taking classes and exams during the weekends.

Yeah, I took up trade school, um, to be an elevator technician. Took me four and a half years . . . of school (laughs). I said, "No kidding, four and a half years?" He replied, "Mm hmm. Freakin' college! (He laughs again) I joined the Local 18, the union, and uh, I worked while I was going to school." "A lot of us did that, too," I said, meaning that many of us worked as students, juggling our time between studies, work, and sleep. "There's no other way, you know?" He responded, "No. You gotta make a living!"

**Negative attitudes toward men in hula—even today by Hawai'i's locals.** A year later he was introduced to hula and started dancing. I asked, "How did you find the halau?"

Ok, um, Tracy (not her real name). Tracy was going out with my stepmom's nephew, my father's wife's nephew . . . and she asked me, you know 'cuz we used to carpool to work. She used to work in Goleta, and I was working right down the street, so we'd carpool to work. She just went and asked one day. "Do you know I dance hula? I think you should come down and try it out." And I was like, "Uh . . . I don't know." (Laughs)

I wondered about the hesitancy in trying out the cultural practice of dancing hula. So I asked, "It's because you didn't dance on the islands, right?" He responded, "No, no. You know

how it is back home. Some . . . What . . . the majority of the guys gonna think, like, “Oh, what’s up with you, brah?” (Laughs) “Turn *māhū* (homosexual), boy?”

This comment made me wonder who had this attitude toward male dancers—was it brothers and friends here in California or in Hawai‘i? So I asked, “Over here, or over there?” Paka responded with, “Oh, I mean, back home (Hawai‘i). You know, when my brothers then heard of . . . when they heard that (I started dancing hula), they were like, “Whoa, what’s up with you, man? You turning *māhū*?” I was like, “No, man, come on.” I found it interesting that his brothers back home on the islands questioned his masculinity or sexual preference when they got word that Paka started dancing with a halau here on the mainland, teasing that he might be “turning gay.” Again, I thought about our differences in upbringing, where my mom, all four of my sisters, and five of my six brothers danced with *Ka Pā Hula Hawai‘i*, under the direction of John Kaha‘i Topolinski, a *punahele* (favorite student) and chosen tradition-keeper who had received instruction from both Aunty Pat Namaka Bacon and from Tūtū Kawena Pukui.



Figure 4.2. Kumu Hula John Kaha‘i Topolinski (center front) and his halau. Center back is my younger brother Ka‘umi. Printed with permission courtesy of Kihei DeSilva, © copyright 2004.

Ancient Hawai‘i was an oral society that relied on memory and storytelling; chanting and beating some sort of drum or gourd, almost always accompanied ancient hula—*Kahiko*—a discipline when danced correctly, depicts our Hawaiian creation stories, recounts travel from Tahiti, reminds us of horrific battles won and lost, and serves to re-tell myths and legends of old.

I remember there was no scene for men dancing; the women still pretty much had a grasp on the hula. You know, you have to put up with what other people think about you, whether they question, “why are you moving your hips so much, isn’t that supposed to be a feminine thing, to move the hips?” when you know, that’s just so a part of who we are, but we bought into being brainwashed that . . . that’s just not what men are supposed to do.

Kumu Hula Robert Cazimero (Video clip 8:15– 9:12)

It’s unbelievable to think how the residual, post-colonial Western attitudes about men who dance still permeate, intending to shame aspects of our culture, even to this day. This stigma was adapted by our own people since the hula had been banned in the early 1800s; performing hula was then regulated and restricted in the mid-1800s with heavy fines. Hula didn’t experience a significant public revival until the reign of King Kalākaua in the late 1800s; it was Kalākaua who proclaimed, “Hula is the language of the heart, and therefore the heartbeat of the Hawaiian people.” Kalākaua’s coronation in 1883 and jubilee celebration in 1886 both featured hula performances, but after his death in 1891 and the subsequent takeover of the kingdom, the hula once again went “underground” for many, many more years.

You know, one of the best ways to take over someplace is to instill your own ideas. So the missionaries who came over with their . . . religion . . . and did very well, tried to ban the hula. Some people who weren’t going to have that kept it going in hidden places. When Kalākaua became king, he said, come out! Let’s talk about the hula, and let’s talk about our language, and let’s talk about what we believe in . . . and let’s be who we are . . . and find someplace for this world to understand that it’s OK for us to be here . . . (laughs) How’s that for rose-colored glasses, huh?!

Robert Cazimero, Na Kamalei: The Men of Hula (video clip: 9.54–10.31)

Hula was later brought back in a much different way. *‘Auana*, or modern hula, was now almost always performed by women in grass skirts or *mu‘umu‘us* (long shift dresses) who

danced to tunes sung mostly in English, accompanied by the sounds of ukulele, bass, and steel guitars. This type of island dance seemed to be more “acceptable” to the general non-native peoples, something that tourists could more easily palate and identify Hawai‘i with.

**Cultural movement of the 1970s.** Hula was just part of the massive cultural shift in Hawai‘i. In the 1970s—as Paka and I were just kids growing up in the islands—a serious cultural movement in Hawai‘i began to revive the ways of old; ‘ōlelo, mo‘olelo, and kahiko danced by both kāne and wāhine emerged. The *Hōkūle‘a* (Polynesian double-hulled voyaging canoe, full-scale replica of the original *wa‘a kalua*) made its maiden voyage to Tahiti, and the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement was in full force. This cultural movement started the reconstruction of Hawai‘i’s education systems, and today, include public Hawaiian immersion schools on each island. When reflecting on all of these progressions, I thought that the Hawaiian Renaissance of the 1970’s had completely banished those negative stereotypes and attitudes about men who danced the hula in local people; clearly I was wrong.

**Finding an anchor: Turning to hula to stay grounded.** I wanted to hear more about why Paka decided to join our halau. So I asked, “Just trying something new, right?” Paka responded, “Just trying to get attached to something that . . . is like . . . back home.” To clarify, I asked, “Something that’s real, yeah?” He affirmed: “Yeah. (Something) that is real. Like, keep me grounded. Better things, you know . . . Stay out of trouble, too” I agreed, because when I first relocated, besides my boyfriend, the halau was all I had here. When the hula family adopted me and offered a comforting bit of culture, the practice and discipline kept me grounded, as it was something I could hold on to on the mainland, a place to belong while living so far away from home. “For me, it was really hard, adjusting to the mainland,” I confessed. Paka responded, “Yeah, you know? You kind of hit it right there.” We found a commonality. The



halau was a sanctuary where we could be who we are—*keiki 'o ka 'āina*—without having to put on a front, feel self-conscious, or self-correct our Pidgin' English. The halau gave us the space to support each other, enjoy home-made local food, laugh about our struggles, and regroup after practice. Hula had become so much more than dance, or even just a hard workout . . . it was a social system, an 'ohana, a refuge that supported so many of us far, far away from home.

I asked Paka, “What do you like about the halau?” Paka shook his head and smiled, “It’s just fun! You know? Reminds me of, uh . . . just brings me back home. The music . . . the people . . . Everybody was so nice. Everybody had Aloha.” Indeed, I remember the Aloha that these hula people extended to each other, to visitors, and to new students; this was the exact same reason I joined the halau and continue dancing. In the end, Paka actually got more than he had anticipated: dancing with the halau is where he met and fell in love with his wife-to-be.

**Growing roots on the mainland.** Leinani (not her real name) was one of Kumu’s best dancers; a sharp student that could remember tricky choreography quickly, and execute complicated sequences nearly flawlessly. She was recognized as a leader, and so Kumu assigned her to help individuals who were having difficulty with their particular numbers. Not too many people knew it at the time, but she was struggling with her own personal problems—a controlling, abusive husband who enjoyed publicly humiliating her, and decidedly refused to support her dance “hobby.” Hobby or not, hula provided Leinani a safe sanctuary, a daily retreat away from home. In the healing space we call hula practice, nurtured by the constant support of the halau and the Aloha that Kumu and the students shared, Leinani became whole again, eventually finding the courage it would take to risk being outcast by her conservative, traditional-thinking family. Leinani found the courage and strength to stave off further humiliation inflicted by her husband . . . she quietly filed for divorce and several months later,

bathed in the luxury of freedom when it was granted. I asked how Paka and Leinani became friends and eventually lovers:

How could it happen? She got divorced, and (we became friends) I think it was because we were dancing . . . I was dancing a lot at that time, maybe two or three times a week. Even when it wasn't my class, I just needed the practice . . . 'cuz I forget too much.

“All of us!” I laughed, knowing how much I have to practice just to keep up. “All of us,” Paka echoed. Kumu's dance sequences were tricky, and because she demanded perfection from the halau as a whole, as well as individually from each dancer, it seemed like every last one of us needed study help! “Probably getting ready for a show or something,” I commented. “Yeah,” he agreed. He wanted to set the record straight; Leinani was already divorced before they became friends; out of respect for a couple's commitment to one another, he never would have made a move on a woman who was married.

But she was divorced, and I think Kumu needed the girls to help us. So she (Leinani) would stay after class, and then help. Help me learn my dances, and then, we kind of got to know each other . . . a little bit. Yeah, she helped and I—I don't know—I kind of took to her . . . I used to kind of hang out and go to dinner with the girls after practice a lot, and that's how we got to know each other a little more. And then we did shows together.

**It's all about the 'ohana.** With Kumu's blessing, they were allowed to date. Leinani and Paka continued to dance, moved in together, and in 2004, got married on the beach. They have three children, all boys with Hawaiian first names. When I asked Paka how he chose their names, he said, “She (Leinani) did. She chose their names and I agreed with it, you know, I didn't mind them having Hawaiian names, because it was out of respect . . . out of respect for the land that I grew up in.” Their names interpreted into English mean “sea,” “released from restrictions; freedom,” and “the one who appears” or “one who reaches out.” That is kind of funny since their youngest seemed to appear out of nowhere, a pleasant surprise nearly seven years after their second son. I thought, how truly lovely of Leinani—choosing Hawaiian names that reflect their 'ohana's values and lifestyle—even though she herself has no *koko* (blood).

According to Paka, Leinani is supportive of all things Hawaiian; she fell in love with the culture of Aloha that was first introduced by the halau, and now she and Paka cultivate this culture of Aloha within their marriage, family, and community.

Their older boys wear their hair unusually long, more than halfway down their backs! I wondered if the boys were hassled because of their hair, so I persisted, “And so, no problem, you just let them?” Paka responded, “Let ‘em grow. I mean . . . they . . . I know they have problems with people telling them that they look like girls and stuff, but that’s just kids.”

In addition to growing long hair, Leinani and Paka enroll their *kamakāne* (sons) in Kumu’s class for keiki. Their oldest who is almost ten, has been dancing for five years, and their second child who is eight years old has also been dancing for half of his life. Leinani told me that she and the wāhine were learning an *ipu* dance (hula danced while beating a gourd drum), and the boys picked it up on their own, each dancing around the house with an ipu. They learned just by watching and mimicking her. “I think the hula gives them some structure and allows them to develop personal strength somehow?” I commented. Paka agreed.

**Hawai‘i will always be my home.** I changed the subject with, “So, anyway, how do you like it living over here?” He replied, “Ahhh, I like it . . . I love it . . . you know. I call this . . . I like here. But this is not actually my home. I cannot say that.” So I ask, “Where is your home?”

My home will always be Hawai‘i. Oahu, especially the ocean. That’s what I miss a lot of, is the ocean. And then I miss my family. I miss my ‘ohana. But you know, I miss the ocean . . . That’s where I got my peace, that’s what kept me grounded back home.

“So, you chose over here for live,” I asked, Pidgin English escaping my lips before I could correct myself. “How come? Like, you can go home any time. You ever think about going home—to live for good?” That’s when he said he was offered a job in Hawai‘i. “I was

offered to go home and work on elevators . . . but I felt like I already established myself here, and my wife . . . my wife's family is here." I commented on how nice it is to have 'ohana here.

Yeah. And I . . . I don't know . . . I don't know if I want my kids to go to school there. I don't know. That's what they say . . . the Hawaii education is not as good. And I couldn't . . . I don't think I was ready to . . . to sacrifice what I . . . my work and . . . 'cuz I would probably want them to be in private school, and get a better education than I got.

**Wanting better for the next generation.** "But they're in pretty good schools right now?" I asked. "Yeah," he replied. "And they're happy?" "They're happy," he affirmed. Then it dawned on me, "Yeah, especially, you had a hard time growing up, you know, so you don't want that to happen to your kids," I blurted out, and instantly felt like maybe I shouldn't have said that, but he confirmed my suspicions. "Exactly . . . and I wouldn't let the same thing happen to them," he solemnly swore.

**Aloha—what it is, what it is not.** "What does Aloha mean to you?" I asked, changing the subject. Besides briefly describing his thought about Aloha, Paka went on about what Aloha *is not*:

Aloha is love . . . to me, anyway. You know, just sharing everything, with everybody . . . and hopefully you can get that same thing back. The one thing I gotta say about that is, when I came up here, like the first maybe couple of weeks, being myself from Hawai'i, was a shocker.

"How so?" I asked.

'Cuz they're not the same way. It's totally different. Everything is . . . I don't think it's because they mean . . . it's just that the pace of life here is quicker. You stand still, you can get run over! You gotta keep moving. You gotta "up" with everybody, and sometimes I feel . . . like people's token.

For clarification, I asked, "Token? What does that mean to you?"

I don't like to be (thought of as) peoples' token. They, you know, you get a bunch of friends that (make fun by imitating how we speak Pidgin) "Oh yeah," he demonstrates, "We gonna go . . . you know dat Hawaiian local guy's house." And they use that (fake accent) and they talk to me and they expect me to talk like . . . Pidgin . . . they ask me, "Oh, Brah, speaking pidgin you know?" It's like, "Pshhh, dude . . ." Paka said shaking his head dejectedly. "That's . . . I don't know, maybe I'm taking it a bit too personally."

“I don’t think so.” I responded. Nobody likes to be made fun of over and over again about the way we talk in our comfort zone, even if it’s in playful jest. He responded, “I just don’t like . . . don’t like being *like that*. I’m just trying to be . . . I guess, like everybody else over here. You know what I’m saying? I don’t like being anybody’s token.” “Like, you want to be your own self?” I asked. Pat looked at me solemnly, and said quietly, “I wanna be my own self (Hawaiian; a local boy), but I don’t wanna be known as *that*.” I think by “token” he means being identified as the “token local Hawaiian,” “other,” or perhaps, being perceived as lazy, or not smart enough to speak good English. This conversation was interesting, because Paka is so easy-going and laid-back, and I’d never seen him get upset before.

I tried to change the subject again. “So did you feel like you had to give something up, just to fit in?” “Uh, yeah,” he responded, “I had to learn to speak . . . proper English!” We both laughed as he made light of the situation, because we know intimately what a put-down feels like. Not good, especially after extending Aloha, inviting friends to our *hale* (home; homes) to share a home-cooked meal, drinks, and authentic conversations, and then these same friends have the audacity to remind us—by mocking, ever so subtly—that we are different, that we don’t fit in because we aren’t from here. Keiki ‘o ka ‘āina are taught at an early age to be giving and welcoming, to be *‘olu’olu* (pleasant at all times), to extend Aloha, even to strangers. Making fun of people’s accents or how they speak is not how we treat our millions of visitors to Hawai‘i, yet that is exactly how we had been treated by adults who should know better, here.

“But it still slips out!” he laughed. “I know!” I chimed in, “Sometimes you cannot help, you know? You cannot help.” Especially when you are with ‘ohana, friends, and other Hawaiians, *‘ōlelo pa‘i‘ai* (Pidgin English, sprinkled with Hawaiian words) slips out, like now when Paka and I wala‘au. “And then,” I said, “I remember (when I first came to the mainland) I

had to . . . like, I didn't even know I had an accent, you know what I mean?" He opened his eyes wide and agreed, "We don't know! 'Cuz dat sounds normal to us! That's the thing, I kind of feel like I was a source of amusement, I mean, didn't you feel like that sometimes?" I agreed.

Paka and I made a conscious effort to speak proper English around the non-locals we met here, the people we had developed relationships with and come to love because we couldn't trust the outcome of a situation. We avoided speaking Pidgin, even Hawaiian words so that we could blend in, inconspicuously. When we didn't possess the words to express ourselves, we chose not to speak. For myself, I rarely spoke up in class because I didn't want to be thought of as a "dumb Hawaiian." It was just easier that way . . . until I found my voice through higher education. Paka said, "So I wouldn't speak too much Pidgin around people. Some of my friends would come up to me and (start trying to) speak Pidgin and I'd be like "pshhh." I commented, "Not even *good Pidgin*, right?!" We both laughed again.

I asked if he had any other difficulties adjusting to the mainland or fitting in, and that's when he said:

Oh, always get homesick. That's why I go to the ocean a lot. That's my sanctuary. Like, her (Leinani's) sanctuary is the hālau, and I would never take that away from my wife at all . . . at the time I was dancing I loved it . . . and I still do, but it's not my thing right now.

**Responsibility.** In order to provide for the family, Paka wakes up at 3:30 am, drives nearly 100 miles to work in Los Angeles . . . and then another hundred miles home. I asked if it was hard to show Aloha at work, and he said, "Oh yeah. In downtown LA? Where I work, it's not a happy place. The people—they're pissed off! Have you ever worked in L.A.?" he asked. I shook my head.

You don't want to. Everything is so fast paced, everybody doesn't like, give a rip about each other. Which is kind of (sigh), I hate to say it, but it rolls down onto you. And if you work there long enough you almost have that same attitude, which I don't like,

‘cause that’s not me. That’s not me at all. I get really stressed out . . . and I gotta be like them. I cannot show kindness. ‘Cuz if you do, it’s like “What’s up with this guy?!” You know? “This guy’s weird!” Yeah, (my job) it’s taxing . . . stressful.”

Stressful as it is, he feels fortunate to have his job, because he’s able to provide for his family. “Yeah,” Paka sighed. “It’s a very good job. It pays very well.” This job however, asks of him to be on call every eight days, which is hard because he can’t plan time to spend with the ‘ohana. “I did that just to help out,” he said, “but I really don’t wanna be on call. I don’t want the money. I don’t even care about the (extra) money.”

Then I asked him, “Do you consider yourself a local? Here, there, anywhere?” His response surprised me. “Back home, yeah. Here? No.” “How come?” I just had to know.

Um, I’ve lived here for 16 years, and I . . . I mean, it’s hard to say. I still feel like a stranger in this town . . . It’s nothing to do with how I don’t like things, or like people, not at all. It’s just that I feel like a stranger . . . still yet, after this long. Life is just different.”

I asked what it would take to move back, if he could imagine possibly moving back.

I would work the same trade that I do now, and it feels guaranteed that I could hold that job until I retire, and finish, you know, my life of working, and no problem. I’d go back home. I think (Leinani) would, but the boys would have to go to private school.

I nodded, and then asked, “You ever think about maybe it could happen?” He laughed and responded with, “Sure, if I win the lottery!” I wondered if he and Leinani ever thought about applying to Kamehameha Schools to see if even one of their keiki could possibly get in.

**Sins of the fathers.** I mentioned the Kamehameha Schools and their summer Explorations Program where Native Hawaiian children from all over the nation get introduced to their culture and immersed in Hawaiian language and culture in a positive nurturing environment. During the week-long course, the learning experience changes these children’s lives; they begin to truly appreciate being Hawaiian. Paka looked at me in disbelief. “You’re kidding,” he said. “Well actually I heard of it, but I didn’t know my kids could go there.” I

assured him that they could get accepted to the program—so many of my nieces and nephews did, even the ones who live in Nevada, “They make friends, they stay in dorms, the kids are well feed, everything ... and it’s very affordable, too! All you have to do is apply during the open enrollment period, and show proof of being Hawaiian.” “How do you do that?” Paka asked. “Easy!” I said. “You show proof of *koko*—blood—on their birth certificates.”

Paka got quiet again, poured himself another glass of red wine and took a long sip. He looked down, didn’t say anything for a long time, and then looked up at me with those sad, soulful eyes that seemed to be a hundred years old, and said, “Well, that’s where we might have a problem.” “What do you mean?” I asked, still enthralled by the idea that his kids would be going to Kamehameha’s Explorations programs in Hawai‘i in just a few of years. That’s when he told me that his Filipino grandfather was upset with his Hawaiian wife for leaving the family. When Papa re-married, he refused to acknowledge that his children had any Hawaiian blood, so then Paka, the grandchild, cannot prove that he has *koko*, or even that his children do too. It is a kind of “Filipino Pride” or so I am told by close friends of Filipino ancestry, where they refuse to acknowledge that their children have ancestry from another race. It is a kind of ethnic pride that continues, and is extremely costly in terms of future opportunities. Paka’s brothers’ and his children’s birth certificates don’t show *koko maoli*; because Grandpa refused to acknowledge his ex-wife’s Hawaiian heritage, that will cost them the opportunity to take advantage of the gifts of Princess Pauahi’s legacy. There will be no way to recapture the information of ethnic heritage—except through stories, and maybe blood tests—but even that wouldn’t be enough to offer your kids a chance to be accepted into Kamehameha.

**Conclusion.** I learned so much from our talk story interview. You cannot possibly know what a dislocated Hawaiian might be working through on the mainland, until you ask. Paka told



me, “I know how lucky I am. I mean, I know I have it good. I get my wife, I get my kids, I got a good job. Sometimes I get scared . . . all this could go away.” His sentiment reminds me why this study is so important. We cannot forget who we are as a people . . . where we come from, and how hard we’ve worked to prosper.

### **Kalani**



*Figure 4.3. Kalani.* Printed with permission from Welmoet Glover, Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

“Iesu Me ke Kanaka Wai Wai”

lyrics by John Almeida © 1971

[http://www.huapala.org/Ia/Iesu\\_Me\\_Ke\\_Kanaka.html](http://www.huapala.org/Ia/Iesu_Me_Ke_Kanaka.html)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hfm\\_9gLKS\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hfm_9gLKS_4)

**Kamehameha Schools.** Each year, thousands of Native Hawaiian youth from Hawai‘i and around the nation submit applications in hopes of being admitted to the Kamehameha Schools (KS).

Kamehameha's policy on admissions is to give preference to applicants of Hawaiian ancestry to the extent permitted by law. The application process requires parents to fill out extensive paperwork in a timely manner, including the submission of report cards, school transcripts and official birth certificates of the applicants, their parents and their grandparents as well, proving that the applicant has koko Kanaka Maoli. Once the thousands of applications are received and sorted, the elaborate selection process begins. Applicants are scheduled for standardized testing in reading, writing, and math, and required to meet with a Kamehameha teacher or administrator for a personal interview.

Major entrance points are kindergarten and grades 4, 7, and 9 at the Kapālama Campus, The Admissions Department receives approximately 1,350 kindergarten applications for just 80 openings each year; 1,000 fourth grade applications for 64 new spaces, and 1,200 seventh grade applications each year for the Kapālama (O'ahu) Campus alone. Admission to Kamehameha is highly selective and very competitive due to the large number of applicants. Kamehameha School students and graduates have been described as "bright" and "well-rounded," highly intelligent, verbally adept, imaginative, and have "good potential."

Kindergarteners at Kamehameha are considered to be the luckiest of all, receiving 13 years of world-class schooling at a fraction of the cost; these students are known as "13-year seniors." Extremely limited vacancies are available for grades 10, 11 and 12, and usually none for grade 8. Students who are accepted without an available space have their names placed on a waitlist and often wait in vain, hoping that one day, a very precious space becomes available.

In 1977, my mother completed and sent in a KS grade 7 application for me. In those days, most of us didn't know how hard our parents worked to try to get us into Kamehameha, or how fortunate we were to get accepted. Besides submitting application materials and official

birth certificates, some parents took several sick days at work to ensure that their children arrived at their multiple testing sites and interviews on time. We were just kids; my memory of the ordeal was that we did what was required, exactly what they told us to do—behave, spend the day taking test after test (no complaining!) and entertain the interviews. Although the process as exhausting for all parties involved, thoughts of a promising future was really exciting, and definitely well worth the effort when parents rejoiced after reading those acceptance letters.

The 200th year anniversary commemorating Captain James Cook’s arrival to the Sandwich Isles was observed in 1978, as I completed my first year at Kamehameha. That year like any other, hundreds of 13 year-old Hawaiian youth had applied to Kamehameha; several had actually been accepted to the 8th grade, but there was no room for them because the classes were already filled to capacity with bright young students. KS procedure placed these applicants’ names on a waitlist of students hoping to one day attend Kamehameha and graduate in 1983. Before the start of the 1978–1979 school year, one of our classmates dropped out, and a lottery was drawn from the waitlisted children’s names.

**Kamehameha Schools change lives.** I had arrived the year prior, along with the masses of new 7th grade students, but the following year, only one 8th grade student in the entire state was newly selected and planted into the KS Intermediate Division school system. That’s when I first met Warren, in 1978. He describes himself as, “One very lucky kid from Kaneohe who was chosen to attend Kamehameha in the 8th grade.”

At the time, he was attending an intermediate school in Kaneohe where there was a lot of hostility and gang fights. “So, I spend 7th grade there pretty much ducking and dodging a lot of the hostilities.” It was safer to hang out with his sister who was a year older, and took him under her wing. Her friends soon became his friends; they hung out and played ukulele together.

“That was one way to stay out of trouble. You know, during your free time play ukulele, sing, and keep the music alive,” he said.

So when he got accepted to Kamehameha in the 8th grade, it truly was a miracle. His parents’ and grandparents’ prayers were answered, and Warren was ready for a fresh start. They all screamed in disbelief, jumping up and down as they read the incredible news that their son had won the KS lottery. From that day forward, his life would be changed forever.

Although Warren and I went to the same school, we didn’t know each other all that well. Perhaps one reason is that he lived in Kaneohe, and I lived on the east side of Honolulu. Kamehameha has a fleet of busses that bring students of all ages from different parts of O‘ahu to school and back home. After school, he caught the Kailua / Kaneohe bus that headed over the Pali right after school, while my father dropped us off at the KS terminal at the bottom of Kapālama Heights every morning and picked us up at the gym on his way home from work. Warren played in band while I joined the swim team. We didn’t play the same sports or have any classes together, but I knew of him because his cousin Roger and I were in the same homeroom, and had the same advisor, Mr. Kahiwa, all through high school.

**High school days.** Warren was quick to smile. He was what we in Hawai‘i call “Mr. Aloha”—someone who was friendly with anyone he came in contact with. He had the reputation of being outgoing yet sensitive, wickedly smart, mischievous, and very funny. Warren played drums in the marching band and was elected to the student council as our class vice president in 10th grade. Our senior year, he continued in our school’s ROTC program as an elective and just loved it! The ROTC served him well because after graduation, he joined the Army Reserve, and through a State program, he was awarded a grant to help pay for his college tuition.

Warren could have easily won a popularity contest with all the friends he collected in such diverse social groups including the athletes, the drama enthusiasts, the scholars, the boarders, the concert glee singers, and the surfers. He was talented, too. In high school, he could imitate just about anyone—the way a person walked and talked almost exactly—he even had their personal mannerisms down. Warren and his buddies used to park themselves on a bench by the Frank E. Midkiff Learning Center and hang out on the breezeway. As students walked in and out of the library, he enjoyed making them laugh by cracking jokes and also by impersonating a classmate, a favorite (or least favorite) teacher, and perhaps some famous local comedian. He'd go from acting like a wild, angry teenage basketball player who was trying to provoke a fight, to pretending to reprimand a misbehaved student, like our 8th grade principal Ms. Lord who spoke perfect, proper English, to impersonating a loud drunken local guy, complete with a thick Pidgin' accent—all within in the same sentence. I was secretly terrified that one day he might imitate me! Thank God that never happened. I like to think I just wasn't that interesting of a character back then; truth be told, Warren was intuitive enough to know who he could flatter and who would be devastated.

**Alumni.** After graduation in 1983, we connected briefly at our 20-year class reunion, and again, five years later at our 25th, where I met his beautiful wife Lei who has a genuine, sweet personality, and is also very *akamai* (smart, clever). I learned they had two young keiki, and their 'ohana was also living in Southern California at this time. Although we exchanged contact information, it wasn't until 2010 that we actually got a chance to connect, a connection facilitated by social media.

Warren sent me a note in June 2012. He and our 1983 classmates were preparing and hosting a luau later that day for the class of 1982. This is one of those wonderful traditions of

service that our school continues to perpetuate for its alumni to foster a sense of community and KS Warrior pride. The following year when our class was honored for our 30th class reunion, the class of 1984 prepared and hosted our luau. Warren wrote to me June 8, 2012 from the Kamehameha Kapālama Campus, where our classmates were working and where the lu‘au would be held:

CAMI!! ALOOOOOHA! I am so glad to hear from you, I am in Hawai‘i helping with alumni weekend lu‘au—too much fun! We have a whole group of ONP ‘83 here working away : ) I am happy to have your email and Skype address. We can wala‘au piha! We miss you. I will let the gang know we touched base. I will email you my cell, call or text me anytime! If you want to call while I am here with the crew, I will pass the phone from person to person so you guys can connect : ) We were just missing you last night as we thumbed through Kana‘i Aupuni 1983. Duty calls my dear . . . gotta go to Akahi and make lomi (I think). Love and Aloha to your ‘ohana from all of us—Love you girl, talk to you soon, Warren



*Figure 4.4.* Lu‘au Prep. KS alumni 1985 preparing for the alumni lu‘au. Photo courtesy of Allen Hanaike and Baba Akiona, KS 1985; from the Wengler / Akiona ‘Ohana album.

I imagine his note might seem cryptic to anyone outside our immediate circle since it is full of Pidgin, Hawaiian words, and acronyms familiar only to our 1983 classmates (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Translation of Emails Written in Pidgin, Hawaiin Words, and Acronyms

<u>He writes:</u>	<u>Translation:</u>
<p>CAMI!! <b>ALOOOOOHA!</b> I am so glad to hear from you, I am in Hawai'i helping with alumni weekend luau—too much fun!</p>	<p>“CAMI!! ALOOOOOHA!” What a hearty greeting of friendship and love . . . not just “Aloha,” but “<b>ALOOOOOHA!</b>”</p>
<p>We have a whole group of <b>ONP '83</b> here working away ; ) I am happy to have your email and Skype address.</p>	<p>Many classmates are there working and having fun. “<b>ONP '83</b>” is an acronym for two of our 1983 class mottos: <b>O Na Po'okela</b> which means “the chosen ones” and ‘<b>Onipa'a</b>, which means “be steadfast, resolute, firm and determined.” ‘<b>E 'Onipa'a Kakou</b> was Queen Lili'uokalani's personal motto, when in 1895 she was held captive, wrongfully imprisoned in her own castle for eight months.</p>
<p>We can <b>wala'au piha!</b> We miss you. I will let the gang know we touched base. I will email you my cell, call or text me anytime! If you want to call while I am here with the crew, I will pass the phone from person to person so you guys can connect : ) We were just missing you last night as we thumbed through <b>Kana'i Aupuni</b> 1983.</p>	<p>“<b>Wala'au piha</b>” means, “We can talk plenty, fully, until we cannot talk anymore!”</p> <p>“<b>Kana'i Aupuni</b>” means “conqueror of a nation;” it is the name given to King Kamehameha, and is also the name of our KS year book.</p>
<p>Duty calls my dear . . . gotta go to <b>Akahi</b> and <b>make lomi</b> (I think).</p>	<p>“<b>Akahi</b>” means the number “one,” it is the name of the dining room.</p>
<p>Love and Aloha to your 'ohana from all of us—Love you girl, talk to you soon, Warren</p>	<p>“<b>lomi</b>” means to massage. He is not going to “make a massage,” rather he is creating “<b>lomi lomi salmon</b>,” a Hawaiian dish made by “lomi” or gently massaging fresh salmon with Hawaiian sea salt.</p>

**Reunion in Southern California.** Over the course of a year we conversed through email. I finally connected with him on the phone, told him about my project, and he wholeheartedly agreed to help me in any way that he could. Warren invited me to visit him at his 'ohana's new home in Newport Beach, which is located a block from the beach; they had just moved there several months ago. The timing was perfect since I had to attend a convention in Los Angeles that weekend. The drive to get there took about two and a half hours, mostly freeway miles. They live on a cul-de-sac in a newly built townhouse beach community. The streets are kept very clean, lined with tall palm trees, well-manicured hedges, and bright magenta

and violet colored bougainvillea bushes; a refreshing breeze blows in from the ocean, even on the hottest of days like today. I parked my car and walked toward their house. “Hooooey! Eh, Hawaiian! Alooooooha!” He called out. I hadn’t seen Warren in ten years, and there he was, standing on the porch with his big smile grinning ear to ear. We hugged for a long time, and I felt a little tear fall from the corner of my eye. I took a step back to take a good look at my old classmate from way-back-when. “The years have been kind to him,” I thought as he stood there in a black Hawaiian tank top, all tan, and his long, wet black hair glistening in the sun, and kind, soft brown eyes that flashed the tiniest bit of *kolohe* (mischievousness).

‘*Ohana*. “*E komo mai!* Come, come . . . come inside! Everybody, hurry, hurry! Come say hi to Aunty!” He waved me in, where I was greeted with hugs and kisses by Lei, his son Josh, daughter Nalani, and vibrant little four-year old grandson Kuponu who, on the command of, “give *honi* (kiss) to Aunty,” cocked his head sideways and smiled impishly. We all waited in anticipation to see what this kid would do when suddenly, he giggled hysterically, ran up to me and planted a big fat wet kiss right on my lips! “What a sweet greeting! It’s as if we were in Hawai‘i visiting family,” I thought, as the ‘ohana took me on a tour of their spacious two-story home that they’d recently purchased, painted, and remodeled. I admired the high ceilings, neutral colors, soft lights, tasteful décor, and native artwork that was carefully chosen and placed in each room.

I was completely surprised to find out Warren and Lei had planned a small lu‘au for me! He thought it would be nice for all of us to enjoy a meal together while his kids were visiting that afternoon . . . and what better way than through homemade Hawaiian food. They had prepared steaming hot laulus, lomilomi salmon, taro, rice, and even poi . . . but before we could eat, Warren asked his grandson to say grace and bless the food. We held hands, bowed our heads as



the little one recited a very simple yet lovely blessing; we all responded in unison with a solemn “Amen.”



*Figure 4.5.* Ono Hawaiian food. Retrieved from: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lfl/522936825/in/photostream/>  
Used under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>)

I felt at ease the minute I’d stepped into their hale, and even more so as we ate, laughed, and talked story about whatever happened to come up. It was fun to hear that each member of this family plays the ukulele (besides several other musical instruments) and loves to sing. I imagine how much fun it must be to hear them play together.

Partaking of this home-cooked Hawaiian meal prepared with loving hands and joining with these local people was truly a lovely, spiritual experience for me. How can I describe it? In one word: Divine. Hawaiian music playing softly in the background as the conversations flowed easily and effortlessly, it suddenly dawned on me that this was a practicing Christian family, and that in this ‘ohana, the members genuinely cared for one another and worked on nurturing their relationships with each other. They must have been through a lot together, I thought, probably pulled through numerous hardships, and celebrated many good times over the years. The evidence was in the harmonious, respectful communication with one another that I witnessed, void of drama and individuals acting out that many families experience around a meal, especially

when hosting a guest. There wasn't that weird tension that sometimes develops around the dinner table when families host guests and the kids are expected to be on their best behavior, because the parents are trying to impress the outsider with their cooking or parenting skills. I wondered if this family practices *ho'oponopono*<sup>3</sup> (ancient Hawaiian practice of reconciliation). Whatever the case may be, my impression is that this 'ohana's work together produces a trusting, high functioning, and loving family system that most families dream of enjoying.

Their son studies Business Administration at a local community college and works full-time as a supervisor with a retail branch of a mobile communications company. Handsome, charming, and quick to smile, this young man presents as confident, intelligent and caring—all positive traits that have proven to serve him well in sales. Their daughter's sweet personality and positive outlook on life sparkles when she talks; she is petite, well-manicured, sensitive, and stunningly beautiful, just like her mother. She showed me some of her paintings, hand sketches, drawings and computer artwork—what a treat that was! I concluded that soft-spoken blooming artist has been given many gifts by Our Creator, including a big heart and an eye for color and design. She has been working as her father's office assistant. Both adult children have moved into their own apartments, yet enjoy coming home on the weekends to visit their parents.

Our talk story interview took place in a spare bedroom they call the “refugee room.” “Why?” I asked, wondering why anyone would call their lovely, unoccupied bedroom a “refugee room.” “Because the refugees stay there!” he exclaimed. “We have plenty room for anybody who comes to visit, and if somebody needs a place to stay for a little while, they can.”

Warren wasn't kidding. Besides an occasional overnight visit from relatives and friends, this

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<sup>3</sup> *Ho'oponopono* is described as “mental cleansing” that occurs during family conferences in which relationships are set right through prayer, discussion, confession, repentance, and forgiveness. *Ho'o* is a particle used to make an actualizing verb from the noun it follows . . . *Ponopono* means “to put to rights; to put in order or shape, correct, revise, adjust, amend, regulate, arrange, rectify, tidy up, make orderly or neat.” (Pukui, 1958)

*kahu* (pastor, minister, reverend) believes that it is his duty to take in the “lost ones” from time to time; sometimes that means putting people he barely knows, up for a short time until things at home calm down, or the tides turn, and unbearable situations change.



Figure 4.6. Kalani’s ‘Ohana. Courtesy of the Badua ‘Ohana Album.

**Background.** Warren was born in Hilo to a working class family. When the keiki were old enough to go to school, his mother worked as a waitress, and after work, fulfilled her duties as a homemaker. “She waited tables until we graduated. In 1982 she pursued a dream that she had held for many years—attending college for the first time, at the age of 41,” he said in amazement. She graduated from Chaminade University, and today teaches Hawaiian Cultures, Social Studies, Beginning and Advanced Ukulele at a private high school in Hawai‘i. His father worked for the Hawaiian Telephone Company, for as long as they could remember. “He did not take a management position until after I graduated high school,” he recalled, “so both my parents were very, very committed to staying home and available for us.

The grandfather on his father’s side emigrated from the Philippines to Hawai‘i around 1920 to work as a laborer in the sugar cane fields. His grandmother was Puerto Rican, very fair, with European features, so Warren’s father is a first-generation American with mixed ethnicities of European, Puerto-Rican, and Filipino. “My mother’s side is all Hawaiian. My grandfather

Daniel Kaeo, Jr. was one of the last pure Hawaiian men left living; he worked for the State of Hawai‘i in the auditor’s office. My grandmother was Hawaiian and just a smidgeon of Chinese.” She attended a flower shop in Kapahulu, on O‘ahu.

We are *maka‘āinana* (Commoner; literally, people that attend the land). I know everybody’s related to somebody king somewhere. I’m not. I’m *maka‘āinana Kanaka Maoli*. My ancestors on my mother’s side, my *kūpuna kahiko* were physicians, and *kahuna lapa‘au*, herbalists. They learned their craft and served both the *maka‘āinana* and the royalty. Obviously, you know, sickness doesn’t make distinctions between the two.

I discovered that his mother’s great grandmother lived in the ‘Iolani Palace and worked as an attendant to Princess Ka‘iulani and other royal children. “My ‘ohana was taken in by the ali‘i (chiefs), raised in royal home, and served them,” he reported. It turns out that Kalani is also from a long line of healers. “I remember my mother told me that Papa Pu‘uohau had a book that he had transcribed much of his work in—healing, herbs, plants, those sorts of things.”

Apparently Papa had created a secluded place under the house where he researched, studied natural herbal remedies, and kept his notes. Sadly, a tidal wave that hit Hilo in the 1940s washed most of his work away. “Shucks,” I said, “a lot of secrets gone, huh?” He nodded sadly, “A lot of ancient stuff. My niece in Hawai‘i, however, is now a doctor of pharmaceutical medicine, so interestingly enough, she has literally carried on a modern-day practice of the ancients, she is a modern day *kahuna lapa‘au* (medical priest or practitioner).”

His father’s family is from old-town Kohala, located in the north-western region on the Big Island of Hawai‘i. Kalani was born in Hilo, Hawai‘i; in 1967 the ‘ohana moved to Kaneohe, O‘ahu to be closer proximity to their mom’s family for support. “Um . . . are they still around? Your parents, I mean,” asking gently, not knowing what his reaction would be, since I had recently lost my birth mother. “Yes, they are. They’ve been married 51 years,” he replied matter-of-factly, “Yeah. You can tell they’ve been married 51 years. They grumble about everything! Lalalalalalala!!! It must be 51 years because you know they’re so used to one

another, they can grumble and it's not the end of the world." "That's amazing!" I marveled in disbelief, and we both laughed, knowing what it is like to be married to the same person, but only for about half that time. A happy couple like Kalani and Lei who have been married for over 20 years, make being in a long-term intimate relationship look so easy. I thought about strong family values, sacrifice, and how few couples today are able to stick to their vows when the going gets rough . . . and how his parents were good role models in terms of sticking it out through thick and thin. "Panini Pua Kea" (White Cactus Flower) sung by IZ Kamakawiwo'ole comes to mind, when he ends the *mele* (song, tune) with "Song for a favorite flower—can't live with 'um, can't live without 'um."

"Panini Pua Kea"

Words and music by John Almeida

Translated by Mary Kawena Pukui

[http://www.huapala.org/Pa/Panini\\_Pua\\_Kea.html](http://www.huapala.org/Pa/Panini_Pua_Kea.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIcYdJxxfDA>

***'O wai kou inoa? The importance of your name.*** "Tell me about your name," I asked, officially starting the interview. "Ok," he said with a gleam in his eye, "My first name is Warren. That's my tax name, English name. Warren!" We both laughed. "Everybody at Kamehameha called me Warren, but these days, everybody knows me as Kalani." "Yeah, everybody except me," I thought, feeling self-conscious that I had been calling him "Warren" the entire time. From now on, I have to try to remember that his name is Kalani, even though for the past 30 years it was "Warren." All of a sudden he got serious. "My given name is Warren Kalani-kau-Kahu-o-kawai . . . Warren Kalanikau Kahu'okawai 'Ainahau Pu'uohau." I repeated and fumbled miserably, clumsily trying to memorize and pronounce the string of Hawaiian syllables, while he patiently corrected me. Several tries later, I pronounced his name perfectly.

The name ‘Ainahau Pu‘uohau was given to me two years ago by my mother, as an additive, it’s not on my birth certificate. She gave it to me as a gift, my mom did, because Papa (Grandfather) was a kahu as well. So, she said, “Well, I’m going to give to you your papa’s name because you have the same calling.”

**My life belongs to God.** Kalani then told me the incredible story of his birth, and later how he was called to be a kahu. In 1964, his mother delivered his older sister via Caesarian section delivery. The doctor advised that in order to complete her recovery, she needed at least two to three years of rest before conceiving a second child.

So when Mama got *hāpai* (pregnant) with me, the doctor told her, “It’s too soon, it’s too soon. I don’t think you’re going to be able to carry this baby full term. If you cannot, then you’re going to lose the baby. You have to be prepared to lose this one, this baby.” “Shucks,” I said, shaking my head, not knowing what else to say.

I know. So, at the time my parents lived on Moho‘uli Street in the city of Hilo. My father was in school, studying at UH Hilo, and working. He was working the day the doctor told my mother about the danger of carrying me full term. When she returned home, instead of going inside, she sat on the porch crying. Here is this young 23 year old mother and wife carrying her second child, knowing the baby’s life was in danger, and quite possibly her own. I cannot imagine that kind of desperation.

So she did what her grandfather, ‘Ainahau Pu‘uohau had taught her at a very young age: when you don’t know what to do, pray. In that moment of heartbreak, she said, “Ke Akua, if you allow me to carry my baby full term, if you give this baby to me, then I will give him completely back to you the rest of his life—for his whole life.”

He suddenly burst out laughing, “And here I am! I was carried to term and I was *huge!* No complications, none whatsoever. My mother knew that the Lord had heard her, and had answered her prayer . . . She knew and was very, very thankful.” His story fast forwards 20 years:

In April of 1985, I gave my life to Jesus and became a born again Christian. By August of that same year, I felt the Lord calling me to California to begin Divinity School. I told my family that I was going to be leaving Hawai‘i at the end of the summer to begin fall classes at Bible school.

There was intense resistance from his father and older sister, but surprisingly, his mother said nothing. While enjoying a quiet breakfast together one morning, the mother looked her son

in the eyes, and solemnly spoke. “You need to go,” she insisted. “If you are being called by Ke Akua (God; Our Creator), you have to answer. You must.” “She was amazingly supportive,” he recalls, “But there was a kind of sadness there as well.”

When I finally did leave home it was September 7, 1985. I spent that morning with my mother at Hawaiian Memorial Park, where my grandparents are buried. It’s a sanctuary for Mom and I—I would go there often, sit quietly and just listen to the wind, and look up at the Ko‘olau Mountains . . . It is my place of peace and connection with my kūpuna.

That morning she told me the story of my birth. I’ll never forget how the tears ran down her face in the telling of it. She was strong in her mo‘olelo (story, tale) because by revealing it, she was fulfilling her side of the covenant between her and God. It was a covenant of love between them, and it was that covenant that gave me my life. “I knew this day would come,” she told me when she finished. “I knew this day would come, I just didn’t think it would come this soon. You know?” And so we cried.

He wrapped this part of the story up by coming full-circle, emphasizing the reverence he has for the gift of his name. I am reminded of this particular ‘ōlelo no‘eau (ancient Hawaiian proverb): “Even more precious than each man’s personal possessions, his name” (Pukui, 1972, p. 94). “My name was given to me by Aunty Emma DeFries (well-known Hawaiian kupuna (elder), poet, cultural and spiritual counselor): Kalanikau Kahu‘okawai ‘Ainahau Pu‘uohau. Kalanikau Kahu‘o Kawai means “Great Chief and Guardian of the Water,” he told me, and elaborated with this powerful analogy:

Jesus said, “I am the water of life,” and I hope that in my lifetime I’ll fulfill the task of guarding, providing, and gifting the water of Scripture—the water of life to those that I come in contact with as a kahu.

“That’s amazing,” I whispered, because I didn’t know what else to say. Mostly, I was amazed because I didn’t know my friend was so in-touch with The Divine. He surely wasn’t like that in high school. Kalani laughed and broke the tension by saying:

Yeah, I don’t feel amazing! I’m just me. Giving the scripture and touching people at their source, at their *hā* is what I love. (*Hā* means breath or life, to breathe life into.) I would rather move into a broken person’s life *spiritually* to the place in the heart where I can touch someone at their *hā*. That is where it counts.

I asked, “How did you know that was going to be your calling, to be a kahu?” “I didn’t,” he responded shaking his head. “Really?” I inquired in disbelief. “I had no clue,” he said. “I didn’t go to church very often at all. We weren’t raised as Christians, we weren’t raised as Catholics, we weren’t raised as Mormons. We were just raised to pray.”

**Transformation.** Then he begins to tell the second half of the story. The first half was about being given the gift of life in 1965, and skips 20 years forward to being called to study Divinity. Part Two is just as fascinating. Kalani takes us back to April, 1985 and describes how he transformed into a servant of God. The transformation actually occurred on the mainland, in Santa Barbara, California. “When I was 20 years old I became a born again Christian, a Believer. I was in this place in California where the fog rolls in at 11 o’clock in the morning ...”

He was a feisty local boy on his second visit to the mainland. His girlfriend (now wife) Lei asked him to come and visit, so he scrimped and saved and bought a ticket to California in April 1985:

We spent the night hanging out with some of her new “churchy” friends and we’d gone to a bible study—that was new to me. I was in the throes of the eighties dance scene; I had long hair, hip clothes, and a bad attitude. I was willing to fake being a good “church guy” for a while if it would win me audience with her. Besides, I was gunning for a chance to win her back from her new love: His name was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. So I was 20 at the time, sitting at a campfire Bible study and paying zero attention. I was looking at Lei; she was the love of my life. When it was over, I was ready to leave. I wasn’t comfortable with all the smiles, the hugs, the guitar playing and songs that made everyone else’s eyes close and their hands go up in the air. I just wanted to get Lei out of there so I could have her to myself. It’s not like I had all kinds of time, and the plane ticket wasn’t cheap! I wanted all the bang I could get for my hard earned buck. I began walking toward the car, thinking it was enough of a cue for Lei to follow.

A 16-year old young man named Ruben interrupted my quiet escape. He was a new friend, one that I had made through Lei. Ruben approached me and asked me if I was a Christian and if I thought I would go to heaven someday. “Of course,” I said. He was undeterred. Ruben was on a mission, he was sent to help me understand Christ, and the he was sent by the King Himself. I was stuck! For the next three hours, he stood under a street lamp with me, asking me questions about what I thought I knew about God and Scripture. I didn’t know much, so I just made up answers as I went along. He began to



turn in his bible and share with me what God had to say about life and love and Heaven and Hell and people and eternal life.

As a voracious academic, I began to notice that he was actually USING his Bible in a manner that showed that he was a well-studied intellectual. Throughout our entire conversation he kept turning to different places in the Bible and reading Scriptures to me. As he began to read God's word *academically* to me, things began to blossom inside of me, and I knew that God's word and His love was what I wanted. But I didn't "close the deal" with God that night, I left without making a commitment to Christ.

"The following day Lei and I were with that same group of friends, and I started picking a fight with her because I was kind of a jerk, you know, and kolohe," he laughs. "No, no, not you!" I countered smiling and shaking my head, as I remembered what he was like in high school. "Come on!"

So she pulled the car over and she said, "You need to go for a walk!" I said, "Fine, drop me off!" I jumped out, slammed the car door and took off walking, steaming the whole time. After a time, I saw this church; it had a huge front door and a church yard.

I peeked in but didn't want to intrude so I kept walking—through the churchyard, crossed the street and found myself in a beautiful park. I found a little bench in a quiet area, and I sat down, stewing about my side of the argument. In that moment something happened that I had never experienced before . . . the ocean fog rolled in. I was in Santa Barbara.

"No way!" I said in disbelief. It was hard to believe that Kalani was actually remembering and now telling a transformative, critical incident that happened to him 30 years ago, in the town that I now live in. "Uh huh," he nodded. "You're kidding me!" I exclaimed.

I was right there in the park in Santa Barbara. Being from Hawai'i, the fog was a surprise. We don't have fog that rolls in at 11 o'clock in the morning . . . ever. I'm 3,000 miles from home, my girlfriend just dropped me off and drove off, she doesn't know where I am, we're not even from Santa Barbara, we had driven in for the day to go hang out, you know? So I'm like, "Okay, I'm totally lost. I don't know where I am, I can't see anything around me."

I had no bearings, none. I know now that God put in that place, and took all the distractions of what I could see away from me by bringing the fog. So I just sat there. As time passed, I began to grow quieter. Everything that Ruben and I had talked about the previous night came back to me, as though the Lord were laying open my heart. His word became vivid in my mind, only this time I was hearing everything in my spirit, coming from the Great King of Heaven and Earth. HE had come for me and I was captured by His presence there in the mist.

“Holy Moly,” I whispered thinking, “This is a wild story.” He continues:



*Figure 4.7.* Kalani and Lei. Printed with permission from Moet Photography © Copyright 2014.

In that moment I remember saying, “Lord Jesus, if you’re real, make me like them, like Ruben, and the rest of my friends.” I don’t remember falling to my knees, but I do remember getting up, in the coolness of that fog, being absolutely warm, and everything going still. It was as if all of creation stopped because the King of Heaven and Earth had come down from eternity and had shown up at my—at my little place.

And He said, “Ah, Kalani, now you know. I’m here for you.” He touched me then, there and forever. I remember standing . . . and that the fog had lifted. I stayed there for a while not wanting Him to leave; I wanted to stay there for always. I had become brand new as though He had exchanged my old heart for a new one. In Ezekiel, God says “I shall take from you your heart of stone and exchange it for a heart of flesh, and I will put

a new spirit in you.” I was completely brand new; I never looked back from that moment.

I mouthed the words, “That’s beautiful.” That’s when (in his story) he got off the bench, walked around the corner, and lo and behold . . . Lei was sitting right there . . . the entire time.

She had no idea I was there—I had walked blocks and blocks and blocks, and she was parked right there at the park, not far from where I was sitting. I’m thinking, “Whoa, that’s a trip.” She’s like, “Hey!!!” I’m like, “Hey! Guess what? I just gave my life to the Lord. I just . . . I’ve been born again.” And she started crying and I started crying, from that day on I’ve never looked back. I’ve always followed Jesus.

“That’s amazing!” I said. “Yup,” he agreed. “It’s been an amazing ride. That was April 1985.” Upon arriving home from California, Kalani immediately went to the local church and got involved helping with the high school youth group. He joined the Tuesday Night college study, and went to church three times a week. “I read my bible voraciously, never knowing how hungry for the Lord I was until I was filled.” After a while, he realized that all of the pastors, the Teachers of the Word, and those who laid hands on people to pray had all gone to Bible College in California. That’s when he knew he had to go too.

**Moving to the mainland.** Leaving the islands was difficult, but he had a calling—to study Divinity and to join his life with Lei. He attended Azusa Pacific University from 1985–1990, and simultaneously began an internship as a kahu at his first church in Glendora. The internship lasted all four years of college. After graduating, he went to work in Los Angeles in the food industry and continued to be of service to the church by teaching Bible Studies and playing music as a volunteer rather than as a member of the staff.

It was very difficult to sustain a family financially. Lei and I were *hāpai* and Joshy came along; we’re living in Southern California which is just a little bit lower than the cost of living in Hawai‘i, and so I had to make a living. I had worked with Marriott food service through college . . . I also worked in a restaurant, at a grocery store, and I worked at the church . . . all at the same time, to pay my way through school.

“So you had gone back from the mainland to work in Hawai‘i?” I asked.

We got married. I stayed in Los Angeles, and worked for Marriott, and Marriott sent me back to Hawaii in 1993. So I graduated in '90 from APU (Azusa Pacific University), began working, found myself back in Hawai‘i for about 18 months in 1993.

**Family is everything.** During those 18 months in Hawai‘i, the young family moved in with Kalani’s parents, “In one bedroom, all of us, in my parents’ home,” he said. By this time, they had two children and were struggling to make ends meet.

I was what you call a “Trouble-shooter,” a team of Marriott people who goes from place to place to help the division take care of business. So we did that in Hawai‘i, in Redlands, and then they asked me to move on to other universities in other states. I was not able to do that, just too hard on our kids to keep picking up and moving around. I left Marriott in 1996, after 10 years, and moved back to California. We’ve been here ever since.

He landed another position as a sales person that didn’t require traveling; he worked very hard and got promoted quickly. The new job had flexible hours, so Kalani chose to work mostly night shifts in order to spend more time with his children.

I was able to stay with my family. I was working night and day. I like working night shift because I could put my children to bed, go to work, they never even knew Daddy was not home. They’d get up in the morning and I’d already be there, getting them ready with Lei, dropping them off at school, go home and sleep, and right at 2 pm, I’m waking up they get . . . out of school so Daddy’s always there. My dream my whole life was to be a Daddy, and I made as many concessions as I could to make sure that was happening.

**Aloha is the breath of life; Aloha is connecting with one another.** I was really enjoying our interview and suddenly realized I hadn’t even asked about Aloha, even though it was being conveyed from the moment I arrived at their home and throughout his entire story, so I asked, “Kalani, what is Aloha to you, and where did you learn it from?”

Aloha is the breath of life. I see it as that breath that God blew into the first man and woman, into Adam and Eve, in Genesis, Chapters 1 and 2. That’s what I think Aloha is. Aloha is enhanced when we listen . . . to whoever it is that is speaking. It is enhanced when we ask them, “What is your name? ‘O wai kou inoa?” And they say, “My name is Jose, and I’m the busboy here at Ruby’s diner.” “Oh, it’s nice to meet you! I’m Kalani, this is my wife, Lei. This is my son Josh, this is my daughter Nalani, and it’s very nice to meet you. Are you a student?”

So it happens when we wala‘au, when we connect. We ask their name, and then we begin to connect, by listening to them. Because all of a sudden, the cashier at the store is now Jessica, the busboy is Jose; the waitress is Emily. Everybody has an inoa, a name, and everybody is known by who they are in the eyes of Jesus. So that’s the second thing. The third thing is I realize that I will never lock eyes with anyone who is not eternal. Jesus loves them, they are His, and they will be His forever.

So, to me, Aloha is listening, learning a name, and exchanging words; and in some way, touching someone at their hā, whether they know they have a hā or not. (He laughs.) It’s connecting with their purpose—who they are, who they would hope to be, and listening to that . . . and the very last thing is just to encourage them, that’s what Aloha is. I learned it at home, like we all do, from Mom and Dad, you know: take your shoes off, be respectful, respect your elders, don’t use filthy language, those are all parts of Aloha. But my peers at Kamehameha taught me that.

That surprised me. “No kidding!” I said.

Mm hm. I was scared, alone, and lost . . . didn’t know anybody. And then Rhonda Tirrell came up to me. She was my very first friend. Gave me Aloha, asked me who I was, where I was from. Randy Soong came along behind her. Malia Taum, Kalani Tom, Kaniale Baker. (laughs.) You know? Jody Brehm and the rest of the boys; Russell, Roger, my cousin . . . You . . . All of my peers, when I got to Kamehameha were so welcoming. They were so willing to accept me for being this short little skinny scared surfer. Kalani Auwai was also a good friend . . . and they would talk to me about anything. I felt like I had actually come home in some way, even though I was scared to death every day! Every day for the first year I thought I was auditioning. Still.

This really surprised me because in high school and even now, he was so outgoing and friendly . . . but then I remembered that he had such a negative experience being bullied at the intermediate school he attended the year prior. Kalani was incredibly blessed to get in, in the 8th grade, and Kamehameha really did change his life, in so many ways.

“So the foundation (of Aloha), is what I learned from my parents and grandparents,” he continued. “They gave me a basic knowledge of respect. But my peers at Kamehameha showed me what Aloha was . . . they taught me to open my heart.” “Oh, that’s so lovely,” I said. “I do my best!” He laughs. “And you give Aloha in buckets. I don’t think there’s any other way to give Aloha. Give it in buckets. Uncle Duke (Kahanamoku) said, “Greet people with Aloha and watch their reaction, you’ll be pleasantly surprised.”

**Aloha sometimes perceived as weakness.** So then I asked if he ever experienced any negativity in giving so much Aloha here on the mainland where people might not be as receptive as they are in Hawai'i. "One time . . . one person . . . The situation was, I had moved here."

There was one of the friends in our group that didn't really mean to be mean, but he said, "You know, you can't be friendly to everybody, man. You look like you're gay when you're really friendly to all the guys and all the girls. Nobody can tell what you are." I said, "Well, um, ok." "You know, you can't wear your pants this way and you can't wear this Hawaiian bracelet, and you can't do stuff like that." He was very into trying to conform me to what he thought a macho California guy should look like. Simply put, I was almost too friendly and too nice and there's too much Aloha, and it looked too much like a weakness in his culture . . . I was a ready target. So it was difficult.

Eventually, I began to figure out that, I didn't have to really—at first I was like, "Oh, okay. Let me try it your way." I realized that I didn't have to conform to that because I slowly losing that touch with Aloha, you know? I was being less kind, less open. I was some kind of a movie part. Like, "Hey, I'll just talk to you if I'm cool with you." And I didn't fit . . . *it* didn't fit. So we parted ways. Not with hostility, but I said, "You know, I—I'm just gonna move on." And particularly as a Christian, I knew that I needed to continue to just be kind. Whether or not people thought I was straight, gay, weak, strong, it really didn't matter. I had to be who I was. So that was one of the things I ran into. The second thing I think that happened was I realized at one point that I wasn't gonna be getting a lot of Aloha in return.

"RIGHT?!" I couldn't believe we shared the same experience around constantly giving Aloha and not receiving any in return. That feels yucky; I used to think there was something wrong with me, and now I know differently.

"So that was a gradual realization," he said. "At one point I told Lei, this just is not working. I give out all Aloha, you know, I try to be friendly, and everybody—boy, you say good morning 50 times, and you get maybe four good mornings back, and the rest of the time you get these grunts!" he laughs.

So I was very frustrated. Lei said, "You just keep giving Aloha because that's who you are, and it'll all turn itself around." So, those were the two instances and I—I just kind of stuck with it, cuz . . . we're not gonna find a lot of reciprocation. I mean, Aloha doesn't come back to you as quickly here as it does on the island. You know, it's not because the people here are rats or anything, it's just that they don't . . . they don't have it. You have to give Aloha, and then they *learn* how to do it, and they reciprocate it. (He laughs)  
Eventually.

“Beautiful,” I said. “It has to be taught,” he went on, “for us, it’s innate, almost.” “And our parents reinforce it,” I echoed.

Yeah! And then, even my children went from Christian school to public school, they’re like, “Daddy, these kids have no discipline! They don’t listen to the teacher, they need a good spanking or something!” I’m like, “They need to learn to respect their elders.” “How come nobody teaches them that?” I said, “In our house, we do things differently.”

Then I commented, “When you have no more to give, you just go back home, fill your heart up.” He agreed, “You are absolutely right! As soon as I touch home, as soon as the doors open and I smell Honolulu Airport ...” He laughs, “Yeah, I’m refilled.” “Instantly!” I agreed, “Just like that!” “Exactly!” He beamed, “Then you hit the ocean . . . oh boy! That’s how I refill.” “So then,” I asked, “Do you consider Hawaii to be your home? Even today?”

Hawai‘i will always be my home. Yes. My heart, my hā, my *mana‘o* (thoughts), my history, my roots, everything about me is tethered to Hawaii. I don’t use the word anchored because if it were anchored there then I would actually be there physically. I’m tethered there . . . the umbilical cord is always tied to the islands, but I’m free to move from place to place, and...

“Bring your aloha there?” I guessed. “And bring my Aloha there,” he said.

Through my tether to Hawai‘i . . . through my heart . . . I can continue to go throughout the world. So, everything I am is tethered there, and my home is there, but . . . I make a living wherever I am at. Would I ever move back?

“I know . . . shucks,” I said as I saw a flash of angst cross his face. “That’s a hard question I have to ask.”

He says he would move back if they could financially afford it and be sustainable, and on the condition that he would have a place to stay, be a part-time resident, and come and go as he pleased so that he could, “continue to move throughout the world.”

My calling is out here. Jesus was a Jew, and his disciples were Jewish, and they were all called to the Jews, except for the one: Paul. Paul was called to the Gentiles . . . to move outside of the Jewish circle and to spread the gospel that way. I was called to move outside of Hawai‘i, to spread Hawai‘i and the message from Christ, and it’s amazing—Jesus says, “A prophet is never welcome in his hometown.” So when I go home, I’m Kalani . . . unless I’m around my classmates, then I’m “Kahu.”

But for the most part, when I come to California and I preach the gospel, and I give out Aloha, they don't know anything more than that, and I think that's the key. Who I am, and my history hinders those who I have known all my life on that island. But out here, because people just know me for Kalani, it's easier to give. They don't have any prejudgments or anything like that. (laughs) It works! And they get the message, you know, and they get a lot of Aloha, and a lot of love, without any filter, you know?



*Figure 4.8.* Kalani and Noelani (KS '83 graduate and Kahu at Hope Chapel) at Founder's Day, 2014; Founder's Day honors Princess Pauahi for leaving her legacy The Kamehameha Schools to the children of Hawai'i. Photo courtesy of the Badua 'Ohana Album, 2012.

## Nani



*Figure 4.9.* Nani. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

“Ho‘onani Ka Makua Mau—Hawaiian Doxology”

Words by Reverend Hiram Bingham (1831–1908);

Music by Louis Bourgeois Louis Bourgeois (1510–1561)



## Sung by Kapalama Middle School Na ‘Opio Singers

[http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani\\_ka\\_makua\\_mau/hoonani.php](http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani_ka_makua_mau/hoonani.php)

[http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani\\_ka\\_makua\\_mau/hoonani\\_i\\_ka\\_akua\\_mau.mp3](http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani_ka_makua_mau/hoonani_i_ka_akua_mau.mp3)

Ho‘onani i ka Makua mau,	Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Ke Keiki me ke ka ‘Uhane nō	Praise Him all creatures here below
Ke Akua mau, ho‘omaika‘i pū	Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Ko kēia ao ko kēlā ao. ‘Āmene.	Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

She presents as a petite and very sharp middle-aged Asian business woman who is very punctual, articulate, and exacting—a person who easily remembers facts, figures, and complex calculation formulas, as well as recall dates, events, people and conversations in great detail. Over time, I have come to know that besides a razor sharp wit, she is quick to smile and crack a joke . . . and behind her tough business persona, this woman is kind-hearted, sensitive, and very, very resilient.

I met Nani through LinkedIn of all places, while trying to connect with alumni from my alma mater. My goal was to meet graduates of Kamehameha Schools (KS) who lived in California, join the KS Alumni Association (Southern California Chapter), make new friends, and talk about my graduate school project. Her profile popped up among several likely candidates that I was interested in meeting. After a thorough investigation of each profile, Nani looked the most attractive on paper, especially if I was seeking a business mentor or looking to place a business executive specializing in accounting / finance in a director position for an NGO. Nani has an extensive background working with diverse and interesting non-profit organizations, and has held titles such as a financial analyst, accountant, controller, and finance director. I sent her a message via LinkedIn, hoping she would respond in a couple of days . . . she responded that same afternoon. We chatted on the phone briefly. It turns out that she had actually lived in Santa Barbara a while back, and would be passing through in a couple of days for an overnight

visit with some friends in town, and then continue her journey north. I couldn't believe my luck! I just couldn't wait to meet her.

I invited her for coffee, and she counter invited me for a run . . . at 6 am in the morning! “Really?” I thought, shaking my head in disbelief. Who does that? Overachiever! I've heard that successful people tend to exercise early in the morning. Truly, Nani jogs almost every morning to keep her health in check, and she was on a tight schedule—even on vacation—so that was the only time she could spare for me. I consider myself to be pretty athletic, but the mere thought of running at 6 am made me want to throw up! In any event, I rallied as the sun rose early that next morning to meet her at Shoreline Park. Although she described herself in detail so that I'd recognize her, that proved to be unnecessary. There were only two cars in the parking lot—hers and mine. “*Aloha Kakahiaka!*” (Good Morning!) She called out to me from the park as she stretched her legs and calves. “What a cheerful greeting,” I thought. She smiled and waved, looking perky in her sun visor and dark blue athletic zip-up jacket; walking over, she greeted me with a kiss and hug hello. “Aloha,” I croaked back, stifling a yawn as we hugged, hiding my tired eyes behind sleek black sunglasses.

As we set out to jog, Nani casually began telling me a little bit about her history in Santa Barbara, and I immediately perked up, not wanting to miss a word she said. A few minutes later, I forgot how tired I was, and about my terrible adversity to heavy exercise early in the morning. Apparently her mother had owned Montecito Printing Center, and Nani had managed the day-to-day operations of this high end printing company many years ago . . . in fact, around the same time Dave and I had moved to Santa Barbara from Hawai'i nearly 25 years ago. She talked about being Hawaiian and looking Asian, and how other people perceive her has actually helped her time and time again in her career:

I feel incredibly blessed because I am Hawaiian, and because I look Asian. You know, a lot of attorneys are number phobic. They say, “Nani, you’re good with numbers, could you help me with this?” The truth is, I conceptualize numbers three-dimensionally. My high spatial intelligence compensates for my barely-above-average math intelligence. Also growing up, I had parents, siblings and cousins who could help me figure out mathematical problems.

I told her about my research project, and she thought it sounded quite interesting. We agreed to a later time and date when we could “talk story” even more. By the time we circled back to the park, I was invigorated! So happy to have made a new Hawaiian friend who also went to the same high school I had, had lived in the same town, and liked to exercise. I bet we have even more in common, I mused. After we kissed goodbye, she quickly turned around and said, “Oh! I almost forgot—I have something for you” as she reached into the back seat of her white sedan, pulled out a heavy opaque white plastic bag, and carefully placed the package into my hands. Nani explained that inside were very healthy plumeria cuttings from her parent’s place; she instructed me to plant them in Santa Barbara, and give them a good home. Before I could say another word, she smiled, waved, and called out, “Gotta go! *A hui hou!*” (Until next time!) jumped into her car and took off, leaving me standing in the parking lot holding my new baby plumeria plants, in utter disbelief of all that had transpired in less than an hour that morning.

**Background.** You’d never know it unless she privileged you with such personal information: for most of her life, she had survived growing up in the shadows of dominant Hawaiian male family figures: grandfather, half-brothers, cousins, and specifically, her father and her father’s younger half-brother—who both worked as teachers and administrators at Kamehameha Schools.

Her parents—both students at UC Berkeley—met, fell in love, married, and bought property just six blocks from campus . . . so Nani was actually born in Northern California in the

mid-1950s. “It’s my Dad who’s Kanaka Maoli” she said, emphatically. When (his father) my Grandpa retired, he moved his family from Honolulu to Berkeley, living just down the street from us.”

**Family life gets complicated.** Just two years after Nani was born, her parents split up. Her father instantly became a single parent responsible for two little ones. He moved his son, infant daughter, and himself down the street to live with his parents (father and step-mother whom Nani calls Grandma Nancy) and their six-year-old son, right down the street. “Even though he is my uncle, I’ve always regarded Wayne more like an older brother,” she said, “because he was just four years older than me.”

When that school year was over, her father moved his family back to Hawai‘i, this time to live at Grandpa Chang’s home in Honolulu.

We first lived at Chang’s Daycare in Waikiki, a block away from Paki Park. For kindergarten, I went to Waikiki Elementary. When my Dad remarried, we moved to Kailua. I went to Keolu Elementary from 1st to 6th grade, and my Dad taught at the University of Hawai‘i. Later, when my older brother entered 7th grade at Kamehameha in 1964, my Dad (KS graduate class of 1939) started teaching at Kamehameha.

Like her older brother, Nani was also fortunate to also get accepted into the Kamehameha Schools (KS) in the 7th grade. It was almost like their whole family was infused in “Warrior culture” (KS’s mascot is the Hawaiian Warrior) because her father was teaching industrial arts in the high school division, at the same time Nani and her brother attended as students there. Nani particularly enjoyed participating in drama, so much so that she flew to the mainland with the drama team twice to attend the International Thespian Conference in the summers that followed her freshman and junior years. “Being in drama at Kamehameha was a lot of fun. When you represent Hawai‘i, you have to sing and dance,” she says. “We did Hana Chant. It’s so funny

because my Uncle Wayne is a kumu hula, so people always assume I can dance. The only hula I ever had to learn was when we went to Indiana.”

**More upheaval.** During her junior year, her father was going through his second divorce and Nani once again, moved in with Grandma Nancy in Waikiki. This time, things were very different living with Grandma Nancy. Nearly fifteen years had passed since Nani’s birth parents divorced and the children had moved in with Grandma Nancy, who had moved from Berkeley to Kaneohe; managing all the changes seemed a lot harder as a teenager during this second time of divorce and subsequent family division. “How so?” I asked. “Grandpa Chang had died,” she responded. “My older brother was in California, and my Uncle Wayne was finishing up his senior year at Michigan State University.” There was clearly less familial support during these turbulent times . . . just Grandma Chang and Dad for Nani to lean on.

**An honorary Kamehameha graduate.** Nani attended Kamehameha Schools through 11th grade, and as it turns out, did not graduate there.

I went with the Kamehameha Drama Club to the International Thespian Conference in Bloomington, Indiana, and on the way back I would visit my Mom in California but ended up staying there. So I actually finished up high school in California.

I asked to clarify things because I was getting confused. “So, Nani, you graduated from a school on the mainland, but you have a dual diploma. How did that happen?” She paused. “Well, actually, my dad helped me get my Kamehameha diploma years later,” she confessed. “He appealed on my behalf to Aunty Gerry who was in charge of KS Student Services.”

**Wanting a new identity.** “But back then (summer of junior year) he (Dad) was really in shock that I didn’t want to come back. “How come you didn’t want to come back?” I asked, shocked myself, and wondering why anyone would enter a new school on the mainland in their

senior year without any friends . . . given the opportunity, who wouldn't want to graduate from Kamehameha?

Because I wanted to be with my Mom . . . if you have a parent that is going through a divorce, it is not fun by any stretch of the imagination. At that time I couldn't put it into words, but I really wanted to reinvent myself. Also during my five years at Kamehameha, I was primarily known as "Mr. Chang's daughter."

I felt like I had to get my own personality. My dad had such a strong personality! You know what I found out just a couple of years ago? My dad would joke around and say to the guys (students) in his classes, that if they'd get an A, he'd let them go out with his daughter Nani! Phyllis, my friend and classmate . . . heard this from her husband who was one of my dad's students. She is one of the few people who could tell me something of this nature. Decades later, when Phyllis calls me on my cell phone telling me this story . . . I'm over 50 years old, my dad's been dead for years, and I'm still turning red with embarrassment in the middle of the store! That's the kind of thing my dad used to do. Thank God I didn't know back then, or else I would have left sooner.

"Right . . ." I agreed, feeling her embarrassment and trying to cover up the awkwardness I was feeling in that moment as I imagined how weird it would feel if my own dad jokingly told that to the boys in my class behind my back. I would've died from humiliation! Still, that wouldn't be enough for me to leave Kamehameha in my senior year, leave all my friends behind, and relocate to the mainland. I had a gut feeling there was another reason why she didn't return to Hawai'i, but I didn't want to speculate or probe. Time would tell that my gut instinct right. At a much later date, Nani trusted me enough to divulge some very dark secrets that no child should be conflicted with—secrets that have haunted her, crushed her youthful, carefree spirit, and burdened her unnecessarily for over 50 years.

"But times were different then, yeah?" I said, thinking that perhaps her father had treated her like a "trophy daughter." Back then, sexual harassment hadn't been brought to the workplace consciousness yet; men in leadership positions told jokes they thought were funny, said and sometimes did whatever they felt without repercussion, or without thinking that the words they say might make their subordinates, direct reports, students (or daughters) feel

uncomfortable. “Yeah,” she said softly. “My friend Phyllis said, “Nani, he thought the world of you; he only wanted the best for you.” She continued:

Being raised by my Dad was too much for me. I really didn’t appreciate him until I was much older. Looking back, I’m really glad that my Dad did raise me. He taught me to be independent, yet dependent on *Ke Akua* (Our Creator). He taught me to be a problem solver. He showed me to be passionate about singing.

**Remembering Dad.** Bad behavior aside, her dad was a wildly popular teacher and an extremely effective department chair. Everybody knew Mr. Chang; he’d left a legacy with his students in the stories he told, and more importantly, because they knew he cared about them. He raised the bar for his students, and they would jump through hoops so as not to disappoint him. He took the time to listen and build relationships with them . . . if fact, that was his way—the Hawaiian way—building relationships with the people he worked with, people he met, people he knew. He was always trying to find a way to help others through the connections he made and the relationships he had nurtured.

“About 10 years ago my Dad mailed my resume to Dee Jay Mailer ‘70 KSK (Kamehameha Schools Kapālama) graduate, Kamehameha CEO, recommending me to be the Executive Director of Ke Ali‘i Pauahi Foundation,” Nani continued.

I could not believe my Dad had done this! Dee Jay, CEO of a \$9 billion organization, sent a very gracious handwritten note to my Dad with a book of poetry by the students of Kamehameha. In her note she did say that I would have to apply for the position through the KSBE website. Ana Horne, my good friend from the Cathedral Choir of St. Andrew’s, psychologist and KSK ’67, reassured me that my Dad loved me and that he was very proud of me.

Each of my Dad’s students has their favorite “Mr. Chang” story. Dr. Kamana‘opono Crabbe, CEO of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, said that *mana* (power) is inherited and acquired. To have mana is to have influence and authority, and efficacy—the power to perform in a given situation. For Hawaiians there is mana in mo‘olelo. For me, I have inherited mana from my Dad through nā mo‘olelo about my Dad. Nā mo‘olelo about my Dad directly affects how people relate to me.

Although I wasn't in any of Mr. Chang's classes (he taught Industrial Arts—Drafting, Design, Engineering, and Auto CAD), I remember him well. He was such a character, and everybody loved him because he was loud, boisterous, and funny, and loved to *wala 'au* (talk story). At the football games and whenever we had pep rallies, Mr. Chang would stand up, start cheering, and get the crowd to follow him. He sure made our job as cheerleaders a lot easier!

But here's when our interview was an interesting twist. It suddenly dawned on me that she wanted to talk about her father, her uncle, her aunt, and more relatives . . . all prominent people, and their stories were fascinating, but I wasn't here to tell their stories. I wanted to hear her story! And then the more I listened, I came to realize that she was telling her story! It seemed as though she lived in the shadows of her relatives. Perhaps she thought that maybe her life was not as significant as theirs, so she had to tell their stories . . . the choices they made . . . the way they lived their lives. I became keenly aware that even though we were just "talking story," I needed to pay close attention to everything she said in order to hear "Nani's story" which gets muddled, buried in her narrative . . . so I waited patiently, listened very deeply, and gently asked more questions about her life and the decisions she made when the conversation eventually meandered that way.

"My great-aunt Alice was one of my Grandpa Chang's youngest sisters. She is the longest resident of Kalaupapa: from 1919 to when she died in 2000," she told me. On the tenth anniversary of her death, Nani was given a transcript of great-aunt Alice's 1956 diary entitled "Alice in Wonderland." Hansen's disease (leprosy) was introduced to Hawai'i in the mid-1800s. Under advice from his cabinet, King Kamehameha V resolved to protect the healthy population by banishing all those afflicted with the terribly infectious and disfiguring disease to Kalaupapa. The police participated by tearing families apart. The afflicted were brutally hunted down,



captured, arrested, and then sent by canoe to the prison in Kalaupapa. I have been haunted by the stories of how sometimes these sick people were thrown off the boat and forced to swim to shore . . . many of them drowned by trying to crawl back into the boat or swimming against the strong currents in shark-infested waters. Of course, their stories were never told. In any event, the isolated peninsula on the north shore of Moloka‘i became the site of Father Damien’s mission and ministry; he eventually suffered and died from the disease as well. On October 9, 2009, the Belgian priest was canonized by Roman Catholic Church for devoting his life to missionary work with the people of Hawai‘i who had contracted leprocy. Today he is called Saint Damien of Moloka‘i.

Since 1866, more than 8,000 people (mostly Hawaiians) have died from Hansen’s disease at Kalaupapa, detached from the rest of the world. Kalaupapa is now a refuge for the remaining few residents who were forced to live their lives in isolation (<http://visitmolokai.com/kala.html>). Nani told a story about how Aunt Alice took regular opportunities to visit ‘ohana in Berkeley before she passed away, and what an impact that had on her life, especially since children were not allowed to visit Kalaupapa:

Aunt Alice made daily entries of her first trip to Northern California when she stayed with my folks August to November. The great lesson I learned from her is not to be overwhelmed. My *pilikia* (troubles) are *manini* (petty) compared to what my aunt faced with fierce candor and passion for life. I have taken for granted the values and mana of my kūpuna. I was raised in a Hawaiian household without realizing it! Doing this interview makes me aware of this.

**Negative perceptions based on looks and race.** Her first few years on the mainland proved to be more difficult than anticipated. Nani was embarking on her college education and didn’t have much confidence. As a young adult she was developing her own personality and still learning to find her voice. She experienced prejudice for the first time because of her Asian

appearance. “People had all these assumptions about me,” she said, shaking her head. “I got really tired of guys saying, “You’re so exotic!” “What does that mean to you?” I inquired.

Being exotic meant I was different. These (kinds of) comments made me really glad that I grew up in a place where I was one of the majority. (In Hawai‘i, most of the youth appear to be of mixed Asian ancestry.) Even in California at my mom’s shop, there was a Japanese-American graphic artist who, when (she learned that) I joined the choir at All Saints-by-the-Sea, asked how many Asians were in the choir. To me, the number of Asians is an irrelevant criterion for joining a choir. I looked at her and thought, “What does that have to do with anything?”

“Right?!” I agreed. These sorts of experiences of being treated like “other” were all too familiar to me when I had relocated to California; the comments were especially forward when I travelled to New England and the Mid-Western states. It turns out that one of the reasons Nani specifically chose to raise her daughter in Minnesota was that it (according to Nani) “has the highest per capita adoption of Korean children; I made a correlation of high racial acceptance of Asians.”

Throughout our entire interview, it became apparent that Nani identified herself as Native Hawaiian. I was curious to find out if she knew of her mo‘okū‘auhau. She did, I discovered, in great detail, and on both sides. “My great-great-great-great grandmother on my Dad’s side of the family was Kauī Kawekau from Hanalei, Kaua‘i. My great grandmother on Dad’s Mom’s side was Mary Pali.” “Pali from where?” I asked. “Lahaina, Maui. Her grandfather was a Pali who was a kahu at the UCC church there,” she said with a knowing smile. We both understood that learning about your mo‘okū‘auhau is very important in Hawaiian culture; knowing your kūpuna and where you are from is traditional practice, and foundational to Hawaiian values and the Indigenous belief system that mandates that all spiritual beings are connected—past, present, and future—and that our ancestors live in us, in our bones.

Nani even knew of her other koko. “So I’m 5/32 Hawaiian, 1/32 English. I am 11/16 Chinese, (because) my mom’s pure (Chinese). And then I am 1/8 Irish.” I was impressed. “Wow!” I exclaimed. “Genealogy is how my Dad taught fractions,” she said matter-of-factly, “by doing the genealogy and teaching this to his kids.”

“Walter Chang! What a great method to teach kids fractions,” I thought. That makes total sense, and clearly makes the task of learning fractions personal. “That’s truly amazing. So on your birth certificate, does it have all your nationalities?” I asked. “Yes,” she affirmed, “it has Caucasian, Chinese, and Hawaiian. Even though I was born in California, my dad knew that was important to have Hawaiian on my birth certificate.” “You know, your dad had much wisdom,” I remarked. “He was sooo akamai.” “He was very proud to be part-Hawaiian . . . as I am,” she said softly.

**The world of work.** I wanted to know about Nani’s mother at this point, since she told me about her grandparents, father, uncle and great-aunt. “My Mom got her degree in Public Health from UC Berkeley. She worked as a Medical Technologist until the early 1980s when HIV/AIDS blossomed into a full-blown epidemic.” Realizing that Medical Technologists handle bodily fluids, and HIV/AIDS is transmitted through bodily fluids, her mother made the choice to make a career change and leave the industry. “So how did the two of you end up in Santa Barbara?” I asked.

Mom went on a retreat to an abbey, she felt called to be in Santa Barbara. She found a newspaper ad for a partnership in a Montecito franchise print shop. Eventually she did buy out her partner. I went to work for her after working for a Big 8 accounting firm.

**The start of an incredible career.** Working in her mother’s print shop became an incredible opportunity to apply the theory that Nani studied in business school as well as the discipline and experience she gained working at the Big 8 accounting firm . . . she was even able

to incorporate the relationship-building, networking skills she learned from her father; all of these acquired skills, abilities and experiences stemming from the print shop eventually helped Nani to grow from out of her father's shadow and transform into becoming person she is today—a powerful, quick-witted, yet thoughtful and humble, articulate business woman.

It is one of many reasons why I'm not just your average "bean counter." My undergrad degree is in English. My master's degree is in accounting. The English degree gave me the tools to write articulate analyses, grant proposals, recommendations to senior management of Fortune 100 companies, policies and procedures. By working with my Mom's clients, I learned marketing, business process flow, political campaigning and fundraising.

After working eight years in Minnesota, and then several more years managing operations at the print shop, Nani was lucky enough to land a job as a controller with Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society—simply because she had listed the clients of her mother's printing shop on her resume. Jean-Michel Cousteau's Executive Assistant Barbara, was married to Rick, the former general manager of the Coral Casino Club at the Four Seasons Biltmore, Santa Barbara—a client account that Nani had serviced through the Montecito Print Shop. Besides being highly qualified to do the job, Barbara noticed the connection of service immediately on Nani's resume, further peaking her interest to offer Nani an interview. The rest is history:

After my interview, she (Barbara) asked her husband Rick about me. His response: "You will love working with Nani!" I really loved working with Jean-Michel Cousteau especially when he started his PBS series "Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Adventures." Two of episodes were "Voyage to Kure" which is one of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands. As the Controller, I'd wire money to wherever the expedition needed it, talk with the Searcher Captain via satellite phone, and communicate with (one my KS classmates) Brickwood Galuteria, then PR for Polynesian Voyaging Society.

**Kamehameha Schools become the conduit in making connections.** This career move proved to be especially interesting and exciting for Nani, because she got to work with an amazing non-profit organization that was environmentally driven to educate the public through

their international ocean adventures. Nani found herself conversing with, and sometimes influencing the “movers and shakers” in the political arena, as well as handling large donations from well-endowed philanthropists.

Nainoa Thompson, Navigator for the Hōkūle‘a and Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate (KSBE) Trustee came to speak at the Northern California KS Alumni meeting. At the meeting’s end, retired Superior Court Judge Bill Fernandez, KSK ’49, said, “*E komo mai!*” (Welcome to my home), an invitation to dinner at his home. At the *pa‘ina* (party) later that night, I got to sit next to Nainoa Thompson. On his other side was an attorney KS alumnus. Between the two of us, an accountant and an attorney, we talk to Nainoa, Trustee of a \$9 billion trust, about governance, accountability, transparency, especially in the wake of Enron. We talked about being really careful and *ma‘a* (thoroughly know) about all the rules and regulations.

“Nainoa Thompson is such an inspiration,” Nani said with a sigh, “He’s one of the most approachable leaders of Hawai‘i. So *ha‘aha‘a* (humble)” Later in her career, during her tenure as Director of Finance at Honolulu Community Action Program (HCAP), she took the opportunity to speak with Nainoa at the 2006 Kamehameha Reunion, at the Tuesday Night Mixer with the Board of Trustees:

I told him that out of HCAP’s 1,600 children in the Head Start program (benefitting children ages 3-5 whose families are at or below the poverty level)—800 of these children were Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian. What is Kamehameha doing about this? His late father Myron “Pinky” Thompson during his 1974–1994 leadership as a KSBE Trustee helped to develop early childhood education programs . . . which were canceled in the late 1990s. Later, during Nainoa’s tenure as a KSBE Trustee, Kamehameha established 30 preschools for 1,500 children as well as Pauahi Keiki Scholars—a program offering need-based scholarships aimed to increase the number of Hawaiian preschool-age children enrolled in eligible preschools in the community.

Nani enjoyed going to the Kamehameha Schools’ reunions and alumni association events to connect intellectually and socially, invitations that are exclusive to KS students, graduates, and alumni. Thank goodness her father had known this, because being connected this way as an inner member of the KS community would have been nearly impossible, had her father not appealed for Nani to receive her Kamehameha Schools high school diploma. It made her

especially happy to see Nainoa, because her face lights up with joy when she remembers this time in her life:

“We are an ocean people,” Nainoa would say about Hawaiians. When I would go to the Kamehameha reunions, I would bring my Cousteau stuff, and so of course we start talking about the ocean,” she remembers.

I’m so proud to be part Hawaiian and to have worked at Ocean Futures Society, Jean-Michel Cousteau’s organization. The really great thing about Cousteau’s organizations is that there are people from all over the world: from Egypt, from Fiji, from Brazil, from Norway, from Australia, from Hong Kong. It’s wonderful to represent Hawai‘i and Hawaiians in such a truly international group. The expedition teams are just fabulous.

*E kuahui like i ka hana.*

Let everybody pitch in and work together. (Pukui, #323, see Appendix B)

Even though I was in back office, it’s still special, working for Jean-Michel Cousteau. Many of the team have worked with Jean-Michel’s father, Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau. They often referred to the “Cousteau way” which is an expedition mentality: My life depends on you, your life depends on me. Since I have this responsibility, I know you are precious. Everybody gets trained on CPR and First Aid, whether your office staff or expedition team. Each person is empowered to act. Each person is a valuable member of the team.

It just occurred to me that feeling valued as a family member, employee, or team, and contributing to the success of a project is *lōkahi*—working together in teamwork and harmony—was one of Nani’s top values, along with using one’s mana to do what is *pono* (right, just). Nani’s piece in this project required her to think quickly, problem solve effectively and get the administrative paperwork (reports, permits, grant proposals, budgets, pay for equipment) done so that the crew could receive funding to continue their work. What she had to offer was just as valuable as each of the other team members’ contributions. To see a clip of the exciting work they’d done together entitled *Jean-Michel Cousteau: Ocean Adventures—Voyage to Kure*, please copy and paste this URL to your browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKhf7Xs1Y2w>

Everybody works together to do their part. Our work on “The Voyage to Kure” episodes of “Jean-Michel Cousteau’s Ocean Adventures” inspired President George W. Bush to establish the Northwest Hawaiian Island National Marine Sanctuary—which is now the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, our planet’s largest fully protected marine area of 5,178 square miles which has *heiau* (ancient Hawaiian religious sites), endangered green sea turtles and monk seals and a unique marine ecosystem found nowhere else on earth.

The name of Papahānaumokuākea comes from ancient Hawaiian cosmological mythology; it’s symbolic of the Earth Mother and Wakea Father Sky. Their union birthed the Hawaiian race, and the Hawaiian Islands from island Hawai‘i to Kure or Holaniku. The name reminds us of our connection and responsibility to our environment.

*‘Ike no I ka lā o ka ike; mana no i ka lā o ka mana.*

*Know in the day of knowing; mana in the day of mana.*

Knowledge and mana—each has its day; another day may bring greater knowledge and greater mana than today. (Pukui, #1212, see Appendix B)

“There are many things that I’m really committed to,” Nani said gravely, alluding to her unending devotion to helping her daughter and herself, learn about and claim their birthright—the Hawaiian culture and language—through bible studies, singing in the church choir, language and chanting classes.

When I went back to Hawai‘i in 2005, I was ridiculed about coming from the mainland. (They’d say) “Oh, you’re from America!” . . . and it really hurt. But it led me to actively seek out to read the Epistle in Hawaiian at the Cathedral Church of St. Andrew which was established by King Kamehameha IV and Queen Emma. As a lector / reader, we get our assigned lectionary months in advance. When I first started, I asked Auntie Paulette Moore (KS ’52) to read and record the passage on a dictating tape . . . so I could practice, practice. I would look up every word in the Hawaiian dictionary. I took *oli* (chanting) classes at the Bishop Museum. Tuti Kanahēle gave group ‘olelo Hawai‘i lessons in her home. So I did that.

“No kidding,” I said in amazement. It occurred to me that upon her returning to her homeland, this woman was serious in reclaiming her Hawaiian heritage . . . even though she had been estranged from Hawai‘i for over 30 years.

*‘Ae* (Yes). Tuti is from Ni‘ihau so that was really great. She taught us the Maori method of learning ‘olelo Hawai‘i. There are five *lula* (rules) of learning. One is “*Mai ho ‘ohilahila*” which means, “no make shame.” In other words, don’t be embarrassed;

don't embarrass others. Another is "*E mālama kekahi i kekahi*" ("take care of one another").

She spoke about a friend she made while running the 2008 Honolulu Marathon—a Canadian chartered accountant who was trying to break into the Hawaiian market and become a CPA. They discussed local manners, what to do in certain situations, and Nani would advise him on professional business attire (aloha shirt and slacks), and what kinds of shoes to wear (she recommended loafers, so if you get invited into a home you easily can take your shoes off). Nani even taught him some common Hawaiian words.

Before pronouncing the words, he would preface with "Please don't make fun of me." I said one of the rules that I live by is (what I learned from Tuti) "*Mai ho 'ohilahila*" (don't make shame). You encourage. That's the only way people learn. It's a good thing to know when people from Canada or from wherever want to learn our culture! It's wonderful when other Hawaiians want to learn more. Whenever another part-Hawaiian prefaces a question with, "I'm such a bad Hawaiian," I correct them by saying, "You are striving to be a better Hawaiian." Encourage.

Nani told another story about a friend who was originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, relocated to Hawai'i, and now teaches 'olelo Hawai'i in Honolulu. This particular friend earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in Native Hawaiian Studies. According to Nani, this woman is completing her doctorate degree and will be writing her dissertation on Hawai'i as the Aloha State.

She married a Kamehameha graduate. When she was an undergrad, she worked as a lei greeter, official title "Ambassador of Aloha" at the Moana Surfrider, a 4-star hotel (in Waikiki) dating back to 1901. Her UH (University of Hawai'i) advisor really put her down for that. She stood her ground and told him that since people have a dream of coming to Hawai'i, they should be greeted with great warmth and so.

"It's very interesting how Aggie coming from Cincinnati, just really embraces our culture," she muses, "and so *hanohano* (honored) to have (her title) on her LinkedIn profile read "Ambassador of Aloha."



I wanted to ask more about her daughter who lived in Santa Barbara for a good portion of her life. Perhaps our paths had crossed. As we spoke about her, her age, her mannerisms, and how she had a Hawaiian first name and a Caucasian last name. I somehow put two and two together . . . I inquired, “She doesn’t have the same last name as you, does she?” Nani affirmed this to be true. Then I asked, “She doesn’t look anything like you, you said. Does she have long, sort of auburn hair, fair skin, light eyes, and freckles?” This time Nani stared at me with her jaw dropped wide open. “How could you know that?” she asked. It turns out that her daughter had come to visit me at the career center in Santa Barbara City College a couple of times, several years ago. I helped her with choosing a major, finding an internship, and writing her resume.

**Inoa.** The name she gave her daughter means, “The Loved One” or “With Love” in Hawaiian. I asked what the significance was in choosing this particular name, among all the other flowery, poetic, and lovely Hawaiian names one can choose for her baby, plus I know the importance of inoa is in Hawaiian culture. Nani simply answered, “Because I wanted her to know she is always loved.”

Part of that had to do with me being raised by divorced parents. There is always junk talk that goes on by one parent or the other. I just want her to know, that whatever happens, that she was loved even before she was born.

“That’s beautiful,” I said. “It must have been difficult being a single mother raising your child, and then sending her off to live with her father every now and then.”

Although that’s how she felt for many years, I didn’t mean for her name to be an affliction. It didn’t help that, unbeknownst to me, when she was growing up, there were other Hawaiians (living) at her Dad’s (place) making fun of her because she has a Hawaiian name and really doesn’t know as much as they do about our culture. Instead of teaching her, they made fun of her. *Auwe!* (Alas!) *Mai ho ‘ohilahila!* (No make shame!) *E malama kekahi i kekahi.* (Take care of one another.)

**Looking for the positive in adversity.** “Right, right,” I said shaking my head in disbelief at how sometimes people can be so cruel . . . even toward children. That certainly is

not the way of Aloha. Then Nani explained how her daughter had the opportunity to learn more about her heritage. “After fifth grade, she did go (flew from the mainland) to Kamehameha Explorations, a week-long Hawaiian culture immersion experience. My Dad insisted. Good thing!” she said. “That’s awesome,” I agreed.

I have a lot of really great memories of Kamehameha. Both my brother and I agree that Kamehameha was really one of the best things in our childhood. I said to my older brother, “See, isn’t it great our parents broke up? Because if they hadn’t broken up, we would have gone to Berkeley High.”

“And never experienced living in Hawai‘i or the legacy of our Princess,” I speculated.

You always think, “Hey, where’s the blessing?” That’s what I’m constantly, constantly looking for: the blessing. Since *Ke Akua* (The Creator) only wants what’s good for us, I’m always asking, “Where’s the blessing? Where’s the blessing?”

“That’s lovely,” I said. Nani continued, “There’s got to be a blessing somewhere . . .”

her voice trailed off and she got this faraway look in her eyes.

**On Aloha.** “Nani, what does Aloha mean to you?” I inquired. “I mean you have in so many ways, already told me how you carry yourself with grace, but what does Aloha mean to you, and how are you able to embody that?”

Oh, Aloha is more than just myself. I am merely a conduit of Aloha. I just have to open myself up to it. The “*ha*” in “Aloha” means breath, so I express “Aloha” in my singing. I am conduit of Aloha in just listening to others. When there is strife around or you hear an ambulance, fire engine, just say a little prayer. Or if you hear the neighbors having a domestic squabble, you *pule*, you pray for them.

“Say more, please,” I asked. She continued:

Your presence is there; you pray for them. What’s really wonderful is that other people will start praying when I have a prayer request. I ask others what is their prayer request. Aloha is so all encompassing. It’s hard to describe, but it is there. It’s bigger than I am. You know, if I can be a conduit of even just a little of Aloha, I think I may fulfill my mission here on earth.

“That’s beautiful” I commented, never having heard Aloha described as such. She went on:

There's so much Aloha. Being a conduit of just a little bit of Aloha, how can you not find that Aloha will fill everything? Aloha is as pervasive and ubiquitous as the scent of plumerias in Hawai'i. Actually that's what I really love about where I live. It's quiet when I go jogging around the senior mobile home park in the morning. Out of 160 homes here, I've counted over 80 plumeria plants . . . and that's only the plumeria plants I can see in their front yards or along the sides without trampling into people's backyards.

I had just one more question to ask her. "Nani, do you consider Hawai'i to be your home? Even today? And if so, would you ever consider moving back?" "'*Ae*," she replied gravely, implying that Hawai'i *is* home. "'*Ae*," she said again. "I would consider moving home after my Mom—a mainland girl—passes, *AND* if I am called (by *Ke Akua*) to serve and to be in Hawai'i."

She had one last mana'ō as we conversed, and I thought about the concepts of living Aloha and Mālama Pono for all keiki o ka 'āina, at home or living far away from the 'āina Hawai'i:

You don't have to physically be in Hawai'i to help our people and our culture to prosper. You can do it wherever you are in the world. Bloom where you are! Being Kanaka Maoli, we seek out to mālama, and we seek others who do the same, wherever we are.

If I had to quantify myself in terms of Aloha . . . in terms of the many gifts I have received and my life's contributions in return, I would say: I am an accountant. I am Hawaiian. And . . . I am a product of Pauahi's love.



Figure 4.10. Nani at peace. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

## Mona



Figure 4.11. Mona. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

### “Wāhine ‘Ilikea”

Words by Dennis Kamakahi

[http://www.huapala.org/Wa/Wahine\\_Ilikea.html](http://www.huapala.org/Wa/Wahine_Ilikea.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1s62yckknc>

*‘A ‘a i ka hula, waiho ka hilahila i ka hale.*

When one wants to dance the hula, bashfulness should be left at home.

(Pukui, # 2 see Appendix B)

She was written up in a local Central Coast magazine last November (2013), in a feature article entitled *Mona’s Gift of Aloha*. The article starts like this. “You might not be aware of it, but right here on our Central Coast, the spirit of Aloha flourishes.” The author compares her to a tropical trade wind—a fresh breeze softly scented with island flowers:

If a person can be compared to a tropical trade wind, it’s Mona. When you meet her, the air freshens, there is the fragrance of plumeria blossoms and flowering ginger, and a soothing Hawaiian melody sways in your mind. Mona is a gift (makana) to all who know her. Her gracious demeanor, unselfish attitude, and helping hands extend to everyone—to say nothing of her radiant smile and infectious laugh. (Huttle, 2013, p. 14)

It's true. If there was only one descriptor for Mona, it would be Aloha, pure Aloha. Mona is one of my oldest friends and dearest hula sisters on the Central Coast of California. We met in the fall of 1994, almost 20 years ago. Dave and I had just moved 90 miles north (from Santa Barbara to San Luis Obispo, CA) because I was accepted into the undergraduate Business Administration program at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly, SLO). I happened to pick up a fresh copy of the *New Times*—a weekly local publication that is released on Thursdays, and features what's happening in San Luis Obispo County—and while studying the events that were occurring that week, spied a very small ad inviting local artists (musicians and dancers) to meet and share their love of Hawai'i and Island music. I just had to go and check it out.

The ad instructed us to meet at 5:30 p.m. at Cal Poly; approximately 20 “Island music-lovers” showed up that night in that. Some people even brought their instruments, hoping to meet other musicians and possibly start a jam session. It was so wonderful to meet Aloha-minded artists in this new town where I had no friends. Within moments, strangers instantly became friends; people were hugging and kissing each other, introducing themselves to one another, laughing, chatting about their families and where they grew up, places they've been and similar experiences they'd shared.

I asked Mona if she remembered how we met. “We were sitting, I remember we were all sitting in that room.” she recalls. “So you answered an ad in the paper?” I asked. “Yeah, to meet at this place . . . That's the first time we all met; and whereas before, if this were at home (in Hawai'i), she muses, shaking her head, “I never would have looked twice at that (ad). I was just wanting to be with something . . . Oh look!” she said, remembering what it was like to see that tiny ad in the *New Times*. “Something about home!” She smiled, “You know, I was excited,

maybe I could connect with . . .” she said happily, and then instantly looked distraught, “It’s hard to find another Hawaiian here!” “Right, right,” I agreed, “I felt the same way.” The rest of our conversation continued:

Mona: “You know . . . it’s not so much that I wasn’t happy, but it would be nice like . . . to speak your own language . . . or talk about food we like or you know or . . .”

Cami: “Talk Pidgin even . . .” I said, speaking Pidgin.

Mona: “Yeah, (nodding) you know (squinces up face), or just say “Ho!” you know, (laughing) and we know!” (We’d know exactly what the other person meant.)

Cami: “Right?! One word!” (Pidgin English is all about cutting down the amount of words in order to communicate across languages and cultures; to utter one word is the ultimate Pidgin.)

Mona: (Laughing hysterically) “One word! One word . . . or just a look you know! (The non-verbal Pidgin is when you personify an emotion with a facial expression—with just “one look.”) Just to be with your kind of people, so . . .”

Cami: “(That makes it) a little bit easier.”

Mona: (Nodding) “So, that’s (nods) yeah . . . I think . . . if I didn’t have any connections, I would have moved on,” she said matter-of-factly. “What made me stay now longer . . . and I was on the brink of moving before we had Bebe (she means baby, her daughter). OK, we did this now . . . maybe we should go back home.” She suddenly became animated, with her hands on her hips, sticking her chest out, and looking like a mother chicken rocking side to side, pretending that she was talking to / hen-pecking her husband. “I did my mainland thing for you, now it’s my turn, you know?” (laughs)

Cami: “Right?!”

Mona: “You know, but I think if I didn’t have the Hawaiian connection . . . it kind of saves me (yeah) to feel not so alone . . . and you make your ‘ohana, you know? (Meaning that you create a community, a family wherever you are when you are not near relatives.) But um . . . also it was she came (when her daughter was born) then you know, like I was telling you, the schools are better.”

Cami: “Here?” I asked, clarifying.

Mona: “Yeah.”

Cami: “For your daughter?”

Mona: “For my daughter . . .” she said, nodding. “And life, socially, would be better. It’s a great place to bring up a child, and so I’m just doing the best I can . . . to continue . . . and, you know, that she knows her culture and (nodding to emphasize that

teaching children their culture is important) You know, so . . . sometimes she comes hula (*auana*—modern hula) with me too, or you know. I go (with her to her *kahiko*—ancient hula classes).

Cami: “Really?”

Mona: “Yeah.”

This meeting we had attended at Cal Poly was a chance for the homesick and the isolated to connect and make new, lasting friendships. For Mona, dancing hula with this group became (and still is) a huge part of her life. For the two of us, it was the beginning of a life-long friendship as hula sisters. This chance gathering changed the course of our lives by providing an anchor—a community foundation—where we could begin to grow roots on the mainland.

When the meeting officially started, the lively chatting died down; we were instructed to go around the room, introduce ourselves, and say what attracted us to the gathering. I learned that most of the attendees had spent considerable time in Hawai‘i or were kama‘āina that now live in the area, and had fallen in love with the culture. My goodness, there was a lot of talent in the room! I counted at least a dozen or so dancers, some singers, several ‘ukulele and guitar players, and a couple of guys who played *pahu*, *fa‘atete*, and *to‘ere* (Tahitian drums).

A Native American woman of Portuguese descent named Sandy Rodriguez claimed responsibility for placing the ad that brought us all together. Sandy was tall and very thin, a soft spoken, fair-skinned brunette who wore colorful mu‘umu‘us and worked in the records department at Cal Poly; over the next few years, she would become Mona’s first “real” hula teacher, our beloved kumu, and prove to be a most loyal and supportive friend-for-life. It was Sandy’s love of Hawaiian culture that facilitated our meeting. In joining our talents together—Sandy, the teacher and choreographer, Mona, the musician and I, the seasoned dancer, *alaka‘i* (leader under the direction of the kumu), and the one who knew a little ‘ōlelo would build the foundation of this new venture and ongoing project of Aloha, one that continues to this day to

be a hub of Hawaiian cultural education and collaboration for students of all ages in the central coast.

The first thing I noticed about Mona is that she has an incredibly welcoming presence and a contagious laugh; she struck me as spirited in an easy going sort of way, a local Hawaiian woman who had found a way to make herself at home on the mainland. She introduced herself as a “Hilo Transport” (one who transported themselves from Hilo, Hawai‘i to the Central Coast of California) from a family of lei makers and musicians who loved to *kanikapila*<sup>4</sup> on the weekends, happy hour, any chance they got to play guitar, ‘ukulele, and sing. I thought for sure she was a dancer, because growing up, almost all Hawaiian girls I knew took hula lessons. I distinctly remember her saying, “Me? No, I don’t dance . . . it just never was my thing.” A couple years later after that initial meeting, hula had definitely become “her thing!”

We all agreed on meeting a couple times a week, whoever could make it to the practices. The musicians would practice their songs in one room, and the dancers worked on the hula to those songs in a bigger room. During the last half hour of practice, the musicians and dancers would work together on what was practiced separately. This was extra special for me because I’d never had the privilege of dancing with a halau that had its own musicians! As it is, it’s rare to even get an opportunity to dance with live music, so for us to practice twice a week with musicians . . . what a treat that was!

At this point, we had to decide on a name. Several people made good suggestions, however the group ended up selecting the name I had proposed: *Nā Mele ‘o ke Kai*, which literally means “*Songs of the Sea.*” Even though I eventually moved away and joined another

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<sup>4</sup> A style of Hawaiian music produced in an impromptu jam session, most commonly taking place at a beach, or family gathering.



hula halau, whenever I'd come back to visit my former group, the old-timers always introduced me as "the one who gave us our name."

Hours had passed like minutes, and before I knew it, it was time to leave. We had wala'au piha, connected with others who appreciated Hawaiiana, created new friendships, and exchanged information; even though we were physically 2,500 miles away from our beloved Hawai'i, in this space of Aloha, it felt like we were at home in the Islands. Who could have known that answering a little tiny ad in the New Times would turn into an event that eventually changed so many of our lives? Each of us left the meeting anticipating the next one, excited for the opportunity to dance, sing, and make beautiful music together. We all went home that night with hearts full of Aloha, generated by the warmth and loving kinship gifted by our new 'ohana, Nā Mele 'o ke Kai.

Dancing with our new hula sisters and with live musicians was so much fun! Nā Mele practice was the highlight of my week. I always looked forward to seeing Mona and hanging out with the rest of our halau. Mona was an excellent guitar player, and was picking up 'ukulele very quickly. She had the sweet voice of an angel and easily harmonized with the best of them. Mona became the lead musician probably because she could sing Hawaiian songs from memory beautifully and effortlessly, with the correct diction. She was organized and punctual; she met with Sandy frequently, communicated what kumu wanted from the musicians, and was able to deliver what was requested. Once we had mastered several hulas and mele, Sandy began booking gigs—private parties, birthdays, and public events—for us to perform around town.



Figure 4.12. Na Mele o ke Kai logo (Vignoe field notes, 2010).

Mona always came early to practice. She wanted to catch Sandy before everybody got there, in order to get direction from her and to make the most of the musicians' practice time. In contrast, the musicians were almost always late. Mona was getting frustrated because she'd arrive to practice on time, and the musicians would casually trickle in one by one, 45 minutes late, an hour late or more; some barely made it to the last half 15 minutes of practice. I'm not sure if tardiness was due to working late or family obligations . . . most likely, they were running on what is known as "Island time", a sort of relaxed and carefree attitude about time. Mona would wait patiently for sometimes over an hour for her team members to arrive, while the dancers started on time, did their drills, worked on new numbers and perfected the old ones.

Sandy noticed all of this going on in her halau, but did not want to make *pilikia* (cause problems or disharmony) so she said nothing to reprimand the musicians; instead, she invited Mona to come and dance with us. Mona would sit on the side and politely refuse. Sandy persisted, asking at the beginning of each practice if she'd like to dance; the answer was always the same: "No thanks, hula really isn't my thing." It became apparent that the problem with late musicians wasn't going away anytime soon, so one day, when Sandy asked if Mona if she felt like dancing, Mona surprised everyone by actually stepping up to the plate to learn to hula.

“Well, I actually always wanted to learn,” she confessed, “but was kind of scared to try. Everybody was already so good (we really weren’t), but Sandy made it easy for me to take baby steps just to try it out.”

That is how Mona transformed into a lovely hula dancer. She’d come extra early to practice and receive a private tutorial from Kumu. When the other dancers arrived at 5:30 p.m., we all did a quick 15-minute warm up, and then divided up. Sandy worked with the advanced girls on new material, while I worked with the novice girls, concentrating on drills to perfect the basic steps until the musicians arrived for practice. Mona caught on quickly to the basics, and worked hard to catch on to the choreography that Sandy arranged. Her hard work paid off. A year later, she was asked to join the advanced dancers who were hand-selected by Kumu to perform in the shows. Over the years, Mona and I have performed together many, many times, and will continue to collaborate through our kumus. Mona has developed into a graceful, experienced dancer who exudes Aloha whenever she performs.

**Dancing with Aloha, contributing with Aloha.** Without knowing it, Mona had become the unofficial “MVP” (most valuable player) of Nā Mele ‘o ke Kai, because she not only danced and sang, but also played the ‘ukulele and guitar. Additionally, she contributed countless hours behind the scenes, buying fabric, designing, and sewing all the beautiful costumes that were needed for the dancers to perform.

I left Nā Mele in 1999, upon graduating from Cal Poly; I moved to Santa Barbara to pursue a career in Human Resources, and was adopted into a new halau called “Hula Anyone?” under the direction of Angelita Eller, who had been teaching in Santa Barbara for over 30 years. Mona eventually replaced me as Sandy’s alaka’i for Nā Mele ‘o ke Kai. Sylvia, one of Sandy’s former students, had studied kahiko and oli even more intensely under another kumu, and had

completed the *‘ūniki* (graduation of a hula dancer to become an official kumu) process and ceremony. Sandy retired, moved to northern California to be closer to her grandchildren, and placed her halau in Sylvia’s care. Nā Mele ‘o ke Kai has since morphed into a halau that focusses primarily on kahiko and oli.

Some of the women wanted to dance more contemporary hula with live musicians, like in the days of old; with Sandy’s blessing, her former student Pauline formed a sister halau in 2008 called *Hoapili Pomaika‘i Aloha* which means “Friends bound together with Aloha.” Today, Mona dances with Hoapili Pomaika‘i Aloha, while her daughter is a student in the keiki division of Nā Mele ‘o ke Kai.



*Figure 4.13.* The keiki division of Nā Mele ‘o ke Kai. Photo with permission from Nā Mele ‘o ke Kai and courtesy of the McKelvy ‘Ohana album.

**Interview.** Mona invited me to their home in Los Osos to talk story. One might describe Los Osos as a sleepy little town that rests on the Pacific Coast of San Luis Obispo County. The drive took longer than I had anticipated—almost two hours from Santa Barbara—and since I had not been to her home in many, many years, I had to ask for directions. From the main street, I drove several blocks up, turned right onto the quiet street in Mona’s neighborhood, and parked along the curb. As I got out of the car to stretch my legs, a cool ocean breeze greeted me with an

enthusiastic kiss, stirring the wind chimes outside Mona's house, and filling the air with tones that gleefully tinkled with magic swirling in nature. "Ahhhhh . . . Pure loveliness." I thought, while walking down that familiar driveway lined with an assortment of healthy tropical plants.

I knocked on the door and immediately heard a dog bark from inside, coupled with the sound of bare footsteps on hardwood floor hurrying toward me. "Hi Cami!" Mona greeted me, opening the door. "Aloha!" We kissed and hugged, and then she waved me in, "E komo mai! Come, come inside! No need take your shoes off! MaiMai! Come say hi to Aunty Cami," she called out to her daughter. As I took off my shoes, Mailani peeked out from the kitchen and smiled shyly. I gave Mailani a big hug followed by a kiss on her forehead. Mona offered me a refreshing glass of iced water with lemon and fresh baked ginger cookies, a new recipe that she and Mailani were trying out.

She led me toward the living room where I put my things down. Mona opened the sliding door that led to their lanai, and Mailani took me on a tour of their back yard and garden. We walked on a smooth stone path that led to the chicken coop . . . Oh my goodness, they actually had several egg-laying chickens! Mailani recited the names of her chickens, showed me their worm bin and compost pile, and pointed to their vegetable garden, everything nestled neatly within a lush backdrop of tropical green plants, shrubs, and royal palms. I gazed in wonder at the assorted fruit trees of citrus, banana, the neat rows of herbs, and thought to myself, "This is like a mini Hawaiian Garden of Eden!" And just then, the wind blew, rustling the leaves of the trees and confirming my thoughts, with the magical sound of wind chimes.

**Music—here, there, everywhere.** A weathered upright piano stood quietly against the wall. Everywhere I looked, there were musical instruments, most I cannot name—hanging on the walls, displayed above the mantle, gourds and drums of different sizes were tucked away in

the corners of the living room. “What’s that, Mona?” I asked, pointing to several odd looking horns hanging above the fireplace. “Oh, aren’t those cool?” Mona squealed with delight. She told me how Kiki (her husband) finds these unique pieces of curled and hollowed out wood on the beach, and fashions each one into a horn that actually makes a very interesting sound! Apparently, he enjoys playing the French horn, and loves to work with his hands and tools. Somehow he found a way to combine the two in this fascinating hobby where he creates natural and very one-of-a-kind instruments that sort of sound like the French horn.

I sat down on a comfortable sofa and looked around. Her living room walls were painted earth colors, olive green on one side, and a shade of turmeric, mustard color on the other. There were wooden framed paintings of calabash, of mountainous landscapes, as well as black and white photos of ‘ohana members and of Hawai‘i in years gone by. Mona saw that I took interest in her pictures. “Cami, come,” she said. “I want you to see this.” I walked over where she was standing. “Check this out,” she says:

I found this picture at an antique store in Morro Bay. I look, I go (say), oh, that’s a nice picture. I like black and whites . . . And so . . . it’s out of context . . . and I look again, I go, No! That’s Mauna Kea! That’s Hilo, my hometown! (laughs)

“Oh my gosh, and you didn’t even know!” I said, laughing with her. It’s always so much fun to find a surprise at an antique store, a treasure like this old picture of your home town—the sands of your birth place—2500 miles away from where it originated. When these things happen, I like to believe that it is the work of our ‘aumākua (family or personal gods, deified ancestors), communicating with us, giving us gifts, and reminding us how loved we are.

“I didn’t even know,” Mona continued, “and I found that in Moro Bay . . . that’s a really old picture.” “Mona, that’s so cool!” I said. The dialogue continued like this:

Mona: “And then, same with that one up there. I found that one in Idaho.”

Cami: “In Idaho?” I questioned, “Of all places!”

Mona: “Yeah,” she sighed, “Just like in one of these used stores.”

Cami: “Mona, where is that a picture of?”

Mona: “Mauna Kea” (points to a white capped mountain), “See right there?”

Cami: “Oh Yeah! Wow . . . It’s like the islands keep following you.”

**Background.** I asked Mona how long her ‘ohana has been on the big island. “Since my grandmother’s generation,” she said, looking up toward the ceiling. Her dark eyes sparkled with this faraway look, as if she went back to a time in old Hawai‘i, way before she was born. “Beyond that . . . her mother, I think from her mother and her dad, so my grandmother’s mom and dad.” She remembered that her grandmother was a lei maker, and her grandfather was an iron worker with Hilo Iron Works. “Yeah, yeah, and Hilo side,” I said, indicating in our Pidgin English exchange that I remember they lived on the Hilo side of the Big Island. “Hilo,” she echoed and confirmed by nodding, “My grandfather’s from Kohala (the opposite side of the island) and then my Dad’s side . . . my grandfather worked in the sugar cane plantation. Dad, he’s from Moloka‘i and he came over (to the Big Island) for school. So that’s where my mom met my dad, at Hilo Community College.” “That’s awesome,” I commented. I’ve always enjoyed hearing about how couples meet and fall in love.



Figure 4.14. Ah Lan’s Lei Stand in Hilo. Photo courtesy of the Mona McKelvy ‘Ohana album.

**Ah Lan's Lei Stand.** Mona is the eldest of eight children who were born and raised in Hilo, an old town located on the east side of the Big Island of Hawai'i. "My mother is Hawaiian and Chinese, my dad Filipino . . . so I'm 1/4 Hawaiian, 1/4 Chinese, and 1/2 Filipino. I come from a working family . . . we have a family lei stand in Hilo, Ah Lan's Lei Stand. Ah Lan is my mother's name," she explained. Formerly known as Hilo Airport Lei Stand, Ah Lan's Lei Stand is a thriving family business that was started by Mona's grandmother (mother's mother) nearly 50 years ago. "We were stationed at the airport, and back in the day, ours was one of only two lei stands at the Hilo airport," she said matter-of-factly.

Mona and her siblings grew up working under mother's and grandmother's careful eye, learning to sew, braid, weave, and *wili* (a method of lei making that utilizes string to wind) lei. The lei stand was busy throughout tourist season in Hawai'i, and making lei is extremely labor intensive, especially during the Merrie Monarch Festival<sup>5</sup> (March /April), Lei Day (May 1st), graduation, and Aloha Week (2nd week in October). So busy, in fact, that family members plan their vacations around Merrie Monarch to work in their 'ohana's lei stand, and in order to handle the overload request for leis, family members visiting from neighboring islands are instantly put to work. "My brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews, and whoever comes home . . . has to help," Mona said.

"When I was (living) in Honolulu, every vacation was at those key times," Mona said. "Oh, no kidding," I asked, "to help your family out?" "Yeah, but when I came to the mainland, that became . . . you know harder, so . . ."

Mona: "Yeah, and I still do (help out) . . . um . . . now it's not so important that I'm home (there are nieces and nephews to help) . . . but it is welcome, if I'm home during

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<sup>5</sup> The Merrie Monarch is organized as a non-profit that honors the legacy left by King David Kakalākaua (who was also known as the Merrie Monarch) who inspired the perpetuation of Hawaiian traditions, native language and the arts. The week-long celebration featured an international hula competition, a crafts fair, an art show, hula shows, and a grand parade through Hilo town. <http://www.merriemonarch.com/>



the busy time. So, I like going to Merrie Monarch, plus of course, I enjoy hula now (smiles). I help, plus, like, we stay up all night because everything is fresh, making (lei) until it's finished. So when I go to the competition, if there still sewing (that needs to be done), I'll sit at the table and help sew too. And then the next day, 'cause we set up shop at the airport, and then uh, we have at the craft fair, so I'm at the craft fair all day selling and then I go to competition, you know, but that's how it is."

"Not too much sleep," I commented, "or visiting with everybody because you're" Mona laughs, "I live on coffee . . . and then they say, "Go rest, go rest," but you feel like you want to help, so . . ." I asked Mona if there was a special way that they sew, or a particular weave that their family invented, since they are known to create these incredibly unique and beautiful woven leis. "Is there a special weave that they do?" "We call it *haku lei*," Mona said. (*Haku* means to braid.)



Figure 4.15. Making a haku lei. Photo courtesy of the Mona McKelvy 'Ohana album.

"So, now you've been sewing leis since you were a little girl?" I asked. "Yeah," Mona said shaking her head, smiling a far-away smile, going back to the days of bebe, when at age 2 or 3, parents teach their keiki to pluck flowers in their back yard.

**Picking flowers in the forest.** She told me a story of how her mother would load the kids up in the car, and one by one, drop them off with their buckets every 500 yards or so along the highway to pick ginger. "Now, you would never do that, drop your child on the side of the road!" she laughed. "That was a long time ago!" She told another story of how her mother would go deep in the forest to pick *liko leihua*, *a'ali'i kumakane*, and *maile*—these are precious

flowers and leaves that grow in the wild and cannot be cultivated. Mom would call out, “Ramona!” and Mona would call back, “I’m right here!” following each other’s voices so the little ones don’t get lost. It can be spooky going that deep in the forest if you don’t know where you are going.

Once when I was visiting, my brother Kealoha invited me to pick flowers to make a special lei for a friend’s birthday. The flowers he wanted grew in a secret place he knew of, so we had to drive to a forest on the other side of the island. Before we went in, he performed a hauntingly beautiful oli that seemed to echo throughout the forest. I asked why he chanted and what did it mean. He smiled, patiently telling me that he called out to *Laka* (goddess of the hula and the forest), asking permission to pick the flowers we needed, promising that we would be respectful of her gifts, take only what we needed, and not waste; finally he asked ‘aumākua for protection against evil spirits that may be lurking in the forest. And then he laughed light-heartedly as he walked off the beaten path, knowing that some people wouldn’t understand this ritual, also knowing that I’d probably get spooked by his explanation. Believe me, I did get spooked! Just then, I felt the chill of goose bumps creep up the right side of my neck. I made it a point to stay very close to the group the entire time we were in the forest.

I asked Mona if they still go into the forest to pick. She said not so much, and today, you would never bring young children with you to collect flowers. “How come?” I asked, and was shocked by her reply. “Now, *pilau* (rotten, spoiled; foul),” was her reply, “Cannot . . . because *pakalolo* (cannibus, marijuana) is planted there. People put trap because they no like you touch their pakalolo. Now we no ever go pick maile—too dangerous—we have pickers.”

**Supporting the industry.** I asked my hula sister if there were any other dancers in her family. “No!” She said, laughing. “We . . . we’re . . . we not dancers you know.” I wondered

why, since they were raised on the Big Island where Pele is alive and well, where the Merrie Monarch Festival was hosted every year, and so many very famous kumu taught there. As I began to speculate why the women in her family didn't dance, it was like she heard my thoughts and tried to explain:

And yeah, 'cause you know, when we sew leis, I thought about it, 'cause we all like to sing. You no can really watch TV, you know. We glance up. We have a TV by the table. But when we sew, we got to glance up. We always got music on. So the first thing I turn on when I come in the house is music. You know how some people it's TV? It's always music.

"No kidding" I said, taking in what she was saying. "The music is always playing in my house," she said, nodding. "I noticed that," I commented, suddenly aware that Hawaiian music had been playing, ever-so-softly in the background the entire time.

In reflecting on what Mona had said, it dawned upon me . . . even though hula is an integral part of our culture, not everybody gets to dance. Suddenly, it all came together for me: I remember her saying that she came from a working-class family, there were many mouths to feed, and how she learned to sew lei at a very young age. It takes time to go to dance class, it takes time to practice in order to perfect basic steps, and it costs money. These days, unless you come from a family that dances where the elders teach the young ones, you either pay dues to the halau or pay for lessons; then of course, there are practice outfits (usually a *pa'u* skirt or colorful pareau) that must be sewn or purchased, as well as costumes, leis and adornment (if you are lucky enough to be chosen to perform). Some halau require their dancers to sell tickets to events or participate in fundraisers—especially if they are called to perform off-island . . . all of this takes time and costs money. Not everybody has these things.

I had taken for granted that not every Hawaiian girl comes from a long line of chanters and dancers, or has had the privilege of taking hula lessons like I did. I can't imagine being denied the pleasure of learning to dance with the other girls, being denied the satisfying feeling

of accomplishment in perfecting a number, and then being denied the rush of pure joy when given the opportunity to perform.

Reflecting on the disparity of privilege and opportunity that so many take for granted brought up a deep sense of sadness. I felt ashamed for being so ignorant. In that moment, my heart grew with two realizations: a) I became mindful, with a new perspective and appreciation for those who work tirelessly to support the industry from behind the scenes, and b) I gained a new empathy for Mona. Hers was a Hawaiian Cinderella story—she stood for all the little girls who wanted to dance, but had to work because their families couldn't afford to send them.

“Cam, look!” Mona said, breaking my thought, wanting me to see her music collection. “So now when I go home, I spend all my money on food, books, and music!” She giggles with delight.

“You have quite an assortment of Hawaiian music,” I marveled, as Mona showed me an entire cabinet—hundreds and hundreds of CDs—neatly organized by the names of artists. It was impressive; a custom-made shelf—three full sections across, and five down—each of these sections carefully labeled. “I keep it in one place,” Mona said, smiling bashfully. I was still in shock at the pure volume of music on CDs she possessed. “Well, I had to organize myself,” she said, in reaction to my reaction, “or else, I no can find nothing!” Practice (hula) CDs were alphabetized by artists' names in the first section, Hawaiian Christmas CDs in the next. “And then, this is my collection of my Hawaiian, this is only Hawaiian,” she said proudly. “Oh my goodness,” I thought. “I have never seen such a collection . . . except for in the music stores. She probably has every Hawaiian CD ever created.” “Well . . . mostly Hawaiian, some contemporary,” Mona said, again, hearing my thoughts. “I'm not much into the reggae, or

Jawaiian (a mix of Jamacan and Hawaiian),” she admitted, “This (collection) is mostly Hawaiian, Hawaiian music.”

**Moving away.** Mona attended parochial school, graduated from St. Joseph’s Catholic High School in Hilo, and dreamt of moving away to do something exciting with her life.

I’m the eldest of eight, so I’m like, number one in crew. In other words, I was driving everybody and doing all the errands and all of that, when my Mom wasn’t. She wasn’t ready to let me go. So it was hard to “get out of dodge” to, you know, (get out) of this small town. I wanted to go, you know? I helped raise the lower half of the eight kids, you know . . . So anyway, it took a couple of years, and then moved to Oahu. I went a couple years to Hilo Community College and then went to Oahu, but was trying to support myself plus going to school and work. That kind of went by the wayside.

When Mona first moved to Honolulu, she was lucky enough to land a job at Byron’s Drive In, an old fashioned diner located close to the Honolulu airport. Mona would work at Byron’s for a couple of years, until she finally earned her degree in Fashion Merchandising. She described her weekdays: catch the bus to Leeward Community College and after classes, catch the bus to Byron’s Drive In for swing shift, which was from 2:30 p.m. until 11 p.m., and then catch the bus home. “Wow. That’s hard,” I commented. “At the time, I lived with ‘ohana,” she said, “and then I needed to move on. So anyway, ‘ohana was good, but hard when you just want to spread your wings.”

Mona: “So . . . I got into a relationship and moved in with my boyfriend Walter for eight years . . . and then I was like, okay, a nice man, and you know, I would have been very well taken care of island style, you know, go to the games, have season tickets.”

“He was a local boy?” I could already tell. “Local Japanese boy, you know, I was just . . .” She sighs, rolling her eyes upward and shakes her head. “Bored?” I guessed.

Mona: “It was just like (her eyes get big, she makes a chopping motion with her hand, like a routine done over and over, day in and day out). Is that all there is? It was just like, you know . . . and so, everything was fine you know, but . . . so then, just one day I woke up, I said, “I need to move . . .” and he said, “Okay,” just like that. (No drama, he didn’t even put up a fight, he said OK.) So that’s when I moved in with Maggie, who’s my friend at work in Waimanalo. So we were roommates and so then one summer, Kiki comes over for a visit.”

Cami: “That’s her brother?”

Mona: “Her brother, my (now) husband. She would always (say), “I want you to meet my brother!” And I’m like (shakes her head), “I’m not going out with your younger brother, no way!” (laughs) You know, so a long time we (she and Kiki) were friends and just . . . oh, and before that, she (Maggie) got married and her parents came over, so I met her parents before I even met Kiki. So anyway, how it happened, how I came to the mainland, is . . . when it was time for him to come back (to the mainland), they—I really hit it off with his parents—they invited me to come over for winter season, they said, “Hey, Kiki’s coming back why don’t you come on the plane?” Unbeknownst to them that we had gotten romantic and for me it was just like, okay it’s just this summer fling forget it, he’s gonna go home and I’ll be on my merry way.”

“So anyway, he wrote me a letter (that said), you can come for the winter and see what’s it like and so . . . at the time I was working for, I had a really good job! I was working for um, a gift shop they’re still in business, but now it’s (owned by) the next generation.”

Cami: “In the islands?”

Mona: “In King’s Village (Waikiki), he (owner) had a number of stores at Ward Warehouse, and one at the Hyatt, and one at King’s Village . . . and I was doing admin, and I was doing displays, and I really loved it! I was even traveling to other islands to do his uncle’s shop, to do merchandising and stuff you know, but when that came up (the chance to visit the mainland) I was kind of (thinking) you know, you go to work, you do your thing, my Sundays was driving to North Shore, it was just this routine (she does this hand chopping motion in the air again, just like she did when describing her life with Walter, meaning routine), so when that (came up), that sounds fun, you know, go to the snow (she said smiling and nodding her head), so I said, “Yeah!” (Her eyes got big and she had this look on her face like she was four years old and just got invited to Disneyland) “I want to go!”

Kiki’s parents lived in Sandpoint, Idaho. Mona had never been there; her thought was that if she didn’t like it, she could always just come back home. “You know, I was just ready for a change,” she said. “So what year was this?” I asked.

Mona: “1984. So . . . (She sighs, looks up at the ceiling and puts her right hand to her mouth like she’s thinking) then there was this problem of Kiki . . . he has a girlfriend, back there.”

Cami: “Okay . . .”

Mona: “I was like (shrugs), your parents invited me to come over. So, I can go and do my own thing. I’m fine you know, we can be friends and you know, were gonna be in the same house.”

Cami: “Was it weird for you?”

Mona: “No . . . So, no, and so then I said, “So, you have this girlfriend, and that’s fine if you want to go back to your girlfriend . . . that’s fine, I can just . . . so he’s like, “Oh no!” (laughs) So we stayed boyfriend, girlfriend. When we went . . . you know, he just had to solve that little problem, you know . . . when I got there . . . (laughs) who was his um, sister’s best friend (laughs) and I shared a room with his sister (laughs) . . . But anyways so, that’s what brought me to the mainland, and he said, “You know there’s a ski hill up there.” So I, never . . . curious, so I go, can I apply? He goes, “Yeah.” So I just applied, and sent my thing in and I was hired sight unseen. It was food service, but hey! I had a job!”

What was supposed to be a little winter get-a-way turned out to be a two year stay in Sandpoint, Idaho. “It was fun,” Mona reminisced. “I met a lot of nice people but (sighs) that was an experience—to feel like a minority—because it’s mostly . . . I don’t know if you know, the Arian Nation is like the next town.” “Oh, you’re kidding!” I said. That was shocking to hear.

It’s mostly . . . it’s very white. I mean there was one other Asian girl who was a really good skier . . . and the only thing similar to us two, is that she had really long black hair. She was Korean . . . And so the people would confuse us, the two of color people there, in a town of four thousand. I really felt (nodding), there was some . . . (prejudice?) And I think it was more out of ignorance, where people don’t really know where you’re from, not ignorance, stupid ignorance. Just they don’t know.”

As she told this story, Mona leaned forward toward me, opened her eyes really big, and she shook her head in disbelief. “Right?” I commented. “You don’t look Korean at all.” “So you know, after a while they’d say, “Hey Sun-ei! (That was the other Asian girl’s name) Great run!” I’d go, after a while I went, (smiles and waves, reenacting the scenario) “Hey! Thank you!” (She laughs, crinkling up her nose.) I was a horrible skier!” She laughs again. “You just played along?” I gasped, looking at her in horror. “Yeah,” she said, nodding, “I did.”

The couple lived with Kiki’s parents until they saved enough money to rent a little house; eventually, they purchased a trailer, and could move wherever work became available.

Mona: “I worked the most jobs in my entire life in that one little town, it’s just ‘cause every season it changes. Your job ends, you gotta find another job and then you gotta do whatever it is. I did, cleaned houses, worked at a boat place, I worked you know, I worked at couple of bars . . . I’d be serving beers or whatever. But sometimes, I have two, three jobs.”

Cami: “I love that picture of your first Christmas . . . there you are, in your mu‘umu‘u!”

“Yeah,” Mona sighed. “That’s really sweet!” I said, looking at a picture of my friend who was so young at the time that the picture was taken, she might’ve been a daughter’s age now. “I just, I was homesick,” Mona lamented. “You know, and . . . but you know, my mother-in-law also embraced the culture very, oh you know, she . . . she let me play Hawaiian music. She wore her mu‘u mu‘u too. (pronounced it Moo-Moo) In fact her name is Moomoo, (she spelled it out) M-O-O-M-O-O because she always wore mu‘umu‘us!”



*Fig. 4.16.* Mona and Kiki in the early years of their relationship. Photo courtesy of the McKelvy ‘Ohana album.

I asked if the experience of relocating to the mainland was difficult, since she got homesick, especially that first year away from home.

“I had a really good time, but sometimes, you know, you just get homesick for . . . not so much food, or . . . it’s just, uh . . . the island feeling, you know? ‘Ohana, especially at Christmas time, when you’re not with ‘ohana. You know, so.” She said looking wistful, sighs, looks away. “Um . . . so, you know.” She sighed again, resting her chin under her fist. To take her mind off of how much she missed home, Mona would play her guitar, or play Hawaiian music at the house.



I worked on the lake, it was kind of like across (motions with her arm in an arch) the town, so people would come on their boat and they would stay for the day. I was known as the Hawaiian girl, in the middle of Idaho. (Laughs) So after a couple of seasons of that, I was like, okay enough playing, because you would make just enough money to get by. You know, that can be only so long, and besides, I was missing ocean. So we decided to come down to California because Kiki has family here.

They drove from Idaho and ended up in Morro Bay. “Ho, the first time, when we drove from Idaho and then we went to Oregon, that first ocean smell it was like, Ahhhhh . . .” she recalls, laughing. “You were like a fish out of water,” I said, shaking my head.

I asked Mona if she ever had a hard time when she first moved here from Hawai‘i. “I did,” was her response. “When I first moved . . . um . . . well to Idaho, (nods) Yeah. Definitely when I first got there, ‘cause I couldn’t associate with anything . . . you know?”

Mona found certain things frustrating because she was used to being very independent, and now had to depend on others because she didn’t know how to drive in the snow. After a while, she made some friends, and things got a little easier. And then when they moved to the Central Coast, Mona found it difficult to make friends because this area was full of college students, but she and Kiki weren’t. She told a story about being mistaken for being Latina:

I would, and I still do (leans forward to make a point) get . . . um . . . mistaken for Hispanic, which is not a big deal, you know, I’m not offended by it, but it’s like HEY! You know (laughing). Um, but one that really made me mad is uh . . . When we first got here, we had that (VW) bug you saw (in a photo). And Kiki would drive into where his job was, he was doing landscaping every day on Highway 1, drive into San Luis. And um, the one time I drive, I get pulled over . . . (rubs eyes with her left hand) and the officer was asking me real round-about questions which (at the time) I didn’t know, but he was trying to find out . . . I should’ve said I was a student, which I wasn’t. “Why are you here? How long you . . .” ‘Cause we had Idaho plates on . . . so I got pulled over, and I really believe because he thought I was Hispanic (eyes big and head nodding) and maybe I was from out of the . . .(she paused).

Cami: “You mean he thought you were here illegally?”

Mona: Yeah, so times like that I felt really discriminated (nodding) you know . . . I mean, I . . . I . . . I feel like it’s an honor when . . . the Hispanic people they, (face lights up smiling and she becomes very animated) “Buenos Dias! Dadadadadadadada . . .” You know? (she said laughing.) You know, I was like, “I don’t know . . . (She shrugs her

shoulders and laughs) and then I go, “Hi, I’m just here to order a cake!” You know, I don’t get offended like that, you know, but for those other kind of situations where (looks disturbed) I was pulled over by . . . It was clearly . . . (shakes her head)

Cami: “Right, they wouldn’t pull over anybody else (meaning Kiki, who is *Haole*)

Mona: “And here the same car . . . (Kiki drove) for months, you know, and then (smiles in disbelief) I drive it, and then (shakes head) you know, (tips head) so there were a couple of occasions like that where I knew I was picked out because I . . . maybe they thought I was an illegal immigrant.”

“For real?” I gasped. So this kind of thing happened to her on several occasions. “And I don’t tink (think) I look (Hispanic)” Mona said, shaking her head. “I don’t think you do either,” I said.

Mona: “So those kinds of things made me mad, you know and, kind of like ugh, what am I doing here, you know? I need to be . . . I think I would have been more left alone (speculating) maybe if I was in Santa Barbara,” she gestured toward me, “or San Francisco where there’s more.”

“Yeah, diversity,” I said, feeling unsettled for how my sister had been marginalized over and over. “Yeah,” she agreed. “It’s pretty homogenized here.”

**Funny stories about flowers and people.** Mona had some funny stories to tell as well.

They were in Idaho celebrating a work friend’s birthday:

And, you know how we are at home, we just see a flower, we pick it and put it in our hair. So oh, it’s Larry’s birthday, I’m gonna make him a lei! So I picked all these yellow flowers, I thought it was pretty. I picked it all up, I made it, it was really pretty, and it was um, it was the yellow flower from the dandelions, he was so allergic!

We both started laughing hysterically. “Oh shucks!” I managed to say, gasping for breath. “That is so funny . . . poor guy!” She goes on:

I felt so bad! (She laughs some more.) Then another one is, when I first came here, I worked in Embarcadero, at this place that sold coffee, ground coffee, tea and chocolate. Bad combination, I think I gained 20 pounds working there (she laughs). But anyway, again, I’m like (her face lights up with delight, reenacting how she happened upon such pretty flowers) Oh! Pretty flowers! I’ll put one in my hair, and I come to work. The girl (at work) she’s just horrified with me. I go, “What?” She goes, “You know you have a California poppy in your hair? That’s against the law to pick them.” (Mona laughs.) I didn’t know if she was messing with me, or what.

At this point, Mona and I are laughing so hard and can't stop. We didn't even have to exchange words, because we each knew what the other was thinking: How ridiculous is it to have a law against picking flowers?! Isn't that why Mother Earth produces flowers, as gifts to us, her children? And we honor her by adorning ourselves with a single flower or many flowers strung into a lei . . . But then the shock of being reprimanded by a co-worker for wearing a flower in her hair . . . The whole scenario was hilarious.

“But you liked the yellow flowers,” I said, wiping a tear from the corner of my eye. “That’s so funny, how could you know, you know?” “So that’s funny.” Mona stifled a giggle. “So I guess I always did do the lei or you know, related to the flowers or to the sea. I don’t know mainland flowers, I still don’t know, you know,” she said, shaking her head. Well, we know she won’t be making leis from California poppies anytime soon.

**Making a home on the mainland.** Mona and Kiki settled down in Los Osos, got married in 1989, and a couple years later, were lucky enough to purchase a home. Although it was a huge responsibility, it seemed like these two very free-spirited artists were ready to move into the next phase of their new life together.

**A new career.** Mona became certified as a massage therapist, and started her own business—Aloha Nui Bodyworks—and incorporates a little lomilomi into her practice. “Why Aloha Nui?” I asked, even though I already knew the answer. “I wanted a name, but I also wanted it to start with A,” she said laughing. “Yeah, and so I said, OK Aloha . . . *Aloha nui* . . . ‘cause I do things with a lotta Aloha or a lotta love, so . . . that’s how I,” she nods, “came up with that name.” Mona enjoys her work, and owning her business allows her the freedom to travel, go to hula workshops, and to take care of ‘ohana.

**A gift from heaven.** The couple had been trying for years and years to get pregnant, with no luck. They were ready to give up hope because Mona was almost past the age of conceiving, and then one day, a miracle happened. At the age of 45, Mona became hāpai. Theirs was a high risk pregnancy, and doctors placed Mona on bed-rest for in the hospital for two months. To soothe herself, she listened to Hawaiian music. “I always had my stereo with my Hawaiian music going” she remembers. The baby was born very premature and weighed only two and a half pounds at birth. They named her *Mailani*, which means “gift from the heavens” or “heavenly gift.”

Little Mailani was fighting for her life. She had asthma among other complications that premature babies suffer. The baby needed to stay in the incubator for many weeks; she also required physical therapy to develop her muscles, because she wasn’t able to lift her head.

So I would do different games with her, for her to look up, so she would (imitates a baby lifting her head up) exercise her neck, you know . . . and that kind of thing. So, anyway, there was a program that covered all of that but, said and done, we had medical expenses up the ying-yang . . . so having the house really helped.



Figure 4.17. Mailani, Kiki, and Mona. Photo courtesy of the McKelvy ‘Ohana album.

Today, Mailani is a healthy, vibrant eighth-grader who shares her mother’s passion for dance and both her parents’ natural talent for music. Mailani plays ‘ukulele, piano, guitar, and trumpet. She enjoys kahiko lessons with Aunty Sylvia, and is learning to speak ‘ōlelo. I asked

how long Mailani has been dancing hula. “She is now 12,” Mona replied, “and we were sitting in a garage with Aunty Sandy when she was two.”

**On moving back home.** I asked Mona if she ever thought about moving back home.

You know, now? Hmmm . . . (shakes her head no) Not now, maybe I don’t know . . . Ha! (an outburst) if I ever get to retire . . . or . . . if she (Mailani) decides to go school there? You know, maybe live part-time over there? This is a nice place to live. And very . . . you know, this is not like . . . Hawai‘i, every place is crowded . . . I can’t get a home like this in Hawai‘i (shakes her head).

My home would be a shack . . . if, *IF* I had one. Or I’d be living with Mom (nods) or with ‘ohana, you know. No can. I can’t touch it . . . and it’s expensive to live *here* but we were lucky in getting this home, um, the . . . buyer made it work for us (nodding).

She continued:

I try to go home every year and a half to two years. There was a time where it was three years since I reached home, cause, you only get couple vacations a year, and . . . (She takes a deep breath) . . . Have to alternate, you know, it can’t always be about me, you know (laughing).

“I know,” I said, while Mona continues to laugh. I think she’s laughing because she is a most giving, unselfish person, always contributing in any way she can (marketing for two halaus, sewing costumes, making lei, taking care of her family) and at the same time, maybe she feels it is selfish to want to go home to Hawai‘i any free chance she gets . . . even though when she’s home, she’s sewing leis, working at the lei stand, visiting ‘ohana, all of these things. Is it selfish to go home to rejuvenate, to connect spiritually with the ‘āina, to fill up on Aloha? “Where else would you rather go?” I asked, but she was still on that last thought about not going home often enough:

Mona: “So this one stint was three years since I was home and that was almost like the max . . . you need to at least touch Hawaiian water . . . in between years.”

Cami: “But you just came back (from the islands), right? You got to fill up your heart.”

Mona: “Yeah . . .” she said, her soft brown eyes glazed over longingly, sadly.

Cami: “Your whole family went?”

Mona: “No it’s usually, uh, Mailani and I. We’re . . . you know, I’m self-employed and then Kiki works for a small business . . . though, the next time, he has to come,” she said nodding, and then laughs at the reality of the situation. “If we no work, we no get paid, right? We have to prepare, (nodding) so.”

This excerpt came from an email Mona sent me in July, 2012, after Mailani finished the Kamehameha Schools Summer Explorations Program:

Had a great and very full time in Hawaii . . . lemme tell you, no matta how long you go for . . . it is never long enough . . . but better den nothin yeah? Was sooooo good to see family and friends, make new friends, and spend time in Hawaii nei. Mai had a great time and the hō‘ike (show) was great . . . need to show you the video when we get together. Much aloha . . . and see you soon, Mona

**Aloha.** “You know Mona, a lot of people define Aloha in different ways, there’s no one way to define . . . so what is Aloha to you?”

Aloha is . . . Aloha is sharing. Aloha is caring, and therefore love. You know, sharing, caring . . . It’s your way of life, you know, how you treat each other . . . you know, like how you mālama, take care . . . just spreading the good. I know (that) sounds Cinderella-y but I mean, there’s bad days and there’s good days, you try to make the bad days good days. Bad times, good times, it’s all together but . . . Aloha is a smile, a hug, you know. Yeah, you never know what the next person is going through.

“So how did you learn Aloha?” I asked.

“How did I learn Aloha?” she echoed, laughing. I know that particular question sounds ridiculous and obvious to someone who lives and breathes Aloha in all that she does, but I had to ask, like I have to ask all of my participants. “I think through life,” she said thoughtfully. “You know, you have your Aloha from your ‘ohana. It doesn’t have to be Hawaiian people. Look at Sandy. It’s unconditional love. I think it’s whoever you align yourself with, you know? And then (Aloha) just continues,” she said, nodding. “Your daughter has a lot of Aloha,” I commented, “You teach it to her.” Mona’s face lit up with a big smile. She is obviously so proud of her daughter. “Yeah,” she said, “Her dad too. Her dad is real easy going . . . very loving dad.” She nods and continues, “He’s very sharing. They come from a very sharing family too.”



Figure 4.18. Mona and Mailani. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

**You bring Hawai‘i with you wherever you go.** “You have such a lovely home, Mona,” I commented, looking around, and she graciously thanked me. It was getting late, and almost time to go. My heart overflowed with Aloha for my friend and for her generous spirit of constant giving. “You have all of these lovely touches, pictures” I continued, “You’re sooo Hawaiian, everything you know?” I was thinking about my memorable visit that started with touring her home: the Hawaiian Garden of Eden and the wind chimes outside; her “Ocean Room,” a bedroom painted in tranquil hues of blue and green, and decorated with star fish and assorted sea shells, the bed finished with a matching Hawaiian quilt. “Well you bring it with you, yeah?” she smiled, stating what was obvious to her. “You bring your home with you, you know.” “Yeah,” I said slowly. “Not everybody does, but you did.” “Yeah,” she agreed. “I did, huh.”



Figure 4.19. Mona at Butterfly Beach in Santa Barbara. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

**Cami**

Figure 4.20. Cami. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

“My Sweet Pīkake Lei”

Words by Robert Cazimero & Kaleo Chock; music by Robert Cazimero

Produced by Mountain Apple Company, Inc. ©

[http://www.huapala.org/My/My\\_Sweet\\_Pikake\\_Lei.html](http://www.huapala.org/My/My_Sweet_Pikake_Lei.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GO44V3W9ULw>

I am a woman of Hawaiian, Japanese, and Caucasian descent, described as a beloved daughter, sister, wife, and favorite aunty by family members. In the last five years, I have transformed into a thoughtful student and graceful dancer, by devoting time to learn the language, culture and dance of our kūpuna (ancestors). In the 2012–2013 academic school year



my co-workers nominated me to receive recognition as “adjunct faculty of the year” at Santa Barbara City College (SBCC). Counseling professionals have called me a “leader” among career practitioners when discussing our contributions to the field. None of this really matters to me; I would instead prefer to be known as “a practitioner of Aloha. I practice joining with others . . . and listening to what is said, and what is unspoken. I feel that it is important to melt what divides us and to listen deeply for truth with my heart, with all my sense of being, for that matter. Hawaiians call this listening with your *na‘au* (guts; mind, heart). Hawaiians believe you should listen to your *na‘au* because your *na‘au* is never wrong.

***Mo‘okuauhau (genealogy)***. *Mo‘okuauhau* is very important to the Hawaiian people for several reasons: first, it is essential to know where you came from. Genealogy determined the rank of our *ali‘i* (chiefs). Most *mo‘olelo* and *ka‘ao* (legend, tale, novel; storytelling) begin with some form of genealogy. In 2011, took an online course called *Mo‘okū‘auhau: Ola Nā Iwi* (The Bones Live), and began to appreciate why our *mākuā* teach *keiki* to honor *kūpuna* and to reciprocate the extra care, nurturing and kindness that we ourselves were given in our formative years. Secondly, we learn to treasure the *mo‘olelo* of our *kūpuna*. As we listen to their stories, we step back in time to see life through their eyes, when they were perhaps even younger than we are now, and everything was much different than it is today. Deep wisdom lies in our rich legacy, just waiting to be discovered by those who dare to venture there; then we can reap the rewards of knowledge which help perpetuate cultural values, beliefs, and stories of our ‘ohana with our own *keiki* and family members. The Hawaiians believe that it is foundational to know who you are and where your family comes from. This is why *mo‘okū‘auhau* is so very important to the people of Hawai‘i, so that our young people don’t just “float around” and get lost trying to find themselves. Identity and sense of self helps to ground us.

When we as *kamali`i* (children of the gods, of the earth) know our roots and are connected with one another, with our ancestors, with our *‘aumākua* (family or personal gods, guardians), with all spiritual beings past and present, when we *mālama honua*, (take care of earth, our world, each other) and *mālama pono* (take care of ourselves) we become aligned again; our *na`au* (intestines, bowels, guts; mind, heart, affections) will guide us, and as native peoples, we instinctually know right from wrong, can choose to live full productive lives, and develop the gifts we are given. Besides a sense of pride and ownership in our cultural heritage, we will grow to understand many things: what our parents and *‘ohana* did to contribute to society, why they made the choices they did, where our food, clothing and shelter come from, how earth provides everything from her bounty. Above all, when we share this sacred knowledge, our *keiki* will learn to appreciate all the hands that work together to provide sustenance. Much knowledge comes from knowing one’s past and the *mo‘olelo* attached. Finally, knowledge of one’s *inoa* together with *mo‘okū‘auhau* offers rich information and may help to provide navigation as to one’s purpose in life. Here is my *mo‘okū‘auhau*.

**Dad’s origin.** I know so much more about my mother’s side of the family than my father’s. Perhaps this is because information is more easily acquired considering our relational connections . . . we were raised in Honolulu, Hawai‘i surrounded by mom’s parents, aunties, uncles, cousins, and siblings. Today, my dad is the only person I know (alive) on his side of the family. Realizing this fact makes me want to spend time with him before it is too late. As I write this, I am feeling somewhat sad for my dad who has no more family ties to his people and birthplace; he has no family except us, his children and grandchildren. Perhaps this is a common fact of life for an older generation that I had not considered until now?

My dad is from the mainland; he was the very first and only Wengler to immigrate to the Hawaiian Islands . . . This fact was confirmed by the listings in the white pages of the phone book year after year, for over 30 years. My father is of German, Irish and French decent. He was born a couple years before World War 11, and was raised on a family farm in a small mid-western town outside of St. Louis, Missouri called Fredericktown.

My dad's birth father (Grandpa Wengler) was one of 14 Wengler children. Antone was in his 50s when he married Grandmother Rose, who was only 19 at the time. At some point Rose got sick of farm life; she moved to St. Louis to find work and brought her mother and two young sons with her. Harry and his younger brother Howard would visit their father, aunties, uncles, and cousins on the farm during the summers. I remember my dad once scolding us (kids), saying that we are spoiled, going off about how lucky we were, that we didn't know what it was like to go without anything. Today, I can honestly say that in many ways, he was absolutely right—we were spoiled because we had a lot more than many other local children had—but at the time, I had no point of reference to what he was talking about! Apparently, his generation of Wenglers were very, very poor.

Dad told this story: one day when he was walking home with some of his buddies, he saw that their house was boarded up, and all of their personal belongings had been taken out of the house and dumped on the front lawn. Apparently, they were getting evicted. My dad (who was just a teenager at the time) was stunned, caught off guard, and completely humiliated when one of his friends hollered, "Hey Harry! Isn't that your house?!" "No way, man," he responded, "We moved a long time ago." He turned his head and kept on walking. Embarrassment turned into rage. How could this have happened to them? This scenario of poverty and the unjust feeling of helplessness, of not having enough to eat or money to pay the rent haunted Harry for

the rest of his life; he vowed that he would do whatever it took so nothing like that would never happen to his family again.

Antone passed away while Harry was in college, and Rose eventually remarried a man named Woodrow. They came to visit us once in Hawai‘i. I remember that Grandmother Rose was very kind. She was a heavy-set woman with deep blue eyes like Dad’s; she wore powder blue colored frocks, accented with a crisp white apron, and black utility shoes with thick rubber soles. Grandpa Woody was tall and thin; he wore wire rimmed glasses, denim overalls, and sometimes pants with suspenders. I think this memory stays with me because the only people I’d ever seen wearing those kinds of outfits were in books I’d read, never in real life. They also never took off their shoes when they came in the house—which was odd, because in Hawai‘i, the proper etiquette is that people take their shoes off before entering, nobody ever wears shoes in the house—but Mom warned us in advance not to say anything about it.

**A strange coincidence.** I was living in Maui at the time. My boyfriend and I were driving home one sunny day, in our red convertible after a nice big breakfast at Tasty Crust (local diner famous for their delicious pancakes), when all of a sudden, totally out of the blue, I was struck by an intense sadness that saturated my whole being, causing me to sob uncontrollably. Concerned, Dave pulled our car over to the side of the road. “What’s wrong, Cam?” he asked. “I don’t know . . . I . . . I just feel so very, very sad,” I wailed. “I can’t explain what’s going on, my heart just aches very badly.” Sniffling, I tried my best to compose myself; ten minutes later, we were back on the highway, with me silently sobbing uncontrollably with grief, neither of us saying a word to each other the entire way home. The rest of the day I felt completely empty and numb, like somebody ripped my heart out and I was just a shell of a human being walking around. Later that afternoon as we entered our apartment, the phone’s

message light was blinking furiously. My dad had left an urgent message, wanting me to call home. I did, and received the horrible news that Grandpa Woody had tripped on a step outside the house, hit his head, and died instantly. Grandmother Rose desperately tried to revive him. As Dad gave me the details, an eerie feeling came over me and my skin crawled with goose bumps as I realized Grandpa had passed away several hours ago—at the exact same moment we pulled over on the highway because I couldn't stop crying. This was just one of many psychic phenomena that I have experienced over the course of my life.

**Japanese ancestors.** Our great-grandfather (Mother's father's father) Kumakiyo emigrated from Kumamoto, Japan to Hawai'i in 1890 at the age of 17. *Ojiichan* (Japanese for grandfather) worked at the Papaikou Sugar Plantation on the Big Island of Hawai'i. Several years later he came to Honolulu and eventually worked as a head waiter; later, perhaps because of his gracious nature, was promoted to *maitre d'hôtel* at the Pacific Club, Colonial Hotel on Punch Bowl Street. Aunty Paulie (mom's sister, family matriarch and historian) speculated that he probably had a good command of the English language in order to serve as *maitre d'hôtel*. (*Ojiichan*) Kumakiyo married Ura Hashimoto from Oshiro Gun, Japan in 1913. In doing the math, *Ojiichan* was born in 1873 and married in 1913, which made him a 40 year-old groom. We don't know how old *Obaachan* (Japanese for Grandmother) was on their wedding day because there are no pictures to tell the story. "Was she perhaps a picture bride from Japan?" I wondered, but nobody ever said anything about that, and I am too embarrassed to ask (those who might know) such a forward question about a practice that has been stigmatized in recent years as human trafficking. Who are we to judge these people at this time in history when we don't have all the facts? We weren't there. Regardless, in our culture, you are taught never to dishonor your family or to speak the unspeakable, even amongst your closest family members.

In any event, Kumakiyo and Ura had three sons (John, Edwin, and George), and then three daughters (Mary, Dorothy, and Lily).



Figure 4.21. Ukishima Family—seated: Faith “Lottie” (Grandma), Kumakio (*Ojiichan*), Ura (*Obaachan*), and infant Charlotte (Mom); standing: Mary, Dorothy, Edwin (Grandpa), John, George, and Lilly. Photos courtesy of the the Ukishima / Wengler Family Album:

Our grandfather Edwin (1917–1993) was the Ukishima’s second son. *Ojiichan*’s parents, (Grandpa’s grandparents) Sakuta and Kame Ukishima were from Simashiki Gun, Too Mara, from the Kumamoto prefecture. *Ojiichan*’s brother was caring for their aging parents in Japan. Apparently he died in 1919 from drowning; it was rumored that he may have committed suicide, but nobody seems to know for sure. *Ojiichan* saw his Caucasian neighbor’s children get dressed for church every Sunday—they’d be wearing crisp, starched, buttoned-down collared shirts, shiny black patent leather shoes, their hair slicked back and nicely combed. “Respectable,” he thought, wanting that sort of image for his own sons. Not long after that, the Ukishima boys were dressing up every Sunday and going to church with the neighbor kids. One thing led to another, and that is how my grandfather and his brothers converted from Buddhism to Catholicism.

Ojiichan sent for his father Sakuta, who emigrated to Hawai‘i in 1919. The Ukishima family lived on Birch Street—the same street as the Pukuis (my grandmother’s family). The Pukui ‘ohana lived further down the block, so their house was called “down house” while the Ukishimas lived in “up house” further uptown. From her home, 25 year-old Kawena (Pukui) would see Ojiichan carry his ailing father (Sakuta) on his back (piggy-back style) so *Papa-san* could get out and get some fresh air, and thought, “What a good man he is to take care of his papa like that.” Sakuta had a massive stroke and died the very next year (1920). Ojiichan sent for his mother Kame who arrived in 1920 or 1921. She passed away in 1932 due to natural causes.

I never met Ojiichan (apparently he passed away in 1955 at the age of 55 years old), but I remember Obaachan well. She was tiny, a graceful, demure little Japanese woman (less than 4’10” tall) who often smiled, bowed, and didn’t speak much; when she did, it was mostly Japanese. In order to communicate with her, usually mom or one of the aunties would translate for us. Her long grey hair was kept neatly in a tight bun; she wore crisp, dark-colored cotton kimonos and white *tabis* (traditional Japanese split-toed socks). Obaachan was Buddhist; she had a shrine set up in her bedroom, and her entire home smelled like incense. Additionally, I remember when we went to visit her, there was barely any furniture. We sat on thick tatami mats on the floor similar to how one would at a traditional Japanese tea house.

I remember as a little girl, we had to dress up to go to the *Hongwanji*—this huge white Buddhist temple in Nu‘uanu—for celebrations like a milestone anniversary of Ojiichan’s death. We’d try our best to pay attention and sit quietly in the pews while the minister lit incense and recited these incredibly long monotone, incomprehensible incantations; each long invocation was followed by a loud *GONG!* causing my younger siblings and me to wake up and giggle

uncontrollably, which inevitably resulted in a stern look from Mom, and a painful pinch on the earlobe for being so disrespectful.

**Hawaiian heritage.** Much has been written about my great-grandmother, Tūtū Kawena (Mary Kawena Pukui, 1895–1986). She was born in the Ka‘ū district on the Island of Hawai‘i to Mary Pa‘ahana Kanaka‘ole (a native Hawaiian woman) and Henry Nathaniel Wiggin (from Massachusetts). In the traditional custom of *hānai*, (adopt; rear), the infant Kawena was given to her grandparents Nali‘ipo‘aimoku (Po‘ai) and Keli‘iKanaka‘ole-o-Haililani to raise in Na‘alehu. Po‘ai taught her *mo‘opuna* (grandchild) chants and stories that she had learned from her *tūtū wahine* (grandmother); in her younger days, she had been a traditional dancer in Queen Emma’s court. Kawena’s *tūtū kāne* (grandpa) was a *kahuna pale keiki* (obstetrician) and traditional healer who used *lomilomi*, *la‘au lapa‘au* (herbal medicines), *ho‘oponopono*, and *pule* (prayer). I learned that Tūtū Kawena’s great-grandmother (Keli‘ipa‘ahana) was a *kahuna pule* (priestess) in the line of the (Fire) Goddess Pele.

Keli‘ipa‘ahana’s parents were High Chief Kauhi and High Chiefess Na‘aihunali‘i (means the hidden chief). Keli‘ipa‘ahana married the High Chief Keli‘iKanaka‘ole, son of King Kamehameha I and Queen Wahinepio. I was fascinated to read that Tutu Kawena’s ‘ohana is known to inherit the sacred *Ali‘i Moe Kapu*—the prostrating taboo—because of the sacred bloodline of the highest ranking ali‘i (Kamakau, 1992). I will consult with my brother Ka‘umi (Hawaiian language and cultures specialist) and our Uncle Teenie (Leighton La‘akea Suganuma—our ‘ohana’s patriarch, historian, cultural expert, advocate of *pono* (truth; fairness) and keeper of genealogical records) to verify this information.

Upon the passing of Po‘ai (her grandmother), six year-old Kawena returned to Ka‘ū to live with her parents. The Wiggin family moved to Puna, in the uplands near Kīlauea volcano,



and Kawena—fluent in both Hawaiian and English languages—attended a school in Hilo where speaking Hawaiian was prohibited. My mother told me a story about Tūtū Kawena when she was a teenager, a student at that school in Hilo; the story was later confirmed by my Uncle Teenie (Leighton Sukanuma) and my brother Kealohamakua. Around the turn of the century (after the United States Government overthrew the Hawaiian Monarchy and imprisoned Queen Lili‘uokalani), the laws in Hawai‘i mandated that English would be taught and spoken. ‘Ōlelo was outlawed in the new education system, and the Hawaiian children were forced to assimilate into the culture of White immigrants and missionaries. A student in Kawena’s class was struggling to understand the lesson, which was taught in English. She turned to Kawena and asked what the teacher was saying. Kawena leaned over and explained in Hawaiian. The teacher walked over and struck Kawena, humiliating her in front of the whole class for speaking in her native tongue. She was just trying to help her friend! Kawena went home to tell her parents what had happened in school that day. She would not return to that classroom. It was then at the age of 15, Kawena began collecting and translating folktales, proverbs, and sayings.

The Wiggin ‘ohana eventually moved to Honolulu. In 1913, 18-year-old Kawena married 38-year-old Napoleon Kaloli‘i Pukui and converted to Mormonism. For many years they tried to have children, with no luck. In 1920, Henry and Pa‘ahana adopted a Japanese infant born earlier that year in Waimea, Kaua‘i whose parents had died from a plague, and gifted this baby to Kawena and Kaloli‘i to hānai. She was named Patience *Namakauhoa-o-Kawena* (the haughty eyes of Kawena), and would spend the next 65 years working side by side with her mother, researching, recording, translating, dancing, and teaching. Today she is known as “Aunty Pat” Bacon, a renowned educator, advisor, Hawaiian culture specialist, and in 2010, was

honored by the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame. This excerpt was taken from *‘Ōlelo No ‘eau*:

*Hawaiian Proverbs and Political Sayings:*

About after a year after the adoption of Patience, a second daughter of Hawaiian-Japanese ancestry was adopted by Henry and Pa‘ahana and also given, *hānai*, to Kawena and Kaloli‘i. The second daughter was named Faith. It was not until 1931 that a child was born to Kawena and Kaloli‘i, a daughter who was named Asenath Henrietta Pelehonuamea Napua‘ala-o-Nu‘uanu (Pele). (Pukui, 1983, p. xiii)

**Grandma and grandpa.** The Pukuis *hānai*’d a second daughter (Faith Charlotte Kalama, also known as “Lottie”), my grandmother. Lottie was *hapa* which means “half,” in this case, half Japanese and half Hawaiian. Her father was a pure Japanese boy who had lost his parents in the Bubonic Plague and was adopted by Admiral Clark, who gave him the name Robert. That is how a pure Japanese boy ended up with a very American name—Robert Clark. Upon his new father insisting, Robert joined the merchant marine. When their ship landed in the port in Honolulu, Robert went AWOL; they couldn’t find him! So, eventually the ship took off without him. Robert stayed in Hawai‘i and married a pure Hawaiian woman named Helen Kuina. They had many, many children, in fact, too many mouths to feed, so they took my grandmother (whose name at the time was Eulalia Clark) and her brother Edgar down to Ward Orphanage. Mary Ward, the daughter of a Honolulu businessman and philanthropist, ran the orphanage, She knew Kawena Pukui wanted to *hānai* another little girl, and so within a week, six-year-old Eulalia was sent to live with the Wiggin / Pukui clan where she was renamed Faith Charlotte Kalama Wiggin (“Lottie” 1915–2007) and raised as a Mormon. Both Pat and Faith were given the last name of Wiggin, Tūtū Kawena’s maiden name because Kaloli‘i refused to give his last name (Pukui) to their newly adopted daughters.

“Lottie” and “Eddie” (Grandpa Edwin Ukishima) lived in the same neighborhood on Birch Street and went to the same school. In the sixth grade, Lottie received a full-ride

scholarship to attend the Kamehameha School for Girls, but had to turn it down. “Why?” I asked her a long time ago. Who would ever turn down a scholarship to go to Kamehameha? “I had to work to support our ‘ohana,” she told me matter-of-factly, “Somebody had to bring home the poi.” Lottie wasn’t even a teenager when she began working at S. H. Kress & Co., the “five and dime” store located in downtown Honolulu.

I thought about the traditional family system that had radically been affected by Hawai‘i’s changing social and economic systems. Children were expected to work to help with expenses. Tūtū’s aging parents (Henry and Pa‘ahana) were living with them. Tūtū was hāpai, expecting to deliver her first child (Pele); she was incredibly busy researching and writing with Patience, the *punahele* (favorite; most cherished) who had become her invaluable apprentice. I wondered, “What happened to Kaloli‘i?” (Tūtū’s husband) since he was hardly ever mentioned in Tūtū’s books. By this time, Kaloli‘i was in his 50s. In his earlier career he’d worked for a little while as a salesperson, then became a researcher of titles at a real estate company. Upon googling his name, I discovered that he was an actor; he played “the King” in the 1936 movie *Bird of Paradise*. If Tūtū was supporting herself, (probably her husband,) elderly parents and three children, indeed, more income was needed to feed the family; it was only logical that the eldest child go to work. Hearing Gram telling her story of forfeiting a scholarship to Kamehameha broke my heart. Lottie financially supported her (Wiggin/Pukui) family for nearly ten years, beginning at the age of 12, working at S. H. Kress, a “five-and-dime” retail department store in downtown Honolulu.



*Figure 4.22.* Faith Wiggin and Edwin Ukishima (Grandma and Grandpa) on their wedding day. Photos courtesy of the the Ukishima / Wengler Family Album:

Henry Wiggin (Grandma's Grandfather who originally adopted her) became gravely ill. He wanted to be sure that before he passed, Lottie would be free to leave her duties at the Wiggin/Pukui home to start her own life as an adult; he wanted to be sure that somebody would love, cherish, and take care of her. A short time later, childhood sweethearts Lottie and Eddie were married (1936) at the library of the Sacred Hearts Church. According to Aunty Paulie, there was no party to celebrate their wedding. After the wedding, they went to see Papa Wiggin to tell him they had gotten married, and soon thereafter, Henry died peacefully, knowing that Edwin Ukishima vowed to care for Lottie. As was the traditional Japanese custom, the newlyweds moved in with the groom's parents. Lottie diligently learned to speak Japanese and adopted all of their customs. Additionally, at the urging of new her husband, she attended Sunday school and eventually converted to Catholicism.

Eddie and Lottie had five children, three girls and two boys: Charlotte (mom), Irwin, Edwina, Paulette and Nathan Ukishima, also known as “Butch.” Tragically, Edwina—named after their father—died from pneumonia when she was just two months old. The infant’s death was sudden and devastating, and cast a dark shadow of grief over the family for many, many years. Faith (Lottie) kept busy raising their children and running the household. She sewed all of their clothes on a black old fashioned Singer sewing machine that was pumped by a foot treadle, which was later passed on to me when I was a teenager. Grandpa worked as a truck driver when he and Grandma first married. Eventually, he landed a federal job as a letter carrier. Eddie would take on two more part-time jobs to support his ‘ohana, working as a maître d'hôtel at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel and sommelier at The *Halekulani* (means “house befitting heaven”) Hotel.

When we were growing up, we’d (grandchildren) visit them often, especially on Grandpa’s days off. They owned and managed this multi-unit apartment building on Date Street in downtown Honolulu. I remember he’d be sitting on the sofa lecturing us one minute, and then seconds later, snoring because he fell sound asleep! As kids, we found this scenario to be quite humorous—like an amazing self-hypnosis trick—how he could just fall asleep sitting up like that, especially because I had the most difficult time, struggling to calm down, be quiet, and fall asleep at nap time! We had no idea just how much he labored to support his family and send their children to college. I absolutely loved my grandparents. They were extremely hardworking, very kind, and gentle people who lived and breathed Aloha in everything that they did.

My mom was the *hiapo* (first-born; oldest; sometimes favorite). Her full name was Charlotte Patrice Hideko *Kalāmanamana* Ukishima Wengler (1937–2010). Tūtū Kawena gave her the name *Kalāmanamana*, which means “the rays of dawn of a new generation.” Indeed she

was, born the oldest of her siblings and cousins, the first of her generation in more ways than one. Charlotte learned to speak Japanese from her grandparents, and continued to take Japanese language classes after school. She told me that she actually learned to eat with *hashi* (chopsticks) long before ever using a fork. Charlotte attended Maryknoll, a private Catholic school in Honolulu from kindergarten through graduation, and won a full-ride scholarship to attend Marymount College in Salinas Kansas. She was the very first in her family to go to college—also to attend a mainland college—which was considered to be much more prestigious than attending the colleges in Hawai‘i. She studied chemistry, and later transferred to Mount Mary, another Catholic women’s college in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to study occupational therapy. Charlotte graduated, spent a year interning in several states, and upon returning to Hawai‘i, was employed as an occupational therapist with the Rehabilitation Center of Honolulu.

**The early years.**

*O ka makua ke ko‘o o ka hale e pa‘a ai.*

*The parent (grandparent) is the support that holds the household together.*

(Pukui, # 2424, see Appendix B)

I was born Camilla Grace Fusae Kaiuhono‘onalani Wengler on Sunday, June 13, 1965, to Harry and Charlotte Wengler. I was their second born daughter, and they were very happy to have a healthy, brand-new baby girl, a little sister for their 13-month old daughter Edwina Rose. Who knew that they would bear nine more children in the next fourteen years? As the second eldest of eleven children, I naturally developed leadership skills, and learned responsibility early. We were—and still are—a very tight knit family. Today I have thirty-three nieces and nephews on my side and only two nieces on my husband’s side! Some of these children are becoming young adults, and each touches my heart; they are individually bright and funny, clever, silly, kind-hearted, and just so much fun to be around. I enjoy spending time and building

relationships with them; they motivate me to try harder in all that I do; my goal is to create learning experiences and educational opportunities to help them succeed life and in their careers.

In our clan, each person is loved and cherished, and everyone is an important contributing member. The nucleus of our 'ohana began with Mom and Dad, then their eleven children and their spouses, and all of their children. As if our family wasn't big enough, my mom even *hanai'd* a few of my brother Kealoha's friends who were always at our house and called her Mom, as well as a few other kids who were homeless for a short time. Now that's Aloha. Mom and Dad made sure that there was always enough to eat, a warm place to sleep, and plenty of love to go around.

Both parents were "mainland" educated, the first of their respective families to graduate from college on the mainland. My dad was the eldest of two brothers who grew up in a small town outside St. Louis, Missouri, where the winters were mean and cold, and summers meant long, hot, very boring days of hard work at Aunt Lena and Uncle Leo's farm. After attaining his Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Missouri, Harry moved to Hawai'i soon after it became the 50th state, seeking adventure in a warm tropical place as far away from his home state as possible. Hawai'i seemed like a good place to go to fulfill his dream of living on a sunny tropical island and working as a school teacher. Harry went to work as a self-employed insurance salesman. Charlotte returned to Hawai'i after graduating from Mary Mount in Kansas, and worked as an occupational therapist. The young professionals were introduced at a social event sponsored by the Catholic Single's Club. Charlotte and Harry fell in love, and after a brief courtship, were married on August 25, 1963. The newly-wed Wenglers immediately began building their dreams of having a happy home filled with laughter, love, and little children. Edwina Rose was the first to arrive in 1964, followed by me, and Jonathan Patrick a year later.

My sister Wina, my brother Jon and I attended preschool and kindergarten; after school we'd hang out at Grandma and Grandpa's house. They'd spoil us, dosing us with lots of hugs and attention. I loved them very much. Sometimes Grandpa would take us to the fish market down at the pier, or we'd help Gram water her garden. It was always so much fun to pick stephanotis flowers from the vines in her back yard and string leis.

We'd walk to the community garden and visit grandpa's friends, who were other very nice old people. Every day with them was a good day, and spending time with them made me so happy! They took care of us during and after the twins were born. In 1968, Mom was bed-ridden for two and a half months; when she gave birth to Christopher Michael and Christina Marie, she put her career on hold to raise our growing family.



*Figure 4.23.* The Wengler Family—the early years. Picture taken in 1975 at the Kahala Hilton after brunch. Front Row: Robi, Harry (Dad), Fay, Charlotte (Mom), holding Angela, Tim Kealoha. Second row: Tina, Jon, Cami, Wina, Chris. Ray Ka'umi and DJ were not born yet. Photos courtesy of the the Ukishima / Wengler Family Album.

In the meantime, Dad was working hard and earning good money as one of the best insurance salesmen for Aetna Life and Casualty. In fact, he was honored to receive a place at the Million Dollar Roundtable—members of this elite club met quotas in the top 1/2 of 1% of all



insurance salespeople in the world. Dad purchased a brand new metallic blue Cadillac for his business; he and mom traveled to exotic places where the sales conferences were held, and always remembered to bring a special souvenir for each of us. They also insisted on sending us to Star of the Sea Elementary, a private Catholic school near our house. Life was good for our growing Wengler 'ohana in those days, as long as people continued to buy life and casualty insurance. Our parents bought a house on the hill with a fenced in front yard. I remember the little kids rolling around in the huge back yard, thickly blanketed with lush, cool, emerald-green clover grass . . . they used to spend hours searching for four-leaf clovers. The edge of the property was lined with tall coconut palms. I remember that here was a macadamia nut tree on the side, and huge old mango tree in the middle that generously gave us shade and sweet, juicy fruit all year long. The back yard was complete with an ornamental Japanese temple, and a lava-stone fresh waterfall, where seven golden koi swam in the connecting fishpond.

Anthony Robert was born in 1970. Of course he needed at least one little brother and a few little sisters, so Timothy Charles *Kealohamākua* (with love for the ancestors) made his appearance in 1972, followed by Marissa Fay *Kapōhaileialoha* (surrounded by a lei of love) in 1973, Angela Therese *Nāwehileiakawena* (the ornamental flowers in a lei adorning Kawena) in 1975; Raymond Paul was born in 1977. This brother is also known as *Ka 'umi* (the tenth), *Ka 'umionaleialoha*, which literally means, "the tenth in the lei of love." The Wengler 'ohana was finally complete with the birth of Damien Joseph in 1979. In all, Charlotte gave birth and raised eleven children with Harry, six boys and five girls.

### **Raising the family.**

*Ka 'ika'i i ka lima, hi'i i ke alo.*

*Lead with one hand, carry with one arm.*

Said of a mother with children born too close together. (Pukui, # 1391, see Appendix B)

Raising a family this big was no easy task. There were diapers to change, dishes to wash, children to bathe, meals to cook, and clothes to clean and iron, and we all pitched in to help.

Mom never seemed to tire. She ran a tight ship. “Have you ever heard the term whistle while you work? That was our mom,” my sister Tina remembered:

She taught the older kids to *mālama*<sup>6</sup>, to care for the younger ones. Mom raised her children in a very orderly manner, insisting on extreme cleanliness and discipline. She taught us to be polite, have manners, and to never talk back . . . or she'd wash our mouths out with soap, or make us chew the hottest chili peppers grown in our own yard! Acting up in church was *not* tolerated, nor was slouching or falling asleep in mass. Mom had these long legs, and even longer toes! Boy, whenever one of us was caught slouching, or eating with our elbows on the dinner table, she'd stretch those long legs under the table and *iniki*, pinch, hard too! The unsuspecting victim was no match for those long, powerful toes. (Wengler-Vignoe, 2011, p. 39)

We had several family traditions, some of which continue on to this day. Every Sunday we'd all get dressed up and go to church, and after mass, Dad would treat us to a big breakfast usually somewhere fancy like the Pagoda, or the Kahala Hilton. When our family got too big to accommodate 13 people without reservations, we started making breakfast at home. We'd have guava juice, waffles, scrambled eggs, Portuguese sausage, and chocolate chip pancakes. Today almost all of us still go to church, but since we have our own families (and not everybody is Catholic anymore), it's hard to coordinate so many people. Dad goes to 7:30 a.m. mass every Sunday, where he is a Eucharistic Minister. After mass, he treats whoever was able to join him to breakfast at Starbucks. Another tradition we continue is picnicking at the beach on the

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<sup>6</sup> *mālama* - nvt. To take care of, tend, attend, care for, preserve, protect, beware, save, maintain; to keep or observe, as a taboo; to conduct, as a service; to serve, honor, as God; care, preservation, support, fidelity, loyalty; custodian, caretaker, keeper. (wehewehe.org)

weekends, where we spend the entire day sunning, running after children, barbequing, and splashing in the ocean until after well the sun goes down. Our favorite tradition is getting together for our annual Ukishima family Christmas party, which was started by Grandpa and Grandma when we were very little. The party is hosted at someone's house the weekend before Christmas. We'd participate in games, crafts, reenact the nativity scene in full costume, and sing *The 12 Days of Christmas* Hawaiian style. It is always a big surprise to see who is chosen and accepts responsibility of donning on the Santa suit, transforming into St. Nick, and passing out gifts to the keiki . . . it could be any adult, in fact, one year it was Mom! This very special tradition continues today, and sometimes there are nearly 100 of us enjoying the party.

**Mālama ‘Āina<sup>7</sup>—take care of the land.** Even when our parents had money, they valued recycling way before this practice became popular. As children, we walked, carpoled, or caught the bus, and were taught to gratefully accept the gifts of hand-me-down clothing from our neighbors. Mom saved eggshells, coffee grounds, and vegetable peelings to make her own compost; she grew mint, herbs, and taro in her organic garden. We harvested mangoes, guavas, passion fruit, bananas, avocados, and papayas from our back yard. Like her own mother did, our mom nurtured the ti-leaf plants, yellow and white ginger, and the plumeria trees, so that we always had supplies to make fresh lei.

My parents believed that conserving whenever possible would allow their children and grandchildren to enjoy the earth and all her gifts as they did. For them, recycling was their moral imperative—it was the only way to live—and as an adult, I've learned to appreciate them for that. I've opted to walk downtown, or bicycle to work whenever possible, rather than drive. In the last few years, we've re-committed to re-using and recycling, buying locally, purchasing

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<sup>7</sup> The Hawaiians have a tradition of Mālama ‘Āina—taking care of the land. They believe that if you take care of it, it will take care of you.

produce from the farmers market, preparing our meals from scratch, and bringing lunches to work. By taking these few small steps toward social consciousness and sustainability, I hope pass on what my parents taught me by becoming a living example of mālama ‘āina.

**Book worm.** My two favorite places to hang out were the park, and our local library. I loved the swings, jungle gym, trampoline and slides; I equally enjoyed curling up in my bed and devouring a book or two. I’d come home from the library with a stack of books—fiction, non-fiction, children’s stories, self-help books, and biographies about famous people that we saw on the news—the stories introduced me to interesting people, took me to faraway places and on amazing adventures. When I had nothing to read, I’d pick up a volume of Encyclopedia Britannica (we had an old set on our book case), read a chunk of it, then share whatever obscure fact I just learned with whoever happened to be near. Mom mentioned this to my aunts and uncles at a party once, and they all had a good laugh. I didn’t care. I learned a lot from those books, more than a kid could learn by asking an adult, and more efficiently, too, because I learned adults sometimes tell half-truths, or don’t always know the answer to your question. Anything you want to know, you can look it up in a book! (Clearly, this was way before computers and Google came along.) Find a few sources, and you will get a pretty good answer to your question. In sixth grade, my PSAT exam scores indicated that for my age, I had high math and language skills and college-level reading and comprehension. That surprised all of us, and I’m sure helped my chances of getting into Kamehameha Schools.

**The dark years.** In the fifth grade, Jon, Tina and I took swimming lessons from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. After school, we caught the bus from our perspective schools to the Mānoa Community Recreation Center and swam. That was the year alcohol stole our Dad from us. The thing is, a good portion of the people in Hawai‘i drink socially . . . it’s just part of the culture, in

fact it's a part of our family's culture. So what happened was, what used to be a couple of *pau hana* (after work) beers with his buddies from the Honolulu Glass company slowly turned into an alternative lifestyle and a family secret that none of us would talk about for decades. Our father is one of kindest, most generous people ever—not only to us, but to perfect strangers as well . . . a good man who sometimes makes not-so-good choices. By high school, we were getting home from swim team later and later, and our report cards indicated that we weren't spending adequate time on our school work.

My mother was patient through it all, but when the situation became unbearable for her, she'd pack up the youngest child at the time and disappear, retreating to Aunty Paulie's house for a few days. Wina and I became surrogate mothers during that time: starching and ironing Dad's aloha shirts for work, as well as everyone's school uniforms, organizing lunches, cooking meals, and cleaning the house. I found this to be thankless, unsatisfying, burdensome work. I was exhausted all day, every day, especially after school, athletics, chores, dinner and dishes, and then preparing for the next school day. I felt badly for Mom who worked so hard to support our family, all day every day, and never complained. I thought, "Oh my goodness, there has to be more to life than this!" Exactly then, I decided that I never want to grow up and become a mother; I was determined to have my own successful career and make my own money. This was a rough time for my family and everything was kept secret. We never talked about alcoholism and the effect it had on our family for a long, long time. In those incredibly dark years, my dad became a worn-out father that provides dutifully for eleven seemingly ungrateful children on a salesman's commission-based salary. I felt sorry for Dad too. Imagine the incredible pressure of raising a family of 11 children on one parent's income, which was a 100% commission-based paycheck! Our parents worked extremely hard to send us to private schools, provide us with

braces, after-school activities, and a beautiful 8,000 square foot home on a hill, with an unobstructed, panoramic view of the ocean.



*Figure 4.24.* 5312 Puahia Place—Our house on the hill with view of Diamond Head to Koko Head. Photos courtesy of the the Wengler Family Album:

They wanted us to enjoy a better life than they had growing up, and made extreme sacrifices to ensure that. Now, in reflecting on the dark years, there are some things that cannot be foreseen, like a severe turn in the economy. The U. S. oil embargo that caused the recession of 1973–1975 hit us hard, and people weren't buying insurance . . . so Dad's business suffered. In every decade since, there has been one recession after another to recover from. Dad made good on the promise he made to himself—we never went homeless—though I suspect we might have come close to losing our home a couple of times when money was extremely tight. They never let on when resources were dwindling, whenever we were barely scraping by. From the outside looking in, everybody wanted to be a part of the Wengler family, because they just saw our family traditions and all of us having fun—we had a special bond of Aloha that kept us together, even through the hard times—people saw that, and wanted it for themselves. We were

the family that looked like we had it all, and we let everybody believe that because it was just easier that way.

I was blessed to get accepted into Kamehameha. I felt like it was a lucky break, a brand-new start that I desperately needed! I decided to have fun and enjoy as many extracurricular activities as possible. I wrote for the school's weekly paper, was elected to be the secretary of the lettermen's club, and later served as vice president. I joined the high school swim team, played water polo, and made all new friends with the swim jocks. It was a lot of fun, and a great way for kids like me with too much energy to compete both individually and with a team. Our co-ed water polo team was the best in the state, and I was proud to be a part of it.

*Nani i waele mua i ke ala, mahope aku makou, na poki 'i.*

*She first cleared the path and then we younger ones followed.*

Said with affection and respect for the oldest sibling (*hiapo*). (Pukui, # 2265, see Appendix B)



Figure 4.25. The 1983 Kamehameha Schools Cheerleading Squad.  
Photos courtesy of the the Wengler Family Album.

My older sister Wina was very popular in high school. She always knew what to wear, and what to say. Thank God, she paved the way for a sensitive nerd like me! I followed my

older sister's footsteps, tried out for our high school cheerleading squad, and was lucky enough to be chosen. Cheering was so much fun! We'd work out, go to cheer camps, attend strategic leadership conferences for teens, and made a lot of friends. At the end of my senior year, I tried out for the University of Hawai'i (UH) Cheerleading Squad and from among 500 state-wide applicants, won a spot on the team and a full-ride scholarship! I accomplished my childhood dream which was to lead cheers and perform stunts for a crowd of 50,000 screaming fans at Aloha Stadium during football season and at the Pro Bowl.

**My dark years.** In all humility, I share my own downward spiral and personal transformation. Dad wasn't the only one who struggled with liquid poison. For a while after high school, I did too. I was working at a restaurant that turned into a night club, and closed at 2 a.m. The drinking age at the time was 18, so all of us would hang out at the bar until 4 a.m. and stagger home. Dad bought a small neighborhood grocery store, and employed those of us who were old enough to work the cash register. I'd sometimes take my pay in beer, and then— seduced by the confident beautiful women who graced the Virginia Slims advertising campaigns—I too, began smoking Virginia slims ultra-light menthol 100s, deluding myself into thinking that by smoking, I could become one of them. I found that cigarettes curbed my appetite; by this time I had taken up part-time modeling, and my agent, pleased with my new weight loss, booked me on several well-paying assignments.

Some young people think they are smarter than everybody else, when the truth is, they can be incredibly arrogant, ignorant, and impressionable; this combination of personality traits is the perfect storm for one to make very bad choices. So I was working three part-time jobs, cheerleading, going to all the parties that college kids do, supporting a demanding boyfriend, and, oh yeah . . . there was school . . . 8 a.m. classes at UH came around mighty early. I started



hanging around these seedy people late at night who became my new friends; coming home later and later (if at all), lying to my parents as to my whereabouts . . . the list goes on and on. One thing led to another, and I was surprised to find myself on academic probation. The next semester I was suspended. “Whatever,” I said, enrolling in classes at Kapi‘olani Community College, but because I had not changed any of my bad habits, two semesters later I was out.

Instead of looking inward and asking myself questions, I blamed everyone else for all the bad things that were happening to me, starting with my parents, who were on my case every day since I moved out of the UH dorms and back in with them. I was tired of being compliant and confined; they were seriously cramping my style, constantly nagging about where I was going and who I was seeing—especially Mom—who was downright mean, and tried unsuccessfully to ground me! It must be pretty hard to ground a 21-year-old . . . so then she tried another tactic . . . staying up until I got home, and locking the door so I had to knock to get in. Once I got home in the wee hours of the night, she’d stay up even longer, making me tell her about the events in my day and night while she patiently listed, trying to find out what was wrong with her daughter. Things came to a head when early one morning I was (late) driving to work my shift at Dad’s store. I turned left into the store parking lot, crashing my brand new sports car into another driver’s vehicle; she was rushing to get to work on time. I didn’t even see her, and she couldn’t brake in time to stop.

It’s a miracle that I wasn’t seriously hurt. I thank my guardian angels yet again, for saving me. My beautiful red sports car was totaled. The other driver screamed at me while I stared blankly at her, emotionless, from behind the steering wheel. An ambulance took me away in a stretcher to the hospital; my body hurt all over, and I slept for two days. On the third day, my Dad and I sat down and had a serious conversation. He wasn’t mean or accusatory, nor did

he reprimand me like I wished he would . . . I deserved the scolding of my life for the stunt I just pulled. On the contrary, he was just the opposite—kind, gentle, and full of compassion.

Thinking about my dad’s unconditional love for me in this moment always makes me want to cry, because he knew better than anyone what it was like to be stuck. He looked me in the eye and gravely said that I had to get away from all these bad people I had been hanging out with, I needed to get away in order to have a fresh start . . . or the next time I might not make it out alive . . . and we couldn’t afford that. I nodded, agreeing completely. He had done some research, and for me to stay at an in-patient program was more than he could possibly afford—it would take 20 years to pay back the loan, plus there was no guarantee that treatment would work. There was an out-patient program that cost \$5,000, but Dad felt like that would not get me out of my surroundings and I could easily be swayed into a familiar, destructive old lifestyle that I was trying so desperately to leave. I sobbed and nodded, agreeing fully. Finally, he said that my boyfriend’s Native Hawaiian grandparents who lived on Maui agreed to take me in without charge. The stipulation was that I had to obey their rules, come home at night, and had to live clean and sober until they were ready to release me from their care. The next day I boarded a Maui-bound plane. Scared to death, I prepared to start the journey of my brand-new life.

In this phase of my life, I was searching to find myself, my purpose. I imagine my *‘aumākuā* calling my spirit back with this lovely song:

#### Ku‘u Lei Awapuhi

Words & music by Emily Kekahaloa Namau‘u Taylor, copyright 1951.

[http://www.huapala.org/Kuu/Kuu\\_Lei\\_Awapuhi2.html](http://www.huapala.org/Kuu/Kuu_Lei_Awapuhi2.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhIUgJyX3Io>

The Lindsey ‘ohana hānai’d me and took me in with open arms. Grandma and Grandpa Lindsey gave me a spare bedroom in their home. I lived rent-free on their beach front property, and woke every morning, to the sound of waves crashing on the Lahaina shore. Mom and Dad Lindsey visited me on weekends, and I spent time with them in their home as well, in up-country Maui. Away from the hustle and bustle of Honolulu, I learned to slow down, breathe deeply, and enjoy my life, nature, and the people around me.

The Lindseys were passionate, kind, and extremely generous. How many people would take in a former meth addict to live with them? I can’t even say that I would do it. They treated me like one of their own children; I received much aloha and learned the way old Hawaiians lived, and in turn, I was expected to contribute to the household. If they were hosting an event, and I was feeling anti-social at the time, well that was just too bad. I was expected to put my funky mood aside, socialize, and help to host the party. I didn’t know it at the time, but Grandma Lindsey was a Native Hawaiian healer, specializing in *ho‘oponopono*, which causes *pono* or “correctness” in behavior. She scared me because she could be sharp-tongued, tough as nails, and wouldn’t take guff from anyone. Dad Lindsey taught Hawaiian and Social Studies at ‘Iao Intermediate School in Wailuku, and was familiar with counseling at-risk youth. Mom Lindsey had the biggest heart of all. She accepted me, trusted me when nobody else would, and treated me with so much love that I promised myself I would never let her down. Under their guidance, I got in touch with my spirit again, and healed.

I eventually found work as a waitress at Marie Calendar’s in the Lahaina Cannery Shopping Center. The Lindseys encouraged me to apply to the Miss Maui Scholarship Pageant (prelude to Miss Hawai‘i USA and the Miss America Scholarship Pageants). My managers at Marie Calendar’s offered to sponsor me, so I decided to give it a shot. Contestants rehearsed for

eight months. We danced, sang and studied current events. I learned to walk in high heels on a ramp without teetering; more importantly, Dad Lindsey worked with me to help me focus, training my mind to think clearly, logically, and to speak with confidence. We made numerous public appearances, participated in community events, and raised money for charity. When the actual pageant day arrived, I felt like a different woman—stronger, smarter, more confident and much less self-centered. My grandparents bought my evening gown, and my entire family flew to Maui to support me. I won the interview portion of the event, and placed as a finalist. My parents and adopted parents (Lindseys) were so proud. My heart was filled with joy because of the confidence I gained by living drug-free, making my parents proud of me once again, and accomplishing yet another childhood dream, which was to wear a crown in a Miss Hawai‘i pageant.

I eventually moved out of the Lindsey home but never forgot them. I often thank God for the angels that guide me on earth to make sure I fulfill my duties during my short time here on this planet. A few years ago, I contacted Mom Lindsey through Maui Cultural Lands, Inc. (MLC), a grassroots non-profit land trust organization whose mission is to “stabilize, protect, and restore Hawaiian cultural resources. I flew over for the day, and she took me to one of their projects in the Honokowai Valley. MLC is doing amazing work with the land, removing invasive plants and re-planting native species. I was saddened to learn that all of the people who lived in the Lindsey Lahaina home when I lived there had passed away! Grandpa Lindsey died from natural causes, Aunt Mary Helen and Leonard both suffered for years with bad health and passed away, and Grandma Lindsey died from cancer in 2003. I read this about her in the Maui News:



Figure 4.26. Ned (Grandpa) and Pua (Grandma) Lindsey. Photo courtesy of the Lindsey ‘Ohana album.

Kupuna Rose Pua Lindsey, 89, dies; she is remembered as ‘guiding light’

Ed (Dad) Lindsey said his mother didn’t care about outside appearances, but looked at an individual’s character. “To her, your education level or your economic standing didn’t matter,” said Ed. “It was just Aloha . . . just to help people. Whether it was somebody who had their Ph.D. or someone who was homeless or a drug addict, she didn’t care. She just wanted to share Aloha.” ([http://www.mokuula.com/news/mauinews\\_031224.php](http://www.mokuula.com/news/mauinews_031224.php))

A woman who served as the surrogate mother for hundreds of Lahainaluna High School boarders . . . has died . . . She worked in the 1950s and 1960s as the matron of Lahainaluna High School’s boarders, making sure the students were well treated and supervising them in the maintenance of their dormitory rooms. “She taught more by love and aloha,” recalled retired Principal Henry “Bruno” Ariyoshi. “She was really a kind, motherly person.” (<http://archives.starbulletin.com/2004/01/03/news/index9.html>)

I was even more shocked to find out Dad Lindsey passed away in 2009! When I spoke with Mom Lindsey, she said, “Oh Cami, We’ve thought about you often! Dad would have been so proud of you, look at how far you’ve come.” I didn’t even get a chance to thank him and Mom for all that they’d done for me back then . . . I was filled with remorse, and vowed to keep in touch with the people who have invested in me and believed in me when I couldn’t believe in myself. This article appeared in the Maui News online:

“It is difficult to sum up the mo‘okuauhau of a person like Kupuna Lindsey,” said Councilmember Sol Kaho‘ohalahala. “His roots are deep, his life experiences are vast, his passion for the ‘āina is meticulous, his knowledge is tested and honed, his wisdom exceeds his time and his vision bridges multiple horizons. This is the manner of love and commitment Ed Lindsey has graced us with. Privileged to be in his presence, we

each have the *kuleana* to *onipa‘a, kōkua, mālama*<sup>8</sup>—and to do it all in the true spirit of Aloha. This is the legacy of Kupuna Lindsey. It is a burden, a challenge and a commitment I gladly accept.  
(<http://www.mauiveekly.com/page/content.detail/id/500810/Ed-Lindsey--Person-of-2009.html>)

**Moving to the mainland.** If you asked me how I came to the mainland, I would say, “I followed a boy.” This is a true story. I met David around Christmas time in 1988. He got a job at the restaurant where I worked, at 505 Front Street, a block and a half from where I spent six months at the Lahaina Lindsey house. There was something about him that was extraordinary. I just liked him a lot, and even more after I got to know him. I knew he was going to be a special person in my life because I could feel his presence before I’d see him, meaning, if my back was turned, and all of a sudden I’d get goose bumps and butterflies would do flip-flops in my stomach, I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he was near. Seconds later, I’d hear his voice, “Hi Cam! How’s it going?” I think he was sent to walk with me on my journey for a while . . . at least that is what my *na‘au* was telling me at the time, and I didn’t even know it.

Dave was one of the sweetest guys I’d ever met. One of our first dates was going to church and then having breakfast afterward. I was just returning to the Catholic Church after years of rebellion, and he hadn’t been in a long, long time. We both enjoyed going to the beach, eating sushi, sipping a cold beer on a warm Lahaina night, and watching the sun set. Six months later we moved in together, and in the summer of 1990, we moved to Santa Barbara in search of new opportunities and adventures after Dave promised my teary-eyed mother that he would take good care of me. I won’t go into details on how heart-broken I was to leave home, it was just something I knew I had to do . . . and even though we no longer physically have a home in Hawai‘i, I can always easily get there within minutes of closing my eyes. A friend picked us up

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<sup>8</sup> We each have the *kuleana* to *onipa‘a, kōkua, mālama* (We each have the responsibility to be steadfast, help one another, and to take care)—and to do it all in the true spirit of Aloha.

from the LA airport, and offered us a place to stay until we found our own apartment. A day later I flew to Portland to visit my older sister Wina, who was the first of our generation to graduate with her Bachelors' degree in Communications. Our entire family flew up from Hawai'i in support, to cheer her on as she walked across the stage. I was inspired to start the journey to complete my own college education. I flew back to Santa Barbara and was thrilled to discover that Dave found us an apartment, a one-bedroom flat sectioned off in an old Victorian home.



*Figure 4.27.* Dave and Cami Vignoe. Photo courtesy of the Wengler / Vignoe FamilyAlbum.

**Struggles.** I found it difficult to adapt to my new life on the mainland. I was homesick and missed my family so much. In those days unlimited text, talking, cell phones, and email hadn't been invented yet, and expensive long distance rates limited our ability to connect with 'ohana. We wrote a lot of letters and called each other infrequently.

The biggest struggle I had when I first got here was finding work. It took Dave all of three days to find a good restaurant job; in fact, he had to turn down a few offers for work

because he was already employed. I, on the other hand couldn't seem to land a job if my life depended on it. I couldn't understand why Dave was offered work while I was not even called back. We both had good resumes, applied at the same places, were approximately the same age, and had the same years of work experience, in the same caliber of restaurants. I served in the finest restaurants in Hawai'i, had excellent work ethic, but was offered lesser paying jobs. If I applied as a waitress, I was maybe offered a hostess position—they make half of what servers make. If I applied for guest services at a hotel, I was lucky to be offered a housekeeping or dishwashing position. Really?!

Finally, after three months of frustration, prayers, pounding the pavement and searching for work, a miracle happened: I was offered a job supervising the fine dining wait staff at the Fess Parker Red Lion Resort, a company that appreciates diversity. Our staff was living proof: I supervised a mature Czechoslovakian waiter, a Brazilian, an Argentinian, a Mexican, a Bolivian, a Canadian, a Swede, and a Peruvian. Only one waitress was an American student attending Westmont; our musicians were from Paraguay. I have no concrete proof, but I feel like I failed at getting work at all of those other establishments because I just didn't look White enough . . . in fact, I learned what it was like to be treated like a foreigner in my own country! Thank goodness for establishments that are committed to bringing diversity and talent into the workplace. I often advise my clients who are seeking employment to be sure their values align with the company; for myself, I only want to work for a firm that is committed to excellence and advocates a culturally diverse work force.

After a year, I finally qualified to become a California resident. I could now afford to pay in-state tuition and finally achieve my dream of completing college. I enrolled in the Business Administration program at Santa Barbara City College in the fall of 1991, bound and



determined that nobody was going to steal my education, especially not me. I made huge lifestyle changes and sacrifices in order to accomplish my goals; studying became my number one job. I was however, ill prepared for some of the new internal struggles that were to surface, one of which was an ethnic and cultural identity crisis accompanied with the clash of values systems that sometimes comes with being a product of mixed ethnicities. These problems never surfaced for me in Hawai‘i, but here in this strange new world, it was inescapable.

I recall a bad memory of confusing race, ethnicity, and identity in spring, 1992:

I was sitting in the lecture hall amongst several hundred freshman students, just a few minutes before we were to take a Business Law exam. I was a good student and had studied very hard, but that same old anxiety, panic, and self-doubt began to set in. “It’s just a paper and pencil fill-in-the-bubble, multiple choice test. Cami, you know the answers . . . you got this,” I told myself, carefully printing my name on the answer sheet.

“You have exactly one hour to complete this test. Make sure you fill in all the bubbles; only one bubble per line. Double check your answers. Even though you may not know the answer, take an educated guess,” was the professor’s instruction. “Ready? Begin!” The first question was: “What is your race?” What? What kind of question is that? I’ll never forget the forced choice answers were: White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Indian, or Pacific Islander. I was none of these, but there wasn’t a choice for “none” or “other.” I hadn’t even begun the test, meanwhile everybody else was working away, and the clock was ticking. “I know what I am,” I thought to myself, “I am one-eighth Hawaiian, three-eighths Japanese, and one-half Caucasian, which is three-eighths German, one-sixteenth Irish, and one-sixteenth French.” Well how do you pick just one, when none of the answers were right? I thought to myself, “What do you feel like today—White, Asian, or Pacific Islander?”

I started to stress out. I knew this should not be so hard, so I began rationalizing with myself to get the right answer: “I am more combined White blood than anything else, but people here treat me like I’m Asian, even though I feel more Hawaiian than anything... What is the right answer? I need help!” I raised my hand, and walked down to the very front of the class. I whispered, explaining my dilemma to the teacher and asked what he thought the best answer might be. After listening intently, he threw his head back and laughed at me! Like really loud, in fact he howled! Everybody looked up from their tests and started laughing too. It was a surreal moment. I wanted to die. I felt so humiliated, stupid . . . almost had a meltdown right there. With hot tears streaming down my face, I returned to my seat and finished the test. I knew every answer on that damn test except the first one that didn’t even count.

Native Hawaiians and other peoples of mixed blood have been forced to accept an identity label that is not true. Imagine how insignificant it feels when you are limited to a one-race bubble, or don't have the option to choose "other;" more importantly, what does it feel like when there is no mention of your own race in your own country? What is most frustrating is realizing that this kind of complaint is an opportunity for improvement and egalitarian action, yet falls on deaf ears of the dominant culture. They don't understand; they think we are making a bid deal out of nothing . . . and still, our youth continue to experience identity crisis and disconnect, time and time again. I would feel excluded again, when I transferred to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, where the ethnic breakdown of the entire student body at the time was 97% White and 3% students of color.

**Triumphs.** I earned my undergraduate degree from Cal Poly in 2000, enjoyed a career in Human Resources, and went back to finish a Master's degree in Psychology in 2004. I am now in the last phase of completing a Ph.D. in Leadership and Change. I feel like my education belongs to my 'ohana, our Hawaiian community, and to Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop. Education has given me personal confidence, many skills including the verbal ability to express myself, and freedom to choose a sustainable, rewarding, and satisfying career that provides a foundation for lifelong learning. Education allows me the opportunity to advocate for our people who struggle to make it at home in the islands, and for those who choose to keep our culture alive on the mainland.

One of the happiest days of my life was graduating with honors from Santa Barbara City College. With the help of some of the finest teachers and a few choice mentors, I finally earned my Associate of Science degree in Business Administration. Grandpa would have been so proud. He had pancreatic cancer for a little over a year and died January 12, 1993. It broke my

heart not to come home that Christmas. I knew he was suffering, but I didn't want to see him in his deteriorated state and couldn't bear to face the fact that he would someday be gone . . . and then he was. Two days after he had passed, I found myself staring out a closed foggy window on a very cold gray Santa Barbara morning. Out of nowhere, a warm breeze suddenly blew in, lifting my long hair off my neck; I knew it was Grandpa coming for a last visit, kissing me goodbye. I closed my eyes, cherished that moment, and will remember forever just how loved I felt. To me, that is Aloha, mālama keiki, mālama mo'opuna taking care of children and grandchildren is what he was all about.

**Aloha and Mālama.** I learned the practice of mālama and Aloha from my grandparents and parents, family members, special teachers, mentors, and my hula teacher, Angelita. Whatever they gave me, I tried to reciprocate in their time of need. I was blessed to be able to spend some time with Grandma during the summer before she passed away in 2007.



*Figure 4.28.* My beautiful mom—Charlotte Patrice Hideko Kalāmanamana Ukishima Wengler (1937–2010). Photo courtesy from the Wengler Family album.

I was most fortunate to spend time with my mom during the summers and holidays, and overnight in the hospital the night before she passed away on her father's birthday in 2010. As

she lay in a coma, I thanked her for everything that she had done for her children and especially for me over the course of my life. I thanked her for training us to hold high standards for ourselves, and laughed with her when I told her she was kind of mean sometimes . . . and she knew it too! I apologized from the bottom of my heart for each hurt and every heartache I caused her and Dad growing up, as well as during the dark years, and asked if she could find it in her heart to forgive me for the awful choices I made. Although there was no excuse for bad behavior, I explained that I was unaware that I'd been struggling with severe ADHD<sup>9</sup> my entire life and was only recently diagnosed. Perhaps if we had known sooner, maybe I could have been treated and spared our family a lot of shame and pilikia. Finally, I stroked her hair, telling her that if it was God's will, she should go home now, and it would be OK . . . we would be so very sad and miss her dearly, but we would be OK. At that moment a teardrop from the corner of her right eye fell onto her cheek; although the machine continued to breath for her and she stared straight ahead at nothing, I knew she heard everything I said, and I heard everything she told me because I listened with my na'au, in the depths of my bowels and deep my heart . . . I knew that I would be loved, and she knew she would be loved . . . until the end of time.



*Figure 4.29.* Imagine Aloha. Hawaiian music artis Moe Keale (1939–2002) imagined a world embraced by a lei of Aloha. (<http://www.oocities.org/moekeale2020/alohalesson.htm>) Printed with permission from Nalani Keale and Freddy Von Paraz © Copyright 1996.

<sup>9</sup> Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) is a mood disorder that some people are born with; this disorder affects chemicals in the brain and causes behavioral issues. ADHD is ADD with a hyperactivity component. Children usually outgrow ADD / ADHD, but the 12% who do not become adults with ADD. Classic symptoms include distractibility, irritability, severe mood swings, and the inability to focus on completing simple tasks. ADD /ADHD often co-occurs with bi-polar disorder, anxiety, and /or depression. Individuals with ADD / ADHD would benefit greatly if spouses and family members become educated about the disorder, are patient, understanding, and flexible. Although there is no cure for ADD / ADHD, symptoms can be positively managed with good nutrition, herbs and supplements, medication, enough sleep, regular exercise, and meditation, mindful practice and prayer. (Amen, 2001).

## Discussion

### E Ala E

Music and Lyrics by Isreal Kamakawiwo‘ole; published by Mountain Apple Company, Inc. ©

<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/israelkamakawiwoole/eala.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BqZPLNoaos>

In reflecting on the portraits of “Paka,” Kalani, Nani, and Mona as a whole, it was interesting to see how each participant expressed her / his Native Hawaiian identity in multiple contexts—and therefore I chose to use a Hawaiian theoretical framework for my interpretive chapter. A Hawaiian conceptual framework is essentially Indigenous in nature, holistic, and incorporates attention to personhood, context, and valuing knowledge as noted by Kenny (2005), and includes such important tenets that embody Native belief systems by honoring:

- Past, present and future in interpretive and analytical research processes including historical references and intergenerational discourse;
- The interconnectedness of all life and multi-dimensional aspects of life on earth and in the community in research design and implementation; and
- The spiritual, physical, emotional and mental states of the person in research protocols, methodologies, and analyses. (Kenny, 2005)

This framework is uniquely Hawaiian in that the data was collected by using the “talk story” method, was analyzed from the Kanaka Maoli worldview perspective, and incorporates our language, cultural beliefs, creation story, as well as historical references to characters, dates, documents and tragedies exclusive to Hawai‘i, the kingdom of Hawai‘i, and to her people. Prior to collecting the data, I conceptualized the framework of my study as Indigenous, incorporating the methods of Phenomenology, Ethnography, Heuristics and Portraiture; combining these theories into a particular framework may have appeared to be relevant, in reality, they did not fully capture the essence of Native Hawaiian Epistemology critical to this research.

This study was about the journey of four Native Hawaiian adults who chose to leave Hawai‘i where they were born and raised; each one of them journeyed to the mainland United States for different reasons, and as time passed, each inadvertently became permanent California residents. Their stories contributed to the overall portrait of Native Hawaiians “venturing into new lands to find new worlds to settle and establish themselves and their futures” (Peter K. Hanohano, personal communication, July, 24, 2014).

The Kanaka Maoli have always been voyagers, first travelling to Hawai‘i in double hulled canoes approximately 2,000 years ago from different parts of Polynesia, and then about a thousand years later they arrived from Tahiti; their stories carefully documented in an oral tradition that has been preserved and passed down from generation to generation through mele, oli, myths, legends, and the hula. After the colonization and subsequent annexation of Hawai‘i, the knowledge of sailing using ancient Polynesian nautical techniques (which included analyzing the location of the stars, wind patterns, tidal flow, and ocean currents) was almost lost forever; it had been more than 600 years since the double hulled canoes had sailed from Tahiti, and there was not even one Native Hawaiian alive who possessed and practiced the navigation *‘ike* (knowledge) of old. We were facing cultural extinction.

Fortunately, during the Hawaiian cultural revival in the 1970s, a small group of visionaries had a dream—to construct an exact replica of the traditional double hulled canoes that Kanaka Maoli had “built and sailed along the pathway recounted in oral traditions” (<http://www.papamau.com/about.html>). The Polynesian Voyaging Society and Native Hawaiian Navigator Nainoa Thompson sought the help of Mau Piailug, a traditional master navigator who lived on a remote island called Satawal in Micronesia. Although Papa Mau was among six of the very last Polynesians living who practiced the ancestral ways of ocean navigation without the aid

of compasses, maps, or western navigational instruments, he was the only one willing to share his knowledge with the Hawaiians. Piailug successfully lead the Hōkūle‘a (name means “Star of Gladness”) and their crew on her maiden voyage to Tahiti in 1976, and upon their successful arrival in Papeete, were greeted by over 17,000 people.



Figure 5.1. Papa Mau: The Wayfinder. Printed with permission from Na‘alehu Anthony, Palikū Documentary Films ©, Copyright 2011.

This very first voyage became a living symbol of hope for Hawaiians in reclaiming their lost tradition of celestial navigation. The story is told in a documentary film called Papa Mau: The Wayfinder, directed by Na‘alehu Anthony, whom I had the honor of meeting and interviewing. Na‘alehu is a Kamehameha Schools and University of Hawai‘i graduate, Captain and Navigator of the Hōkūle‘a, Chief Executive Director of ‘Ōiwi TV and Founder of *Palikū* Documentary Films (*Palikū* means “initial point of a genealogy line,” or “ancient order of

priests”), a production company that focusses on documentaries and oral histories, with a special emphasis on the oral history of Hawai‘i and its people.



Figure 5.2. On the Hōkūle‘a. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kilinahe/3776941940/>  
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The Hōkūle‘a’s Maoli crew realized that in order to own the ‘ike, they had to lōkahi—work together and practice what they had learned by themselves—a theme that surfaced often in analyzing the participants’ research data. In order to completely pass the knowledge that they needed, Papa Mau became Kumu and observer while Nainoa Thompson navigated during the second voyage in 1980 ([http://pvs.kcc.hawaii.edu/ike/intro\\_ike.html](http://pvs.kcc.hawaii.edu/ike/intro_ike.html)). Since the 1976 voyage to Tahiti and back, the Hōkūle‘a has completed nine more voyages. Today, two double-hulled canoes sail in the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage. I believe that this current voyage is an example of Native Hawaiian leadership at its finest. Surviving the high seas and successfully completing the journey depends on the symbiotic, caring relationship of the wayfarers to work together and mālama themselves, each other, the ships, and their environment. There are many lessons that can be learned from the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage.

### **Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage**

Hōkūle‘a and Hikianalia, our Polynesian voyaging canoes, are sailing across Earth’s oceans to join and grow the global movement toward a more sustainable world. Covering 47,000 nautical miles, 85 ports, and 26 countries, the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage will highlight diverse cultural and natural treasures and the



importance of working together to protect them. The voyage began in 2013 . . . and will continue through 2017 when our new generation of navigators take the helm and guide Hōkūle‘a and Hikianalia back to Polynesia after circumnavigating the globe.

Mālama Honua means “to care for our Earth.” Living on an island chain teaches us that our natural world is a gift with limits and that we must carefully steward this gift if we are to survive together. As we work to protect cultural and environmental resources for our children’s future, our Pacific voyaging traditions teach us to venture beyond the horizon to connect and learn with others. The Worldwide Voyage is a means by which we now engage all of Island Earth—practicing how to live sustainably, while sharing, learning, creating global relationships, and discovering the wonders of this precious place we all call home. (<http://www.hokulea.com/worldwide-voyage>)

The Hōkūle‘a proudly represents a vision of reawakening for the Hawaiian people as she stands for courage, adventure, exploration and hope. Together, the Hōkūle‘a and Hikianalia on the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage symbolize the journey that many Native Hawaiians have chosen to embark upon when they leave the islands to relocate elsewhere; not unlike those ships that sail far and wide throughout the world, they are rediscovering themselves on their adventures from their island home of Hawai‘i. In my mind, those who bring their values, traditions, language and culture with them to the new worlds and share these precious gifts with their communities and future generations of Hawaiians are truly “Living Aloha.”

The thing about culture is that people who have lost their past become a lost people. In complete acceptance of the modern culture, they should not lose the culture past that has given them the guidance that has made them successful. Without the past we are simply rudderless. (Herb Kane, Founding Member, Polynesian Voyaging Society)

To me, the image of these canoes on the worldwide voyage has become iconic in representing the essence of my study—the stories of Hawaiians who have ventured away from the ‘āina to make their homes elsewhere—mindfully bringing with them our traditions, values, culture and knowledge, working together to protect our most cherished resources, our Mother Earth and her bounty . . . all the while, navigating in a modern world and culture.

The participants in this study were chosen because I see them “Living Aloha.” Practitioners of Maoli culture far away from their homeland, they have successfully sailed

through the rough waters and stormy seas that are a part of any such endeavor. They have survived . . . in fact they have thrived! Each of the participants faced unique challenges on their individual journeys, exhibited resilience, and experienced a renewed appreciation of all things Hawaiian. In ancient and modern times, Hawaiian people have been adapting to new environments and ways of living wherever they travel to; in the portraits, the individuals passionately reclaim and sustain their cultural identity as Kanaka Maoli, and decidedly choose resistance with Aloha spirit even when it was difficult; the struggles of resistance became evident in the subtle details of their stories. Without knowing it, the journey / voyage of each participant became one of personal healing, change, and transformation, and made space for Hawaiian leadership qualities to emerge.

**Native Hawaiian context.** The overarching themes of Aloha and Mālama were clearly evident throughout the participants' portraits—in their verbalized thoughts, their actions and reactions to events told in their stories. Several subthemes portraying the nature of the participants' Native Hawaiian identities became apparent as well: a conscious and dedicated commitment to the 'ohana, as well as a deep spiritual connection to Ke Akua (God, including the 'aumākua) and to the 'āina. Each participant portrayed deep connections to family, to spirituality, and to the land; these connections served as factors that contributed to their resilience and overall wellbeing when faced with challenges. Additionally, these themes transcend time as they connect our past with the present as well as with future generations, and parallel the concept of the three piko, which are the foundations of 'ohana wellbeing, according to McGregor (2006).

**The three piko concept.** The first piko—the piko 'aumakua—is the fontanel, the soft spot on the top of a baby's head. The piko 'aumakua connects us to our ancestors, our heritage,

and to the spirit world. Each of the participants in the study expressed spiritual encounters; they knew of their mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy), the place names of where their ancestors lived, and how their kūpuna were connected to the land. The second piko—the piko ‘i ewe—is the umbilical cord that connects baby to mother; it represents our Maoli ties to Hawai‘i. Even though we live in California, each of us considers Hawai‘i to be our home. Finally, the third piko—the piko ‘iwi kuamo‘o—is represented by the genitals, connecting us spiritually and emotionally to future generations. Each participant was committed to the ‘ohana, their keiki, and stressed the importance of teaching keiki to mālama ‘āina and their cultural inheritance.

The essence of ola (life / health / well-being) from a Native Hawaiian perspective begins with ‘ike or knowledge about self, the ‘ohana (past and present, including kūpuna and ‘aumākua) and how everything is related to the ‘āina (McGregor, 2006). The participants shared stories of personal growth, and acknowledged their commitment to building and nurturing ‘ohana relationships, particularly in teaching keiki to respect the ‘āina and her bounty. Native Hawaiian philosophy originates “within the matrix of ‘ohana: an individual alone is unthinkable, in the context of Hawaiian relationship(s)” (Handy & Pukui, 1988, as cited in McGregor, 2006, p.14). Even the very word ohana originates from ‘ohā, which means the “taro corm (an enlarged fleshy, bulblike base of a stem) growing from the older root, especially from the stalk called kalo” and is undeniably tied to the Kumulipo, our stories of creation.

In the Hawaiian tradition, elder siblings take responsibility for the younger ones, while it is the duty of younger siblings and keiki to honor, love, and respectfully service their elders. This practice is modeled through the story of Hāloa. The older brother Hāloanakalaukapali‘i, the root of the kalo plant, provides Hāloa with taro, the staple food of the Kanaka Maoli. Hāloa respects to his older brother by taking care of the lo‘i, (taro patch), creating irrigation systems,

harvesting the plant and replanting to continue the cycle . . . and by teaching his keiki and mo‘opuna (grandchildren) to mālama ‘āina as well. This behavior of interdependence between brothers—man and kalo—is truly the basis of Hawaiian epistemology—and what the Hawaiians mean when they mālama (to care for, respect) ‘āina, mālama each other, mālama kūpuna, mālama keiki, mālama kou kino (your body and mind), to lōkahi (work together in harmony and unity) and live mindfully, consciously with hearts filled with Aloha (love, compassion, kindness). This theme of mālama resonated throughout each participant’s story.

For example, Nani brought plumeria cuttings as a gift for me the first time we met. She had selected them from trees in her yard, wrapped the stumps carefully in wet paper towels fastened with a rubber band. This is an example of mālama ‘āina and mālama each other. Last week I thanked her again by sending a picture of one tiny tree that had bloomed her first pua. She responded with, “Maika‘i! (Very good!) I trusted that you would take care of my babies!”

Kalani talks about mālama ka ‘ohana, mālama keiki when he left his job at Marriott to take a sales job because he didn’t want to travel, relocate and uproot his family yet again:

I worked very, very hard. Got promoted quickly and was able to stay with my family. I liked working night shift because I could put my children to bed, go to work, they never knew Daddy was not home. They’d get up in the morning, and I’d already be there . . . getting them ready, dropping them off at school, go home and sleep, and right at two o’clock, I’m waking up, they’re getting out of school, Daddy pulls in (to pick them up). So Daddy’s always there. My whole dream my whole life was to be a daddy, and I made as many concessions as I could to make sure that was happening.

Mona found a way to incorporate mālama each other and mālama kou kino into her massage business called Aloha Nui Bodyworks.

I was working for a company doing a lot of trade shows for a craft company . . . the bookkeeper, she would always have like neck aches and shoulder . . . you know, so I would go in there and rub her neck a little bit—she was my buddy— and she says, “Mona, I would pay you for this. You should go into massage.” And so I was like Oh, because we do that at home, it’s natural, you know, we rub each other (makes a back rubbing gesture) and I never really thought about it . . . and then a school opened up here.

So I thought, I'll just take it, you know. It was a 1500 hour program, and I just did it on the side . . . under my name . . . and then the job I was working at turned corporate . . . and I was like (flicks her hand in a gesture like "I'm over this.") Yeah (laughs) and so I said, (looks up) OK, Aloha. And Aloha nui . . . 'cause I do things with a lot of Aloha or a lot of love, so . . . that's how I . . . (nods) that's how I came up with that name, or that was the intent anyway.

Over the years I had observed Paka on many occasions exhibiting mālama, especially with his infant sons. He is modest, doesn't talk much, and is a calm, relaxed person. In the interview, I conveyed my observations, and he confirmed them. "You're a good dad," I said.

What makes you a good dad is, I watch you with those kids. You're always looking out. I remember one time, your youngest boy was eating something and you said, "Eh, that piece is too big, he's gonna choke." And then went and made sure. "It's soft french fries, he can handle it."

P: Yeah. Oh, safety first with my kids.

C: You know, and it's like, you're relaxed how you are but you always have your eye on your kids.

P: Yeah, always.

C: And I notice that you make sure you always protect their head, especially when you're carrying them, which is um, the Hawaiians do that 'cause it's sacred, yeah?

P: Always. Always. Gotta make sure.

**Living Aloha.** In completing my analysis, I chose to incorporate this particular Maoli framework that addresses the practice of "Living Aloha." Dr. Peter Hanohano, Jr. describes themes that emerge from the portraits like flowers that have been carefully chosen, and "woven into a beautiful haku lei that give voice to the interconnections of:"

A—connection to Akua, including the 'aumākua

L—connection to Leo, meaning voice, giving voice, or the language lives

O—connection to 'Ohana, both living and deceased, and on the continent or at home

H—connection to Hula, to celebrate life through the dance of Aloha, thus helping to perpetuate the culture, protocols, and timeless stories of Hawaii anywhere and everywhere

A—connection to ‘Āina, wherever you put your roots down, while being connected to where you came from, and remembering where your piko, center or umbilical cord is connected to

“Aloha Leadership is Living Aloha by example, and without expectation of return”

(Hanohano, 2014).

**Paka.** A positive relationship with the ‘āina clearly emerged in analyzing Paka’s story. Themes of mālama ‘āina, mālama keiki, and mālama ka ‘ohana were also prominent and mindfully woven throughout Paka’s entire portrait in obvious and subtle ways: visually, during the interview in his home I recall the fragrant flowers and colorful fruit laden trees that were cultivated in his back yard, the surf and paddle boards, fins, fishing poles, and ocean toys that filled the garage, the framed pictures of the keiki splashing in the waves at the beach.

Then there was this quote:

Well, I love to surf . . . surfing is my life . . . I’m attached to the ocean. I was born to the ocean. I love to fish, free dive, you know, spear fish . . . anything to do with the ocean. I have this (special) kind of connection to the ocean.



*Figure 5.3.* Paka in the back yard with his paddle boards.  
Photo courtesy of Paka’s ‘ohana album.

While most people in our coastal communities enjoy going to the beach for recreation and relaxation, Paka on the other hand, says he is “connected” to the ‘āina, the ocean, the beach part of his everyday life. For him the ‘āina truly is “that which feeds” in terms of providing sustenance for the body, mind and soul. On his way home after a hard day at work, Paka often stops to jump in the ocean and catch a few waves.



*Figure 5.4.* Paka surfing—his favorite pastime. Photo courtesy of Paka’s ‘ohana album.

You can find him with his wife and keiki at the shoreline almost every weekend. Through life’s challenges and during turbulent times, the beach was there. Especially when people in his life let him down, Paka learned at an early age that he could always turn to the ocean for comfort, to relax, or to get a new perspective on life. This is an example of mālama kou kino, which taking care of your mind and body and one’s connection with the ‘āina, in terms of ola or well-being. I will never forget the feeling of desperation I felt, when he told me there were many times when there was no money and they didn’t have any food in the house. Paka took on a leadership role that was void when he’d “put on a pot of rice and head down to the beach to spear some fish.” Instead of blaming others for the situation he found himself in, he decided to take action and try to provide dinner for the ‘ohana. I imagine that because of his spiritual connection to the ocean and his commitment to his family, he was often more successful than not when he went fishing.

The way Paka lives his life unequivocally parallels the embodiment of the ancient three piko concept. In terms of connecting with the past, Paka articulated that he knew of his mo‘okū‘auhau. In our interview, he told me the last name of his Hawaiian family, the place name of the area where these ancestors lived (which was on a different island than where he

grew up), and what they did for a living in terms of contributing to their community. With regard to the piko ‘i ewe (the umbilical cord representing Maoli ties to Hawai‘i), Paka tries to “bring the family back home” whenever he can, but frequent trips to Hawai‘i for this family of five have become quite costly.



*Figure 5.5.* Paka with oldest son.  
Photo courtesy of Paka’s ‘ohana album.



*Figure 5.6.* Paka and Leinani.  
Photo courtesy of Paka’s ‘ohana album.

In the meantime, Paka and Leinani recreate as best as they can, a sort of local, island lifestyle, incorporating Maoli values into everyday life for themselves and their keiki. This means teaching their children to play, fish, surf, and respect the ‘āina without wasting her bountiful goodness. Both Paka and Leinani were students of hula. From a very young age, their sons have been taught to ‘oli and hula as well—the eldest has taken a leadership role amongst the keiki performers; one could argue that this is an example of piko ‘iwi kuamo‘o (the genitals, connecting us spiritually and emotionally to future generations).





Figure 5.7. Fishing with sons. In San Diego.  
Photos courtesy of Paka's 'ohana album.



Figure 5.8. Paka with sons in Waimanalo, HI.  
Photos courtesy of Paka's 'ohana album.

When Paka journeyed away from home as a young man, he was desperate to leave his past, reach for new opportunities, determined to become a better person. In his book entitled *Ethnicity and Inequality in Hawai'i*, Okamura (2008) notes that as a whole, Filipinos are among the poorest—economically speaking—of all the ethnicities residing in Hawai'i, second only to Native Hawaiians. I was shocked to read statistics reporting that the Maoli have the lowest socio-economic status, the worst health, and the least access to health resources and access to higher education. Interpreting those statistics, Paka was at risk simply because of his Filipino and Hawaiian heritage. He did in fact become an at-risk youth. In his own words, he said, “I had to leave . . . I was going nowhere fast.” In a whisper, Leinani once told me that the oppressive lifestyle began to swallow him up and he felt trapped, with nowhere to turn; she said, “If he didn’t leave the islands when he did, he probably would have died.” Connecting with his father in California offered Paka a chance to renew himself; the hula ‘ohana and the ocean kept him grounded.

When he and Leinani married, Paka welcomed the responsibility and resolved to adequately provide for his family. He enrolled in college, re-educated, earned a technical degree

and sought a new career. Even though he works long hours, Paka makes the time to nurture his relationships with his sons in order to provide the kind of positive fatherly guidance that he himself never experienced. Additionally, his wife recently told me that he spends time every week with his own father in order to make up for those lost 25 years of father-son relationship. For me, all of these observable actions contribute to the overall theme of Living Aloha: Paka’s story truly is one resilience, renewal, reclamation and resistance.

**Kalani.** In evaluating Kalani’s story, it was evident that he—like Paka—nurtures a positive relationship with the ‘āina, especially with the ocean. Although the themes of mālama ‘āina, mālama keiki, and mālama ka ‘ohana were woven throughout his portrait, the motif of Aloha, spirituality and connection, particularly with Ke Akua was even more prominent. I reflected on his name for a moment—Kalani—literally translates to “the heavens,” and “Kalanikau” means “to place in the heavens.” He told the mo‘olelo about his miracle birth, how both he and his mother survived, and the gift of his inoa:

My name is Warren Kalani-kau-kahu-o-kawai ‘Ainahau Pu‘uohau. The name ‘Ainahau Pu‘uohau was given to me two years ago by my mother as an additive, it’s not on my birth certificate. She gave it to me as a gift, my mom did, because Papa was a kahu as well.

My name was given to me by Aunty Emma DeFries (well-known kūpuna, cultural and spiritual counselor): Kalani-kau-kahu-o-kawai means “Great Chief and Guardian of the Water.” Jesus said “I am the water of life,” and I hope that in my lifetime I’ll fulfill the task of guarding, providing, and gifting the water of scripture—the water of life—to those that I come in contact with as a kahu.

Kalani spoke at length about how blessed he was to be born, to be raised in a loving family in Hawai‘i, and how lucky he was to have been chosen to attend Kamehameha. Before Kamehameha, Kalani went to a school in Kaneohe where a lot of gang fights took place. “So I spent seventh grade ducking and dodging a lot of hostilities.” He mentioned how he managed to keep out of trouble after his older sister took him under her wing, acquainting him with new

friends who hung out together and enjoyed playing ukulele. As the newest Kamehameha eighth grade attendee a year later, the returning KS students took him in, helped him to acclimate, and befriended him immediately. This reminds me of the story of Hāloa, how in the Hawaiian tradition, elder siblings take responsibility for the younger ones, while the younger siblings and keiki must honor, love, and respectfully service their elders.

Without fully realizing it at the time, Kalani had reciprocated mālama by honoring his mother and the covenant she made with God when he spared their lives so long ago. He became a kahu just like Papa (grandfather)—his mother’s father—and fulfilled the prophesy of “giving his life back to God” as well as living up to his gifted name(s). Recalling that particular story always gives me chicken skin! (Locals say “chicken skin” as opposed to “goose bumps.”) How did Kalani know it was his calling, his destiny, to become a kahu? He says he didn’t! Kalani first came to the mainland to visit his girlfriend. After meeting her friends, he became a born-again Christian, and then went home to tell the ‘ohana his plans to study Divinity and to join his life with Lei in California.

Sometime during that misty morning of his departure to the mainland, as they sat by Papa’s grave gazing up at the Ko‘olau mountains, Kalani’s mother shared the story of his birth and her promise to return her son completely to God. I see this as a beautiful example of the first piko—the connection to ‘aumakua, the ancestors, and a truly remarkable story of one Kanaka’s deep spiritual connection with Ke Akua.

The themes of Aloha, lōkahi (working together in harmony) and mālama come up frequently in Kalani’s portrait, especially mālama each other, mālama ka ‘ohana, mālama keiki. At Kamehameha, Kalani was known as “Mr. Aloha,” friendly with anyone he came in contact with. After graduation, and even after moving to the mainland, he continued to nurture

relationships with KS classmates; in fact, although I had not kept in touch with our graduating class, Kalani generously included me in the celebration even though I could not attend! This was evident in the 2012 email he sent me while working with alumni to prepare the KS reunion lū‘au:

CAMI!! ALOOOOHA! I am so glad to hear from you, I am in Hawai‘i helping with alumni weekend luau—too much fun! We have a whole grup or ONP ’83 here working away : ) I am happy to have your email ans Skype address. We can wala ‘au piha! We miss you. I will let the gang know we touched base. I will email you my cell, call or text me anytime! If you want to call while I am here with the crew, I will pass the phone from person to person so you guys can connect : ) We were just missing you last night as we thumbed through Kana‘i Aupuni 1983. Duty calls my dear . . . gotta go to Akahi and make lomi (I think). Love and Aloha to your ‘ohana from all of us—Love you girl, talk to you soon, Warren

The Aloha continues today in the way he reaches out to strangers he may have just. I reflected on the way he described their spare bedroom as the “refugee room.” “We have plenty of room for anyone who comes to visit, and if somebody needs to stay for a while, they can . . . it is my duty to take in the lost ones from time to time,” which can mean housing and feeding people he barely knows for a while. While in Hawai‘i it is a common practice to hānai (foster or adopt) a child, or to take care of others in need by bringing them into your home from time to time, I asked myself, “Besides charitable organizations and homeless shelters Who does that these days, here on the mainland?” Aside from my sister Wina, and my hula teacher Angelita, Kalani is the only person I know.

Another example of lōkahi, Aloha, and mālama was the day I came to visit and do our talk story interview. Kalani and Lei worked together to prepare a small lū‘au for me, a thoughtful gesture that took me completely by surprise! First of all, it is quite time consuming to find and purchase all the ingredients to prepare a feast of kālua pig, laulau, lomi lomi salmon and poi, and secondly, it had been so long since I had eaten “real” Hawaiian food (as opposed to

“local-kine grinds” or local cuisine). I thought of this proverb (#2453) that Tūtū had recorded so long ago:

*O ke aloha ke kuleana o kāhi mulihini.*

*Love is the host in strange lands.*

In old Hawai‘i, every passerby was greeted and offered food whether he was an acquaintance or a total stranger. (Pukui, 1983, p. 268. See Appendix B.)

In fact, each participant offered me food and beverage when we met to talk, however, putting a lū‘au together was over the top! I enjoyed the food and company immensely.

Witnessing the interactions and authentic communication within this family unit made me think of Hanohano’s (2014) ALOHA connections and the three piko concept:

1. First to Ke Akua (‘aumākua), in thanking God, blessing the food and all the loving hands that went into preparing the meal;
2. Second, to the ‘āina, in thanking her for sharing the fruits her bounty at our table that will nourish and sustain us, and
3. Third, to future generations, in the way Kalani had taught his four-year-old grandson Kupono to recite the blessing before the meal, to kiss Aunty on the lips (Hawaiian tradition—to share breath) in a greeting upon arrival, and to enjoy the ‘āina by going to the beach (located about a hundred yards from Kalani’s home) and body surfing or swimming—a ritual that grandfather and grandson enjoy doing together almost every evening during the week at sunset. They both jump into the ocean without wetsuits! Kalani says, “Eh, our ancestors have been swimming in the ocean for centuries without rubber . . . we no need! If it was good enough for them, it’s good enough for me!”



Figure 5.9. Kalani with grandson. Photos courtesy of Kalani's 'ohana album.

Aside from the family meal, I recalled this likeness to the theme of the first piko (connecting with Ke Akua, the ancestors), when Kalani said he came from a long line of healers on his Hawaiian mother's side:

We are *maka 'āinana* (Commoner; literally, people that attend the land). I know everybody's related to somebody, a king somewhere. I'm not. I'm *maka 'āinana Kanaka Maoli*. My ancestors on my mother's side, my *kūpuna kahiko* were physicians, and *kahuna lapa 'au*, herbalists. They learned their craft and served both the *maka 'āinana* and the royalty. Obviously, you know, sickness doesn't make distinctions between the two.

Then Kalani made the connection, saying that he worked as a healer of hearts and souls, and that his niece had recently become a physician. It will be interesting to see if any other descendants become healers as well.



Figure 5.10. Kalani with Lei at prom. Photos courtesy of Kalani's 'ohana album.

Lastly, a loving couple, Kalani and Lei (like Paka and Leinani) work very hard at keeping Hawaiian traditions alive, at keeping connected with each other, *nā keiki*, with the community, their church, with their *‘ohana* back home as well as with their friends and alumni at Kamehameha Schools. In asking Kalani, “Where do you call home?” I reflected on how he had joined with Lei nearly 20 years ago, how they *lōkahi* (work together in harmony and unity), live mindfully, consciously with hearts filled with Aloha (love, compassion, kindness). I thought about the *Hōkūle‘a* and *Hikianalia*, the *Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage*, and meaning of the second *piko* as he answered in congruence to the concept of ships that sail away, anchor in a new port, and his *Maoli* ties to Hawai‘i:

Hawai‘i will always be my home. Yes. My heart, my *hā* (breath), my *mana‘o* (thoughts), my history, my roots, everything about me is tethered to Hawaii. I don’t use the word “anchored” because if it were anchored there then I would actually be there physically. I’m tethered there . . . the umbilical cord is always tied to the islands, but I’m free to move from place to place, and I . . . (voice trails off)

“Bring your aloha there?” I guessed. “And bring my Aloha there,” he said, “Through my tether to Hawai‘i . . . through my heart . . . I can continue to go throughout the world. So, I am tethered there, and my home is there, but . . . I make a living wherever I am at (in the world).

**Nani.** In interpreting Nani’s story, it was evident that she—like Paka and Kalani—nurtures a positive relationship with the *‘āina*, and has special ties with the ocean. The themes of *mālama ‘āina* and *mālama ka ‘ohana* were also woven throughout her portrait. Like Kalani, the motif of Aloha, spirituality and connection, especially with *Ke Akua* was even more prominent. As with Kalani, I momentarily reflected on her name—Nani—literally translates to “beauty or beautiful; splendid, glorious,” and one of her favorite songs, *Ho‘onani ka Makua Mau* (the Hawaiian Doxology) the one I had specifically chosen to culminate her portrait. It was a perfect piece to weave into her portrait.

She was named Nani Alice, after her Aunty Alice who was sent to live in Kalaupapa (a community where people with Hansen’s Disease were condemned) as a child. Unlike all the other participants, Nani was actually born on the mainland. She was only two years old when her parents divorced, which coincidentally, is exactly how old Paka was when his parents split up. Nani’s father moved the ‘ohana to Honolulu later that year to live with his father’s family.

Due to some horrific events that continued throughout her childhood, she chose not to use her Hawaiian name “Nani” until many years after she moved to the mainland. She went by “Alice” instead for three reasons: first, moving to the mainland offered an opportunity for a fresh new identity; secondly, she thought “Alice” sounded much more “Haole” (Americanized) and “credible” in the business world than “Nani” did. Finally, she told me that she simply had never felt beautiful . . . that she had to re-discover herself before using the name “Nani” again. Hearing her utter those words broke my heart. As keiki ‘o ka ‘āina, we are all precious flowers with a very special heritage; to be gifted such a beautiful name and to smother it due to shame for something that was never her fault must have been unbearable, but she did exactly that to survive.

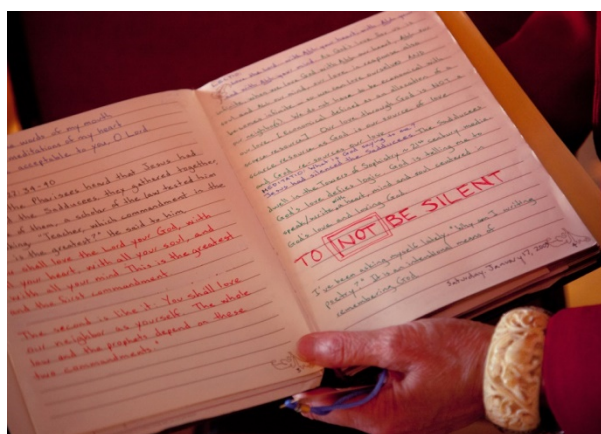


Figure 5.11. Nani: Not to be silent. Printed with permission from Moet Photography© Copyright 2014.

Just as the Hōkūle‘a’s voyages stand for courage, adventure, exploration, and hope as she proudly represents a vision of reawakening for the Hawaiian people, Nani’s journey away from



Hawai‘i as a young adult offered hope, healing and transformation. She learned to forgive the people that hurt her so long ago. She made peace with the past, and deliberately chose to move on with her life. She took a vow never to be silent again, and in doing so, transformed from Alice, a terrified young victim of abuse into Nani, a confident, successful business woman.

Here, it is easy to tease out the theme of the first and second piko (connection to God / Ke Akua / ‘aumakua, and to the ‘āina, respectively): a renewed connection of faith gave her the courage and strength to face her demons of the past. Career opportunities brought both Nani and Kalani home to the islands for several years before they returned to California to begin new adventures.

In highlighting her career move to become the controller of Jean-Michel Cousteau’s Ocean Futures Society, I found a delightful connection in the portrait between Nani’s adventures and those of the Hōkūle‘a, led by Captain Nainoa Thompson, President of the Polynesian Voyaging Society and Trustee at Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estates:

I really loved working with Jean-Michel Cousteau, especially when he started his PBS series “Jean-Michel Cousteau’s Ocean Adventures.” Two of episodes were “Voyage to Kure” which is one of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands. As the Controller, I’d wire money to wherever the expedition needed it, talk with the Searcher Captain via satellite phone, and communicate with (one my KS classmates) Brickwood Galuteria, then PR for Polynesian Voyaging Society.

Nani was thrilled to work with a non-profit organization that was environmentally driven to educate the public through their international ocean adventures, and through her connections with the Cousteau Ocean Adventures and the Kamehameha Schools, she was afforded the fortuity to meet and converse with Nainoa Thompson on two separate black-tie affair:

Nainoa Thompson is such an inspiration . . . He’s one of the most approachable leaders of Hawai‘i. So *ha‘aha‘a* (humble). “We are an ocean people,” said Nainoa would say about Hawaiians. When I would go (to the KS events), I would bring my Cousteau stuff, and so of course we start talking about the ocean.

All of these risks and opportunities add depth to Nani's experience on her journey. In recalling how the Cousteau voyages went down, she spoke about lōkahi, using identical language in describing how the crew members of the Hōkūle'a work together:

Even though I was in back office, it's still special, working for Jean-Michel Cousteau. Many of the team have worked with Jean-Michel's father, Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau. They often referred to the "Cousteau way" which is an expedition mentality: My life depends on you; your life depends on me. Since I have this responsibility, I know you are precious. Each person is a valuable member of the team.

Everybody works together to do their part. Our work (on "The Voyage to Kure" episodes) inspired President George W. Bush to establish the Northwest Hawaiian Island National Marine Sanctuary—which is now the *Papahānaumokuākea* Marine National Monument, our planet's largest fully protected marine area of 5,178 square miles which has *heiau* (ancient Hawaiian religious sites), endangered green sea turtles and monk seals and a unique marine ecosystem found nowhere else on earth.

Then, by referring to the Kumulipo, she pointed out the relationship between the first and second piko (connection to Ke Akua, and to the 'āina), and implied a connection to the third piko (connection to future generations):

The name of Papahānaumokuākea comes from ancient Hawaiian cosmological mythology; it's symbolic of the Earth Mother and Wakea Father Sky. Their union birthed the Hawaiian race, and the Hawaiian Islands from island Hawai'i to Kure or Holaniku. The name reminds us of our connection and responsibility to our environment (for future generations).

Not only was Nani resilient in overcoming personal obstacles, she was serious in reclaiming her Hawaiian heritage that she had set aside for a while in order to heal, and ensuring that her daughter also was afforded every opportunity to learn about her Native Hawaiian heritage. Nani had given her daughter a Hawaiian name that literally translates to "the loved one." Although it was more than difficult for this single mother to save money in order to send her daughter to the Kamehameha Schools Explorations Program, she did to expose her to Hawaiian culture. Serendipitously and through her network, Nani connected her daughter with

the Polynesian Voyaging Society; today, her daughter has connected with her heritage, is living in Hawai‘i, contributing to the local economy, and absolutely loving her life.

Although Nani was determined to reclaim her heritage while living on the mainland, she totally committed to lifelong learning about Hawaiian culture and language only after she had returned to Hawai‘i for work:

When I went back to Hawai‘i in 2005, I was ridiculed about coming from the mainland. (They’d say) “Oh, you’re from America!” And that really hurt. But it led me to actively seek out to read the Epistle in Hawaiian at the Cathedral Church of St. Andrew, so I could practice, practice . . . look up every word in the Hawaiian dictionary. I took *oli* (chanting) classes at the Bishop Museum.

Nani enrolled in Hawaiian culture, language, and chanting classes; she participated in bible studies, singing in the church choir, and wrote poetry. All of these activities strengthened, healed, and served her, illuminating the theme of connection to ‘āina: it is wherever you put your roots down, while being connected to where you came from, and remembering where your piko, center or umbilical cord is connected to. She spoke of her very special teacher from Ni‘ihau, who instilled many rules regarding the Maori method about learning ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, one being “*E mālama kekahi i kekahi*” (“take care of one another”). Nani’s story truly reflects a person who chooses to Live Aloha.

**Mona.** In analyzing Mona’s story, it was evident that she—like Paka, Kalani, and Nani—nurtures a positive relationship with the ‘āina. The themes of mālama ‘āina, mālama ka ‘ohana, and mālama keiki, were woven throughout her portrait, much like a master lei maker selects the choicest flowers and fern to create a beautiful haku lei.

As a child born into a family of lei makers, Mona learned to mālama ‘āina at a very young age. As children, they learned to oli before entering the forest, stating their purpose, asking permission to pick, and requesting protection from evil spirits. She was taught to mālama

‘āina by plucking buds that were ready to be picked, and never over-harvesting in one area. No gathered flower or fern was ever wasted. Mona taught her siblings to pick flowers as well, and in accordance with the Hawaiian tradition of mālama keiki, Mona—the eldest of eight—helped to care for her younger siblings.

Unlike Paka or Nani, it doesn’t appear as though Mona was leaving her past to start a new life . . . or did she? Perhaps she was torn between the obligations of caring for children, helping with the lei stand, and doing what she wanted to do with her life? I recall that Mona attended parochial school, graduated from St. Joseph’s Catholic High School in Hilo, and dreamt of moving away to do something exciting with her life.

I’m the eldest of eight, so I’m like, number one in crew. In other words, I was driving everybody and doing all the errands and all of that, when my Mom wasn’t. She wasn’t ready to let me go. So it was hard to “get out of dodge” to . . . you know, (get out) of this small town, and I wanted to go, you know? I helped raise the lower half of the eight kids, you know.



*Figure 5.10.* Mona’s Ohana (early years). Photos courtesy of the Mona McKelvey ‘Ohana album.

Once the keiki were older and didn’t need her as much as before, Mona spread her wings and moved from Hilo to Honolulu. This was her first small voyage away from home, and yet she

chose to come home to mālama ka ‘ohana during holidays and graduation, and each year during the Merrie Monarch Festival; the whole family came together, to work and sew lei.

In thinking about the Hōkūle‘a and her voyages, a sense of freedom, discovery, and purpose emerges. In parallel, Mona was nearly 30 years old when she journeyed to the mainland in search of adventure. She had fulfilled her duty as the eldest, and it was time to set sail. Like Kalani, she had fallen madly in love, ventured to the mainland to see how her relationship with her partner, would run its course, married her sweetheart, and settled down in California to start a family.

In remembering my interview with Mona, I vividly recall the green Hawaiian foliage and palms that regally lined the driveway of her home, the sweet fragrant flower bushes and vegetable garden that were cultivated in her back yard. There was even a worm bin for recycling plant materials and vegetable scraps, as well as a chicken coop. Mona, Kiki, and Mailani had planted an assortment of fruit trees too numerous to count—and I did spy citrus, and an assortment of exotic foliage that Mona used to make haku lei and hair pieces for their halau in a jiffy—evidence that the practice of mālama ‘āina was alive and well, reminding me about story of the older brother Hāloanakalaukapali‘i, the root of the kalo plant, who provides Hāloa with taro, the staple food of the Kanaka Maoli. Recall that Hāloa respects to his older brother by taking care of the lo‘i, creating irrigation systems, harvesting the plant and replanting to continue the cycle by teaching his keiki to mālama ‘āina as well.

The walls of Mona’s home were adorned with black and white photographs of kūpuna, as well as pictures of Hilo and Mauna Kea that she happened to discover in random antique stores in Idaho and in Moro Bay. She exclaimed:

I found this picture at an antique store in Morro Bay. I look, I go (say), oh, that's a nice picture. I like black and whites . . . And so . . . it's out of context . . . and I look again, I go, No! That's Mauna Kea! That's Hilo, my hometown! (laughs)

That's when I responded with:

“And you didn't even know!” I said, laughing with her. “And I didn't even know!” she said. It's always so much fun to find a surprise at an antique store, a treasure like this old picture of your home town—the sands of your birth place—2500 miles away from where it originated. When these things happen, I like to believe that it is the work of our 'aumākua communicating with us, giving us gifts, and reminding us how loved we are.

This is a clear example of the first piko, Mona's lovely spiritual connection with the ancestors, with 'aumākua, right there in plain sight, adorning her home. Additionally, the pictures are a constant reminder of her Hawaiian-ness, of who she is, where she comes from, and like the umbilical cord of the second piko, her ties to Hawai'i. Evidence of the third piko comes in the way Mona is adamant about dancing hula, learning to speak 'ōlelo, and making sure that her daughter has every opportunity to do the same. Like Nani, Mona mindfully planned and saved in order to send Mailani to the Kamehameha Schools Explorations program in fifth grade. Today, Mailani studies 'ōlelo and kahiko, enjoys performing with hula halau Nā Mele 'o ke Kai, plays 'ukulele, and has the most beautiful voice when she sings. It brings me so much joy to see our culture passed on to and embraced by the keiki, especially here on the mainland.

In concluding, Mona is an exemplary example of Kanaka Maoli Living Aloha on the mainland is exemplified in the gracious way that she lives her life, she shares all that she has, adorns her home, and ensures that her daughter receives her cultural inheritance. She found a way to bring Hawai'i here.

“Well you bring it with you, yeah?” she smiled, stating what was obvious to her. “You bring your home with you, you know.” “Yeah,” I said slowly. “Not everybody does, but you did.” “Yeah,” she agreed. “I did, huh.”

## Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion

### Kaulana Nā Pua (Famous Are the Flowers)

Words and lyrics by Ellen Keho`ohiwaokalani Wright Prendergast (1893); published in 1895.

<http://youtu.be/bhibLQFebpQ> Winner of the 2013 Big Island Film Festival Best Short Film.

<i>Kaulana nā pua a`o Hawai`i</i>	Famous are the children of Hawai`i
<i>Kūpa`a mahope o ka `āina</i>	Ever loyal to the land
<i>Hiki mai ka `elele o ka loko `ino</i>	When the evil-hearted messenger comes
<i>Palapala `ānunu me ka pākaha</i>	With his greedy document of extortion
<i>Pane mai Hawai`i moku o Keawe</i>	Hawai`i, the land of Keawe answers
<i>Kōkua nā Hono a`o Pi`ilani</i>	The bays of Pi`ilani help
<i>Kāko`o mai Kaua`i o Mano</i>	Kaua`i of Mano lends support
<i>Pa`apū me ke one Kākuhihewa</i>	All are united by the sands of Kākuhihewa
<i>`A`ole a`e kau i ka pūlima</i>	No one will fix a signature
<i>Maluna o ka pepa o ka `enemi</i>	To the paper of the enemy
<i>Ho`ohui `āina kū`ai hewa</i>	With its sin of annexation
<i>I ka pono sivila a`o ke Kanaka</i>	And sale of Native civil rights
<i>`A`ole mākou a`e minamina</i>	We do not value
<i>I ka pu`ukālā a ke aupuni</i>	The government`s sums of money
<i>Ua lawa mākou i ka pōhaku</i>	We are satisfied with the stones
<i>I ka `ai kamaha`o o ka `āina</i>	Astonishing food of the land
<i>Mahope mākou o Lili`ulani</i>	We support Lili`uokalani
<i>A loa`a e ka pono o ka `āina</i>	Who has won the rights of the land
<i>Ha`ina `ia mai ana ka puana</i>	The story is told
<i>Ka po`e i aloha i ka `āina</i>	Of the people who love the land

Source: Na Mele o Hawai`i Nei by Elbert & Mahoe - Written in 1893, published in 1895, this hīmeni (hymn) opposed the annexation of Hawai`i to the United States. The original title was *Mele `Ai Pohaku* or The Stone-eating Song, and was also known as *Mele Aloha `Āina* (translates to "Song for the Love of the Land"). Kaulana Nā Pua (literally, "Famous are the flowers") is a Hawaiian patriotic song written by Eleanor Kekoahīwaikalani Wright Prendergast (April 12, 1865–December 5, 1902) for members of the Royal Hawaiian Band who protested the violent overthrow of Queen Lili`uokalani and the Hawaiian Kingdom. ([http://www.huapala.org/Kau/Kaulana\\_Na\\_Pua.html](http://www.huapala.org/Kau/Kaulana_Na_Pua.html))



## Summary

Project KULEANA was created by three Native Hawaiian men who share the perspective that “kuleana (responsibility) is what makes music Hawaiian.” Like Eleanor Wright Prendergast who wrote *Kaulana Nā Pua*, they believe that music can positively affect the well-being of our lāhui.” The concept behind their award-winning project allows space for one to reflect on historical events of the past, to explore Native Hawaiian kuleana to the ‘āina, and to experience our strong ancestral connection to it through music and lyrics. Project KULEANA is a movement that utilizes both technology and music “as a vehicle to educate our community and to develop layers of understanding to strengthen our lāhui Hawai‘i.”

(<http://www.projectkuleana.com/>)

As a Native Hawaiian scholar studying the out-migration of Kanaka Maoli to the mainland United States, I was moved by the powerful lyrics hidden within the upbeat mele *Kaulana Nā Pua*. I have heard this song on the radio and performed live hundreds of times over the course of my life; as a person who was not intimately familiar with Hawaiian history or fluent in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, I could not translate the words myself, nor did I understand the hidden meaning behind what the words mean . . . until now. Within the stories of the people that I interviewed, one of my discoveries is that each of the participants left their beloved Hawai‘i for a combination of different reasons: to embark on a new adventure, to join lives with a future mate, to seek new opportunities and/or to escape personal problems and start new lives.

Through the review of literature, I discovered that many social problems and concerns affecting Native Hawaiians in Hawai‘i are based on oppression and often associated with low socioeconomic status as well as the inability to access resources related to health care, nutrition, education (which leads to sustainable employment), and affordable housing. These problems

continue to affect the psycho-social well-being of Native Hawaiian people, and appear to be rooted in historical trauma—in the collective events that occurred after Western contact and colonization, the loss language, cultural practices, and the introduction of diseases that caused much suffering and death. Of all these atrocities, the most devastating was the tremendous loss of land coupled with the loss of political power when our queen was publicly humiliated, dethroned, imprisoned in her own castle, and the kingdom of Hawai‘i was stolen from the Hawaiian people. Today, generations of Hawaiians are living with cumulative post annexation and statehood repercussions. This is why the powerful mele *Kaulana Nā Pua* written over a hundred years ago, together with the recent award winning KULEANA Project are so important in helping generations of our people cope and heal through music and the hula.

The Native Hawaiian experience eerily parallels that of the American Indians and Alaska Natives who have also suffered “massive losses of lives, land, and culture from European contact and colonization resulting from a long legacy of chronic trauma and unresolved grief across generations” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyen, 2000, p. 60). Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Director of Native American and Disparities Research at the University of New Mexico, Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, Hunkpapa, Oglala Lakota, Ph.D. is internationally known for her work in developing historical trauma theory and historical unresolved grief theory, and for creating healing interventions that draw from traditional practice. She posits:

“For Europeans, ownership of land is a dominant value. For American Indians, land, plants, and animals are considered sacred relatives, far beyond a concept of property. Their loss became a source of grief” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyen, 2000, p. 62) just as it has for the Kanaka Maoli.

Racism and oppression, including internalized oppression (Freire, 1968), are continuous forces which intensify and further aggravate the destructive behaviors of suicide, homicide, accidental deaths, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and alcoholism as well as other social problems in American Indians and Alaska Natives (Bachman, 1992; Berlin, 1986; Indian Health Service, 1995; May, 1997; as cited in Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 2000, p. 60).

Indeed, these exact sentiments were echoed in the voices of the participants in my study. One of the participants' father committed suicide due to the depression he experienced when he felt he could not provide for his family. Several other participants were abused or neglected in some way shape or form, or suffered from abuse of drugs and / or alcohol; during the interviews when the participants shared their stories, much was said in the silence and between the actual words that were spoken, and later confirmed in my investigation. When I created their portraits, I alluded to the kinds of aforementioned problems without coming right out and obtusely say so. These are sensitive topics and must be handled delicately, which is why the Native Hawaiian framework utilizing portraiture fit so very nicely for this study. One of the most important values in practicing Aloha is to be 'olu'olu, which is to be gracious, kind, gentle and pleasant at all times, as opposed to 'olu'olu'ole (unpleasant, blunt and impolite, causing people to feel uncomfortable). This practice I have learned is quite difficult to master, and often misunderstood as "weak" or "passive aggressive" by those who do not understand our culture.

We suggest that these social ills are primarily the product of a legacy of chronic trauma and unresolved grief across generations. It is proposed that this phenomenon, which we label historical unresolved grief, contributes to the current social pathology originating from the loss of lives, land, and the vital aspects of Native culture promulgated by the European conquest of the Americas. (Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 2000, p. 60).

This dissertation is about claiming or re-claiming Native Hawaiian identity after relocating to the mainland United States. I wanted to tell stories that reflect the unique experience of growing up in the 50th State of Hawai‘i, choosing to leave, and then making the choice to permanently relocate. Initially, I asked these questions: “What causes Native Hawaiians to relocate?” and “How do they successfully maintain cultural practices far away from the ‘āina?” In searching for the truth, I turned to the Kanaka Maoli themselves, true practitioners of Aloha; these individuals are in my social circles, have made the journey successfully, and are long-term California residents.

This is a passionate subject for me for several reasons: I myself had taken the same journey over 20 years ago and struggled with identity, clashing values, fitting in, and discrimination; I have since reclaimed my cultural inheritance, and yet I wondered if these experiences were unique or if anyone else struggled to acclimate. Secondly, my concern is cross-cultural wellness in the context of higher education. In reclaiming my cultural inheritance while striving for excellence in my career, my colleagues nominated me to earn the adjunct faculty of the year award, and became known as “the Hawaiian counselor”—not only at the local community college where I work, but within the region. With the title and reputation comes responsibility; soon thereafter, my colleagues began referring distraught *‘ōpio* (youth; young people) Maoli to me. I found myself in a unique situation, able to make a difference for these students—particularly when they were in crisis—by offering comfort, advice, and guidance flavored with Aloha. In all humility, these particular students repeatedly sought my help over working with other counselors simply because of our common cultural background and my commitment to our students’ success. I’ll never forget the time a teary-eyed Native student said,

“You just get me.” Many haumana (students) were able overcome personal obstacles that otherwise stood in the way of achieving academic success.

I wanted to discover how we could increase our student success rate with our dislocated ‘ōpio, and share my findings with colleagues; even though we all have taken the required multicultural counseling courses, the research shows that displaced Hawaiians and Native peoples have a unique worldview; all of us could afford to explore issues of identity and displacement in order to become even more culturally competent counselors, teachers, and community members.

Finally, as the great-granddaughter of Tūtū Kawena Pukui, I am very concerned with Maoli cultural resilience in western dominated culture. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), almost one half of Native Hawaiians (45%) live outside Hawai‘i, while “over one-fourth (27%) live in states other than the top three (Hawai‘i, California, and Washington) with Native Hawaiian populations.” I was surprised to learn that almost half of us live in places (mostly western U. S. mainland states) other than Hawai‘i . . . this population of our people have either migrated themselves or are first, second, or even perhaps third generations of Maoli migrants born outside the shores of our ‘āina. If Hawaiians are relocating elsewhere permanently, how can we keep the stories of our ancestry, our language, and rich culture alive when we live so far away? Each of the participants found a way to do that.

This study was about the stories of four Native Hawaiians who permanently relocated to the mainland United States. Each of their stories was uniquely theirs. They lived in different parts of the islands; they relocated for a combination of different reasons, and although each person encountered indifference, adversity, and struggled to adjust to living on the

mainland—they not only survived . . . they thrived! These are stories of triumph—of individuals who were able to embrace their “Maoli-ness”, celebrate their Aloha culture by sharing the Aloha Spirit, and maintain—if not gain more—cultural awareness.

I was most fortunate in that this study allowed me to travel home often and enjoy extensive stays which afforded me the luxury of spending time with mentors and deep practitioners of Aloha, including my mother, Aunty Pat Bacon, James Vegas, Uncle Leighton “Teenie” Sukanuma, and Uncle Peter Hanohano. I interviewed Pono Shim, CEO and president of Enterprise Honolulu (the O’ahu Economic Development Board), and Na’alehu Anthony, owner of Palikū Documentary Films (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOuDWUghdW0>) on their views of practicing Aloha in an ever-progressing world. I was fortunate enough to spend an entire day with Mom Lindsey digging up weeds and invasive plants in the Honokawai Valley as she taught me about the Maui Cultural Lands project to restore native, and nearly extinct native Hawaiian plants. I enrolled in numerous online Hawaiian cultural classes, read many, many books about Hawaiian history, and struggled to learn ‘ōlelo, all the while being totally supported by my family, especially my brother Rob who invited me to stay for weeks at a time in his peacefully quiet apartment in Makiki to write, my Aunty Paulie who read proof read my papers, and my sister Fay who loaned me her car any time I had an interview. That to me is Aloha.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

Researchers have studied the lived experience of other ethnic groups that have relocated to the United States mainland (Cordova, 2003; Swamy, 2011), but how are Native Hawaiians keeping their culture alive in places far away from Hawai‘i nei?

In her book titled *Ancestry of Experience: A Journey into Hawaiian Ways of Knowing* (2012), Holmes, a woman of Hawaiian and Chinese decent tells a fascinating story about being

adopted as an infant in Honolulu by Haole step-parents who relocated to Cleveland, Ohio for an employment opportunity. She describes what it is like to be a Hawaiian raised on the mainland, never knowing her birth mākuā or mo‘okū‘auhau, and never quite fitting in. Holmes intimately shares her personal struggle with identity. A gap in the literature exists because the migration from Hawai‘i took place when she was four years old, and relocation was not her choice.

Wright (1979) conducted an extensive mixed-methods study of outmigration from Hawai‘i and wrote about why Hawai‘i residents leave Hawai‘i. Of the 44 persons interviewed, 10 were part-Hawaiian. The author notes, “Hawaiians are disproportionately represented among islanders serving in the armed forces” (p. 454). Indeed, nine interviewees in his study were leaving to join the military, five of whom were part-Hawaiian; in four of the five cases, the participants were motivated to enlist because other Hawaiian friends were joining. The other five Hawaiian participants left the islands to enroll in college. The gap in the literature exists for several reasons: first and most obvious is the fact that the study took place over 35 years ago. Motivating factors to leave Hawai‘i may not be the same now, particularly since I imagine that locals’ attitudes about joining the military may have shifted; one thing we can be certain of is that the social, economic and political systems of Hawai‘i, our nation, and world we live in are very different now.

Wright’s (1979) study also does not address Native Hawaiian cultural values and the embodiment of Aloha as leadership, nor did it discuss cultural practices and rituals or the perpetuation of culture through ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, mo‘olelo, and mo‘okū‘auhau. This study is different in that I offer rich historical context as background for the study, and weave it throughout each portrait to add deeper meaning. The participants tell their unique and very personal stories of transition through the portraits were co-created through dialogue based on our

common experiences of being Maoli, growing up in Hawai‘i, and choosing as adults to permanently relocate.

Although there are studies about other ethnic peoples relocating to the mainland United States, there appears to be very little literature to review about first generations of Hawaiians that have relocated from the islands to other places, and their struggle to maintain cultural identity far away from the sands of their birth. I believe my intended study can bridge the gap in the current literature and bring to light why Native Hawaiian people leave Hawai‘i, and how some of them have found a way to regain or maintain their cultural heritage and lead with Aloha far away from the ‘āina.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

I interviewed individuals between the ages of 45 and 62, two kāne and two wāhine. The small sample size of the study could have been a limitation, as well as the fact that all the participants live in the same state, less than 350 miles of each other, and yet, I believe the small sample size allowed me to go in greater depth with each participant,

In this case, the number of participants allowed for added richness and dimension to the individual portraits we co-created within the timeframe allotted to collect and piece together the data—particularly through the enhancements of pictures, songs and multi-media—to tell each individual’s story in depth.

The participants were Native Hawaiian, parents of at least one child, and I had developed a personal relationship with each of the participants over time through years of dancing together in a former halau or because we were classmates or alumni of the Kamehameha Schools. One might argue that because the participants are well-known to the researcher, the researcher had privileged access. In this study, my personal relationship with the participants gave immediate



trust so the participants felt comfortable sharing intimate details of their lives to the individual portraits we created together.

Finally, I was aware at all times that I was tasking in multiple roles listening with my ears and with my heart, observing with my eyes, with all my senses, and most importantly with what my na‘au was telling me, collecting vital information as a Native Hawaiian researcher, yet as a former colleague or haumana, these were people who are dear to me, and therefore I was keenly aware of transference, counter-transference, and disabling bias. For example, in Paka’s story, I had only known him through the halau as a hula brother, so I worked extra hard put our common knowledge of each other in the background in order to avoid assumptions, in order to hear the other facets of his life as a whole, and give balance to his portrait. Throughout each interview, I mindfully checked myself regarding transference and countertransference; when countertransference occurred, I responded by recording it in my notes. I was sensitive, diligent, and completely transparent with the participants in the interviews, as well as in reporting my thoughts in each portrait.

### **Implications for Leadership and Change**

In his book *Ka Lama Kukui: Hawaiian Psychology*, Rezendes (1996) identifies traditional Hawaiian values and what he believes are contemporary causes of mental illness in Hawaiians. Rezendes describes a condition he calls the “*kaumaha syndrome*” and the “*haole syndrome*,” and “provides insight into the difficulties of the transitions of Hawaiians have made and continue to make from traditional Hawaiian life to Western/American society” (p. 37).

Crabbe (2002) developed the Hawaiian Ethnic Identity (HEI) scale used to identify and measure behaviors that are uniquely Hawaiian, while Kaulukukui and Nāho‘opi‘i (2008) developed an inventory of exemplary Hawaiian leadership behaviors, noting that that leadership

behaviors are “observable, values-based, and culturally dependent” (p.101). The body of knowledge offered by Native Hawaiian psychologists Rezentes, Crabbe, Kaulukukui and Nāho‘opi‘i work is especially important because they offer emic insight regarding issues that affect Hawaiians. As a positive psychologist, I found their work to be foundational in facilitating interventions, designing wellness programs, and nurturing *ola* (life; well-being) for our Maoli people.

It is my belief that Kanaka Maoli who do not lose their cultural heritage after moving to the mainland United States choose to embrace *ola* by embodying Hawaiian leadership behaviors—whether they know it or not—and that is why I am interested in telling their stories of lived experience. Their stories can help others. As Hawaiian culture is very collective in nature, the individuals in my study have created communities of Aloha by cultivating relationships, creating opportunities to share, practicing their culture, and passing on knowledge to their keiki. They play Hawaiian music, participate in hula and ocean sports, they prepare and share Hawaiian cuisine, and speak (or learn to speak) ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. I found that that mainland Hawaiians communicate frequently with ‘ohana members via telephone, text, internet, email, and social media. They connect with other displaced Hawaiians, make friends in the communities where they live, and fly home as often as possible, because building and nurturing relationships is foundational to the Hawaiian values system.

The participants in my study were referred to me as individuals that exuded Aloha, meaning that each was recognized as a practitioner of Aloha from people I know in the community; I chose these individuals because they met the criteria of a) being Hawaiian raised in Hawai‘i; b) choosing to relocate to the mainland United States permanently; c) exhibiting what I call leading with Aloha or Living Aloha—in other words, mindfully practicing our culture on a

daily basis; d) passing the Maoli knowledge they acquired on to their keiki, the next generation(s) of Hawaiians living on the mainland.

Initially, each individual participated because they wanted to help me with my project. They all felt it was necessary to tell their story so that others can comprehend the difficulties they had faced in making the transition; they wanted to tell their stories to people back home who were thinking about relocating, so that they could have some knowledge of what to expect. They wanted to help other Hawaiians who were living here and feeling disconnected; they wanted to help ease the pangs of homesickness every one of us experiences from time to time. What ended up happening was a surprise for both them and me; our relationships had strengthened, and each of us was changed by the experience of creating the portraits.

The work that went into sharing information during the interviews and subsequent conversations combined with the process of creating the portraits turned into a sort of healing intervention for both the participants as well as for me! Portraiture requires the researcher to seek goodness and illuminate beauty in seeking the truth; three of my four participants individually reported that as they read their own stories, they cried tears of compassion for their younger selves in understanding the choices they made, the struggles they endured, and the courage it takes to live Aloha. Three participants said they wanted to learn or continue learning ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i; these same three participants said they wanted to learn more about their mo‘okū‘auhau. All participants reported that they want to seek opportunities to learn more about their culture; each vocalized that they were motivated to perpetuate knowledge by sharing what they’ve learned, as well as by encouraging their sons and daughters to become more involved in the Hawaiian communities. Each participant actually thanked me for choosing them to be in my

study. One even said, “I cannot thank you enough for telling my story. It has been bottled up inside me for so many years and I can finally forgive and let go.”

### **Recommendations**

I have learned much from the participants in my study. In the interest of preserving the Hawaiian culture and in keeping a healthy lāhui (Hawaiian Nation), my recommendations based upon analyzing this study are three-fold in revealing how, a) Native Hawaiians that choose to relocate to the mainland United States can stay connected and retain their culture, b) Native Hawaiians that continue to live at home in Hawai‘i can be supportive of those who relocate, and c) Non-Hawaiians can become more compassionate, supportive, and appreciate the diversity and rich culture that Native Hawaiians bring from the islands.

1. Native Hawaiians that choose to relocate to the mainland United States or anywhere in the world can stay connected and retain their culture by:
  - a) Listening to, playing and / or singing Hawaiian music, finding a place to dance hula, by cooking, sharing, and eating local food, and
  - b) Seeking out / connecting with other Hawaiians in the community by getting involved: joining alumni associations, contributing to and attending alumni events, Aloha festivals and hula competitions at home or on the mainland.
  - c) Displaced Hawaiians can connect with their culture by seeking out and supporting local hula halau, by taking Polynesian dance or ukulele lessons, and
  - d) By surfing, fishing, paddle boarding, boogie boarding or by simply just jumping in the ocean!
  - e) It is possible to keep up with ‘ohana and friends anywhere in the world via Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, and Skype.

- f) Seek opportunities to learn Hawaiian language, history and culture—classes are available online for anyone to take; share what is taught with ‘ohana members. Hawaiian curriculum for grade school students has been developed (and will hopefully be implemented in California soon); advocate for keiki of all ethnicities to attend.
  - g) Stay current with what is going on in Hawai‘i by subscribing to online publications such as The Honolulu Advertiser, Ka Wai Ola Newspaper, Aloha Magazine. and Honolulu Magazine.
  - h) Finally, one of my participants said, “Support all things Hawaiian!” Meaning, if Hawaiian artists come to town, go to their concerts and invite someone to enjoy the outing with you; introduce yourself to the artist(s), and don’t be shy about being Maoli.
2. Native Hawaiians that continue to live at home in Hawai‘i can be supportive of those who relocate by:
- a) Understanding that sometimes it is our best personal interest to leave the islands; and though we live far away from the ‘āina, Hawai‘i is still our home too! We are no less Hawaiian because we lost our tan and live far from home.
  - b) Please be patient with those of us who are trying to re-learn our culture and language. Do not discourage, degrade us, be disgusted, or make fun of us when we mispronounce words or use them inappropriately. We are doing the best we can. Gentle, constructive criticism and encouragement is helpful.
  - c) Please be forgiving if we have adapted some “mainland Haole” mannerisms, and forward or aggressive speech patterns. We sometimes find ourselves having to

adapt to our environments and momentarily forget local etiquette. We do not enjoy the luxury of living in Paradise immersed in the Aloha Spirit surrounded by ‘ohana and childhood friends. Many of us are doing the best we can to live with Aloha far away from the ‘āina.

3. Non-Hawaiians can become more compassionate, supportive, and appreciate the diversity and rich culture that Native Hawaiians bring from the islands by:
  - a) Actively learning about Native Hawaiian history and culture by asking questions, reading books written by Maoli artists, attending lectures, workshops, ho‘ike, and hula performances.
  - b) Supporting local musicians that come to the area by attending their concerts and purchasing their CDs and DVDs if you enjoy their music.
  - c) Striving to understand cultural differences, accepting and fully appreciating diversity between cultures, and aiming to realize the horrific and systemic impact that dominant culture has had on the Hawaiian people.
  - d) Learning to listen with the *pu‘uwai* (heart); observing with all the senses, allowing the time and space to listen with your na‘au.
  - e) Advocating that others learn about Native Hawaiian history and culture, and finally,
  - f) When visiting the islands, become sensitive to the cultural trauma that the Maoli have endured. Please try to understand why sovereignty is so important to the Maoli people who have lost so much and continue to suffer.

One last recommendation for Native Hawaiians living on the mainland, Native Hawaiians that continue to live at home in Hawai‘i as well as for Non-Hawaiians: all of us should strive to

connect, to become more educated and get involved with politics and ongoing legislation that either support or deny benefits to Native Hawaiians. It is all of our responsibility to care for each other, to protect the ‘āina, Hawai‘i and her people, and to ensure that Maoli culture is embraced by future generations.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Change for each of us is a process. This study has been an amazing journey of learning and healing for me. My ideas about future research have expanded since I proposed this study. This research was conducted with Native Hawaiians, who as adults, chose to relocate permanently to the south central / southern coast of the mainland United States. Done properly, I believe this study has the potential to be developed into a valid instrument of healing for dislocated Hawaiians—as well as for persons of other ethnicities for that matter.

Additionally, this study could also be expanded on to the second and third generations of Kanaka Maoli who are living examples of practicing the Aloha that they learned—through their parents, through programs such as Kamehameha Schools Explorations—especially if they practice Aloha without living on the ‘āina nui Aloha Hawai‘i for any significant amount of time.

This phenomenon of young people who continually practice Aloha while never spending significant time in the islands is particularly fascinating, and yet I know of such ‘ōpio . . . the legacy lives on in their bones, and they know it, they feel it, and are so proud to be Hawaiian; these children—*keiki ‘o ka ‘āina*—are eager to learn the ways of old, embrace the teachings, and practice Aloha, even when it is difficult and/or they get ridiculed in a dominant western world. They already know how to live pono, and they choose to do so.

Finally, this study incorporated the stories from three former Kamehameha Schools students; a similar project on a much grander scale could be conducted if the same institution

was interested in finding out how their graduates were utilizing the gifts of Princess Pauahi and faring on the mainland.

### **Conclusion**

As a Native Hawaiian researcher who was born and raised surrounded by the visual beauty of Hawai‘i, caressed by her spirituality, and bathed in the love of a good ‘ohana, I have often been asked, “Why would you ever leave the land of Aloha?” Why indeed. The answers can be complex or not; the reasons differ. Each person in my study was working through a problem whether they knew it or not—something was holding them back from becoming the person they are today; each was seeking a solution or opportunity that they must have known was either not available at the time or within reach, at home.

In *‘Ōlelo No ‘eau* (Pukui, 1983), Aunty Pat Bacon recalls a statement made by Pa’ahana that accurately presented the views of her mother, Kawena: “We are now in the Christian era. Let us walk that way. But do not look on the past with scorn and criticism—look back with understanding and appreciation” (p. xiii). This to me is timeless wisdom, true words depicting Aloha.

I daresay, when Kanaka Maoli leave the ‘āina—the land; that which feeds us physically, emotionally, spiritually—we know in our na‘au that goodbye is not forever. Native intelligence reminds us to be present and savor the moment—time is timeless, and nothing is permanent. In our culture, instead of saying goodbye we prefer to say *Aloha* or *a hui hou* (until next time). When closing a celebration or special gathering, it is customary to stand together as one *lāhui* (Hawaiian nation), hold hands with the person next to us and savor our experience together by singing Hawai‘i Aloha. Please allow me honor our special tradition by sharing it with you now.



“Hawai‘i Aloha”

Words by Rev. Lorenzo Lyons<sup>10</sup>; Music by James McGranahan

Sung by the Kamehameha Schools Concert Glee

[http://www.huapala.org/Hawaii/Hawaii\\_Aloha.html](http://www.huapala.org/Hawaii/Hawaii_Aloha.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DycR1qpopHA>

E Hawai`i e ku`u one hânau e  
 Ku`u home kulaîwi nei  
 `Oli nô au i nâ pono lani ou  
 E Hawai`i, aloha ê

O Hawai`i, o sands of my birth  
 My native home  
 I rejoice in the blessings of heaven  
 O Hawai`i, aloha

**Hui:**

E hau`oli nâ `ôpio o Hawai`i nei  
 `Oli ê! `Oli ê!  
 Mai nâ aheahe makani e pâ mai nei  
 Mau ke aloha, no Hawai`i

**Chorus:**

Happy youth of Hawai`i  
 Rejoice! Rejoice!  
 Gentle breezes blow  
 Love always for Hawai`i

E ha`i mai kou mau kini lani e  
 Kou mau kupa aloha, e Hawai`i  
 Nâ mea `ôlino kamaha`o no luna mai  
 E Hawai`i aloha ê

May your divine throngs speak  
 Your loving people, o Hawai`i  
 The holy light from above  
 O Hawai`i aloha

Nâ ke Akua E mâlama mai iâ `oe  
 Kou mau kualona aloha nei  
 Kou mau kahawai `ôlinolino mau  
 Kou mau mâla pua nani ê

God protects you  
 Your beloved ridges  
 Your ever glistening streams  
 Your beautiful gardens

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Na Mele o Hawai`i Nei by Elbert & Mahoe - One of the most beloved songs written by Rev. Lorenzo Lyons, also known as Makua Laiana, was taken from an old hymn "I Left It All With Jesus" composed by James McGranahan (1840–1907). Rev. Lyons arrived as a missionary in Waimea, Hawai`i, July 16, 1830. He translated more than 900 hymns, became a citizen of Hawai`i and died in Waimea, Oct. 6, 1886 ([www.huapala.org](http://www.huapala.org))

## Appendix

## Appendix A: Glossary

The vowels in Hawaiian are the same as in English, but the pronunciations are different:

- A - “ah” as in “Aloha”
- E - “eh” as in “Pele”
- I - “ee” as in “imu”
- O - “oh” as in “opu”
- U - “oo” as in “ukulele”

Every vowel is usually pronounced. An *okina* (‘) or glottal stop before a verb requires the speaker to pause. A *kahako* or line over a vowel requires one to draw out the vowel when speaking.

### ALOHA

- A     *Akahai* - meaning kindness (grace), to be expressed with tenderness;
- L     *Lōkahi* - meaning unity (unbroken), to be expressed with harmony;
- O     ‘*Olu’olu* - meaning agreeable (gentle), to be expressed with pleasantness;
- H     *Ha’aha’a* - meaning humility (empty), to be expressed with modesty;
- A     *Ahonui* - meaning patience (waiting for the moment), to be expressed with perseverance.

‘*ae* (yes)

*a hui hou!*” (until next time!)

‘*ahupua’a* (slice of land)

‘*Ai Noa* (freeing of the eating taboo)

‘*āina* (land; that which feeds)

*akamai* (smart, clever)

*alaka’i* (leader)

*ali 'i* (chiefs)

*Alo* – “face to face”

*Aloha* (love, compassion, kindness); *Aloha* means (literally) “In the face of life.” In the deepest and purest sense, *Aloha simply means love.*

*Aloha Kakahiaka!* (Good Morning!)

*'aumakua* (family god or guardian); *'aumākua* (plural for *'aumakua*)

*'auana* (modern hula)

*Auwe!* (Alas!)

*E komo mai!* (Come inside!)

*hā* – “breath” or “life” or “breath of life.”

*ha 'aha 'a* (humble)

*haku* (to braid)

*hālau* (school of hula)

*hale* (house; home)

*hānai* (adopted)

*hanohano* (honored)

*haole* (White; Caucasian)

*Hapa* (part or half; A *Hapa* is a person of mixed blood)

*hāpai* (pregnant)

*haumana* (students)

*heiau* (Hawaiian temples)

*hele* (go, move on)

*hiapo* (firstborn)

*Hōkūle‘a* (Polynesian double-hulled voyaging canoe, full-scale replica of original *wa‘a kalua*)

*honi* (kiss; kisses)

*ho‘okupu* (gift)

*ho‘oponopono* (an ancient Hawaiian practice of reconciliation and forgiveness)

*hui‘d* (pulled resources together)

*hula* (Hawaiian dance)

*‘ili*; (subdivision; there were many *‘ili* in every *ahupua‘a*)

*inoa* (personal name); *inoa ‘ohana* (family name; where they come from in the islands)

*inoa pō* (dream name)

*ipu* dance (hula danced while beating a gourd drum)

*kahea* (call out)

*kahiko* (ancient hula)

*kahu* (pastor, minister, reverend); *kahuna* (priests)

*kahuna lapa‘au*, herbalists and physicians

*kalo* (taro)

*kama‘āina* (native-born; host)

*kamali‘i* (our children); *kamakāne* (sons; male children)

*Kanaka* (self and others); *Kanaka Maoli* (politically correct term for Native Hawaiians)

*kāne* (men); *kamakāne* (sons; male children)

*kanikapila* (backyard jam sessions)

*kapa* (tapa)

*kapu* (taboo; rules)

*Ke Akua* (God; Higher Spirit)

*keiki* (children); *keiki kāne* (male children); *keiki 'o ka 'āina* (child of the land)

*koko* (blood); *koko Kanaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian blood)

*kōkua* (to help)

*kolohe* (mischievousness)

*kumu* (teacher); *Kumu Hula* (Master Hula Teacher)

*Kumulipo* (the story of creation)

*kupe 'e* (traditional wrist and ankle adornments)

*kupuna* (elder); *kūpuna* (elders); *kūpunahine* (female elders); *nā kūpuna* (ancestors living here on earth, as well as those who dwell in the spirit world); *kūpuna kahiko* (ancestors of old)

*lāhui* (Hawaiian nation, race)

*Laka* (goddess of the hula and the forest),

*lei* (garland of flowers, leaves, shells, given as a symbol of affection); *lei po 'o* (head lei)

*lo 'i* (taro patch)

*lōkahi* (unity, agreement, harmony)

*lua* (a dangerous method of fighting in which the fighters broke bones, dislocated joints)

*lula* (rules)

*ma 'a* (thoroughly know)

*mahina 'oli* (moon chant)

*māhū* (homosexual)

*maka 'āinana* (commoner; literally, people that attend the land)

*maika 'i loa* (very good)

*Makahiki* (a festival honoring the god *Lono* as *Lono-i-ka-Makahiki*)

*makai* (the sea)

*makana* (gifts)

*mākua* (parents); *mālama* (to care for, respect); *mālama ʻāina* (take care of the land)

*malihini* (strangers, newcomer, tourist, guests)

*malo* (loin cloth)

*mana* (power)

*mana ʻo* (mindfulness, thought behind the action)

*manini* (petty)

*Maoli* (Native Hawaiian)

*mauka* (the mountains)

*Makua* (parent); *mākua* (parents); *Makuahine* (mother); *Makuakane* (father)

*mele* (songs); *mele ko ʻihonua* (genealogical song)

*mo ʻokū ʻauhau* (genealogy)

*mo ʻolelo* (stories, myths, folklore)

*mo ʻopuna* (grandchild; great-niece or nephew; relatives two generations later, blood or adopted)

*mu ʻumu ʻu* (long shift dresse)

*na ʻau* (intestines, bowels, guts; mind, heart, affections)

*ʻohana* (family)

*ʻōiwi* (Native, native son – comes from *iwi*, which means bone)

*ola* (life; well-being)

*ʻōlapa* (dancer)

*ʻōlelo* (language); *ʻōlelo Hawai ʻi* (Hawaiian language, poems, songs); *ʻōlelo Maoli* (Hawaiian

language); *ʻōlelo pa ʻi ʻai* (Pidgin)

*ʻoli* (chant; chants)

*‘olu‘olu* (agreeable, pleasant, polite)

*‘ōpio* (youth; young people)

*pa‘ina* (dinner party)

*pakalolo* (marijuana; cannibus)

*Papa* (Mother Earth)

*pau* (finished); *pau hana* (work finished)

*pilau* (rotton; spoiled; foul)

*pilikia* (troubles)

*pō* (spirit world where our ancestors dwell)

*pono* (goodness, right, morally correct, authentic; right action in daily work and in everyday life)

*pua* (flower)

*pule* (prayer)

*punahele* (favorite; favorite student)

*Tūtū* (grandparent); *Tūtū wahine* (grandmother)

*‘ūniki* (formal training for dancers and teachers)

*wāhine* (women)

*wai* (fresh water)

*Wākea* (Father Sky)

*wala‘au* (talk story)

*wili* (a winding method of lei making that utilizes string to wind)



## Appendix B:

References taken from *‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian proverbs and poetical sayings* (Pukui, 1983).

In order of appearance:

***Ke ho‘i a‘e la ka ‘ōpua i Awalau***

*The rain clouds are returning to Awalau.*

Said of a return to the source. (Pukui, #1698)

***Pupuka auane‘i, he inoa ‘ala.***

*Homely he may be, but his name is fragrant.*

He bears an honorable name. (Pukui, #3757)

***‘Ike no I ka lā o ka ‘ike; mana no I ka lā o ka mana.***

*Know in the day of knowing; mana in the day of mana.*

Knowledge and mana – each has its day.

Another day may bring greater knowledge and greater mana today. (Pukui, #1212)

***‘A ohe pau ka ‘ike i ka hālau ho‘okāhi.***

*All knowledge is not taught in one school.*

One can learn from many sources. (Pukui, #203)

***‘Au i ke kai me he mau ala.***

*Cross the sea as a bird.*

To sail across the sea. (Pukui, #2737)

***O ke aloha ke kuleana o kāhi malihini.***

*Love is the host in strange lands.*

In old Hawai‘i, every passerby was greeted and offered food whether he was an acquaintance or a total stranger. (Pukui, #2453)

***Ua ola loko i ke aloha.***

*Love gives life within.*

Love is imperative to one's mental and physical welfare. (Pukui, #2836)

***Ke ēwe hānau o ka 'āina.***

*The lineage born of the land.*

A native Hawaiian who is island-born and whose ancestors were also of the land. (Pukui, #1691)

***He ali'i ka 'āina, he kauwā ke Kanaka.***

*The land is a chief; the man is its servant.*

*Land has no need for man, but a man needs the land and works it for a livelihood.* (Pukui, #531)

***E lei no au i ko aloha.***

*I will wear your love as a wreath.*

I will cherish your love as a beautiful adornment. (Pukui, #333)

***E lawei ke a'o a mālama a e 'oi mau ka na 'auao***

*He who takes his teachings and applies them increases his knowledge.* (Pukui, #328)

***E kuahui like i ka hana.***

*Let everybody pitch in and work together.* (Pukui, #323)

***'Ike no I ka lā o ka ike; mana no i ka lā o ka mana.***

*Know in the day of knowing; mana in the day of mana.*

Knowledge and mana - each has its day; another day may bring greater knowledge and greater mana than today. (Pukui, #1212)

***'A'a i ka hula, waiho ka hilahila i ka hale.***

*When one wants to dance the hula, bashfulness should be left at home.* (Pukui, # 2)

***O ka makua ke ko‘o o ka hale e pa‘a ai.***

*The parent (grandparent) is the support that holds the household together. (Pukui, # 2424)*

***Ka ‘ika’i i ka lima, hi‘i i ke alo.***

*Lead with one hand, carry with one arm.*

Said of a mother with children born too close together. (Pukui, # 1391)

***Nani i waele mua i ke ala, mahope aku makou, na poki‘i.***

*She first cleared the path and then we younger ones followed.*

Said with affection and respect for the oldest sibling (*hiapo*). (Pukui, # 2265)

***O ke aloha ke kuleana o kāhi mulihini.***

*Love is the host in strange lands.*

In old Hawai‘i, every passerby was greeted and offered food whether he was an acquaintance or a total stranger. (Pukui, #2453)

### Appendix C: List of Songs

“My Little Grass Shack in Kealakekua Hawai‘i”

by Bill Cogswell, Tommy Harrison & Johnny Noble; Source: Noble's "Hawaiian Favorites"

Copyright 1933, 1961 Miller Music Corp,

<http://www.huapala.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWlvYpJ5pRo>

“Ku‘u Home o Kahalu‘u”

Words and music printed with permission by Jerry Santos; performed by Olomana © 1976.

<http://islandmusicnetwork.com/sheet/kuu-home-o-kahaluu/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI0hkdyU1tY>

“Island Style”

Words and lyrics printed with permission by John Cruz and Liliko‘i Records ©; copyright 1996.

Acoustic Soul Album released in 1996; John Cruz was the winner of two Nā Hōkū Hanohano

Awards for Contemporary Album of the Year and Most Promising Artist of the Year.

<http://www.johncruz.com/lyrics.php?id=12>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuAQ8YjgN4o&feature=youtu.be>

“Iesu Me ke Kanaka Wai Wai”

Lyrics by John K. Almeida © 1971.

[http://www.huapala.org/Ia/Iesu\\_Me\\_Ke\\_Kanaka.html](http://www.huapala.org/Ia/Iesu_Me_Ke_Kanaka.html)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hfm\\_9gLKS\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hfm_9gLKS_4)

“Panini Pua Kea”

Words and music by John K. Almeida.

Translated by Mary Kawena Pukui.

[http://www.huapala.org/Pa/Panini\\_Pua\\_Kea.html](http://www.huapala.org/Pa/Panini_Pua_Kea.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIcYdJxxfDA>

“Ho‘onani Ka Makua Mau—Hawaiian Doxology”

Words by Reverend Hiram Bingham (1831–1908).

Music by Louis Bourgeois Louis Bourgeois (1510–1561)

Sung by Kapalama Middle School Na ‘Opio Singers.

[http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani\\_ka\\_makua\\_mau/hoonani.php](http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani_ka_makua_mau/hoonani.php)

[http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani\\_ka\\_makua\\_mau/hoonani\\_i\\_ka\\_akua\\_mau.m  
p3](http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/elementary/mele/hoonani_ka_makua_mau/hoonani_i_ka_akua_mau.mp3)

“Wāhine ‘Ilikea”

Words by Dennis Kamakahi.

[http://www.huapala.org/Wa/Wahine\\_Ilikea.html](http://www.huapala.org/Wa/Wahine_Ilikea.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1s62yckknc>

“My Sweet Pīkake Lei”

Words by Robert Cazimero & Kaleo Chock; music by Robert Cazimero.

Produced by Mountain Apple Company, Inc.

[http://www.huapala.org/My/My\\_Sweet\\_Pikake\\_Lei.html](http://www.huapala.org/My/My_Sweet_Pikake_Lei.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GO44V3W9ULw>

“Ku‘u Lei Awapuhi”

Words & music by Emily Kekahaloa Namau‘u Taylor, copyright 1951.

[http://www.huapala.org/Kuu/Kuu\\_Lei\\_Awapuhi2.html](http://www.huapala.org/Kuu/Kuu_Lei_Awapuhi2.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhIUggyX3Io>

“E Ala E”

Music and Lyrics by Isreal Kamakawiwo‘ole; published by Mountain Apple Company, Inc. ©

<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/israelkamakawiwoole/eala.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BqZPLNoaos>

“Kaulana Nâ Pua” (Famous Are the Flowers)

Words and lyrics by Ellen Keho`ohiwaokalani Wright Prendergast (1893); published in 1895.

<http://youtu.be/bhibLQFebpQ> Winner of the 2013 Big Island Film Festival Best Short Film.

“Hawai`i Aloha”

Words by Rev. Lorenzo Lyons; Music by James McGranahan (1840).

Sung by the Kamehameha Schools Concert Glee.

[http://www.huapala.org/Hawaii/Hawaii\\_Aloha.html](http://www.huapala.org/Hawaii/Hawaii_Aloha.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DycR1qpopHA>

## Appendix D: Permissions

### Photographs

Exclusive permission granted by Welmoet Glover, owner of Moet Photography ©, for images of the participants in figures:

From: **Moët Photography** <[moetphotography@gmail.com](mailto:moetphotography@gmail.com)>

Date: Thu, Feb 5, 2015 at 1:35 PM

Subject: Permission

To: Cami Vignoe <[cvignoe@gmail.com](mailto:cvignoe@gmail.com)>

I, Welmoet Glover of Moet Photography, give Cami Vignoe permission to use my images; I took these images and provided them for her to use in her dissertation and published work entitled "Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation and Resistance".

I understand that this dissertation will be available in

- 1) Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database [print on demand]
- 2) AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive [open access] and
- 3) Ohiolink ETD Center [open access].

*Figure 4.1 – Paka*

*Figure 4.3 – Kalani*

*Figure 4.7 – Kalani and Lei*

*Figure 4.9 – Nani*

*Figure 4.10 – Nani at peace*

*Figure 4.11 – Mona*

*Figure 4.18 – Mona and Mailani*

*Figure 4.19 – Mona at Butterfly Beach in Santa Barbara*

*Figure 4.20 – Cami*

*Figure 5.11 – Nani: “Not to be silent”*

Best of luck Cami

Hugs, Welmoet

.....  
With verbal permission (as stated in the IRB) from the Ukishima / Wengler Family Album:

*Grandparents – Faith “Lottie” Charlotte Kalama Wiggin Ukishima (1915–2007) and Edwin Osamu Ukishima (1917 – 1993).*

*Mom – Charlotte Patrice Hideko Kal‘āmanamana Ukishima Wengler (1937–2010).*

.....  
With verbal permission (as stated in the IRB) from the Ukishima / Wengler Family Album:

*Figure 4.21 – Ukishima Family.*

*Figure 4.22 – Faith Wiggin and Edwin Ukishima (Grandma and Grandpa) on their wedding day.*

*Figure 4.23 – Wengler Family (the early years).*

*Figure 4.24 – 5312 Puahia Place.*

*Figure 4.25 – The Kamehameha Cheerleading Squad.*

*Figure 4.28 – My beautiful mom.*

.....  
With verbal permission (as stated in the IRB) from the Vignoe Family Album:

*“Uncle Joe” Reverend Joseph M. Vignoe (1930 – 2010).*

*Father-in-law Robert “Bobby” F. Vignoe (1932 – 2014).*

*Figure 4.27 – Dave and Cami Vignoe.*

\*\*\*\*\*

from: **Ekolu Lindsey** <EkoluMCL@hawaii.rr.com>  
reply-to: EkoluMCL@hawaii.rr.com  
to: Camilla Vignoe <cvignoe@antioch.edu>  
date: Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 2:08 PM  
subject: Permission

Hey Cami,

Congratulations on all of your hard work! Your perseverance is admirable and an inspiration to many you come across.

You are welcome to use any photos you find on the internet. I’ve attached one of my favorites. He’s sitting in front of a Grinding stone in Honokowai valley.



I give Cami Wengler Vignoe permission to use my images; I provided them for her to use in her dissertation and published work entitled "Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation and Resistance".

I understand that this dissertation will be available in

- 1) Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database [print on demand]
- 2) AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive [open access] and
- 3) Ohiolink ETD Center [open access]

Holomua,

*Edwin "Eko" Lindsey*

Maui Cultural Lands, Inc.

[www.mauiculturallands.com](http://www.mauiculturallands.com)

*"Dad Lindsey" Edwin Robert Naleilehua Lindsey Jr. (1939 – 2009); photo courtesy of the Lindsey 'Ohana album. (<http://www.mauiculturallands.org>)*

*Figure 4.26. Ned and Pua Lindsey*

\*\*\*\*\*

With verbal permission (as stated in the IRB) from the Wengler / Akiona 'Ohana Album:  
 Permission via Facebook: **Allen Hanaike** 2/23/15, 8:13am

Aloha Cami - Mahalo for your note and asking permission - It's appreciated! Feel free to use it - Good luck with your dissertation! Rock on!!

*Figure 4.4. "Lu'au Prep" KS alumni 1985 preparing for the alumni lu'au; photo courtesy of Allan Hanaike and Baba Akiona, KS 1985.*

\*\*\*\*\*

With verbal permission (as stated in the IRB) from the Warren Kalani Badua 'ohana album:

from: **Warren Badua** <warrenbadua@yahoo.com>

to: Camilla Vignoe  
<cvignoe@antioch.edu>

date: Mon, Feb 23, 2015 at 7:58 AM

subject: Re: Permission to use pictures..

Hui sister! With much aloha:

I give Cami Vignoe permission to use my images; I took these images and provided them for her to use in her dissertation and published work entitled "Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation and Resistance".

I understand that this dissertation will be available in

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- 2) AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive [open access] and
- 3) Ohiolink ETD Center [open access]

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

 Kahu

*Figure 4.6. Kalani's 'Ohana.*

*Figure 4.8. Kalani and Noelani at Founder's Day, 2014.*

*Figure 5.9. Kalani with grandson.*

*Figure 5.10. Kalani with Lei at prom.*

\*\*\*\*\*

from: **Mona McKelvy** <kimomc@att.net>

to: Camilla Vignoe  
<cvignoe@antioch.edu>

date: Sun, Feb 22, 2015 at 10:23  
PM

subject: Re: Permission to use  
pictures

I give Cami Vignoe permission to use my images; I took these images and provided them for her to use in her dissertation and published work entitled "Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation and Resistance".

I understand that this dissertation will be available in

- 1) Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database [print on demand]
- 2) AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive [open access] and
- 3) Ohiolink ETD Center [open access].

*Figure 2.4. Our keiki mālama 'āina*

*Figure 4.12. Nā Mele 'o ke Kai logo*

*Figure 4.13. The keiki division of Nā Mele 'o ke Kai*

*Figure 4.14. Ah Lan's Lei Stand in Hilo*

*Figure 4.15. Making a haku lei*

*Figure 4.16. Mona and Kiki in the early years of their relationship*

*Figure 4.17. Mailani, Kiki, and Mona*

*Figure 5.12. Mona's 'Ohana (early years)*

Mona McKelvy, also known as Ramona L McKelvy

\*\*\*\*\*

from: **KIHEI  
DESILVA** <halaumohalailima@me.com>

to: Camilla Vignoe <cvignoe@antioch.edu>

date: Mon, Feb 23, 2015 at 4:01 PM

subject: Re: Permission...

I have given Cami Wengler Vignoe permission to use my image; I took this image and provided it for her to use in her dissertation and published work entitled "Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation and Resistance".

I understand that this dissertation will be available in

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- 2) AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive [open access] and
- 3) Ohiolink ETD Center [open access]

*Figure 4.2 – Kumu Hula JohnKaha'i Topolinski and his halau.*

Kihei C. de Silva

\*\*\*\*\*

With verbal permission (as stated in the IRB) from Paka's 'Ohana Album:

*Figure 5.1. Paka in his back yard with his paddle boards.*

*Figure 5.2. Paka surfing.*

*Figure 5.3. Paka and his oldest son.*

*Figure 5.4. Fishing with oldest son.*

*Figure 5.5. Paka with sons in Waimanalo, HI.*

from: **Camilla**

**Vignoe** <cvignoe@antioch.edu>

to: paliku@mac.com

date: Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 11:34 AM

subject: Permission to use image...

Aloha e Na'alehu!

It has been 4 years since we last spoke, when my mom passed away. It was an honor to meet you, to discuss your projects, and to see the world through your eyes. Whether you know it or not, you have been an incredible mentor to me as I am re-learning my culture as a native Hawaiian.

I successfully defended my dissertation entitled Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation and Resistance. It is about Native Hawaiians who move away from Hawaii to become permanent mainland residents... and perpetuate the culture of Aloha. I am working on the last bits of my edits and hope to publish in a few days.

I have featured the artwork, poems, and photographs of talented Native Hawaiian artists in my writing to bring to life black words on a white sheet of paper. I humbly ask your permission to publish the image of the cover of your documentary Papa Mau.

Your movie touched me deeply. In my dissertation, I use a native Hawaiian framework and liken the journey of moving away from home to the journey of the Hokulea and the Hikianalia on their worldwide voyage of Aloha. You are referenced in Chapter 5 as I honor you and your work. I think the visual of the documentary poster would truly add depth and meaning to what I am trying to convey - adventure, courage, lokahi, malama and Aloha. . . a picture paints a thousand words.

Please would you consider giving me permission to use this picture? My dissertation would be available in:

- 1) Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database [print on demand]
- 2) AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive [open access] and
- 3) Ohiolink ETD Center [open access]

It would bring your work to an international academic audience, and would help me tell my story a little better. Please respond at your earliest convenience, as I hope to publish in just a few days. Mahalo nui for your consideration.

Aloha nui,  
Cami Wengler Vignoe  
PhD Antioch Leadership and Change

*Figure 4.30. Papa Mau: The Wayfinder.* Printed with permission from Na'alehu Anthony, Palikū Documentary Films ©, Copyright 2011.

from: **Naalehu Anthony** <paliku@mac.com>

to: Camilla Vignoe  
<cvignoe@antioch.edu>

date: Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 8:07 PM

subject: Re: Permission to use image...

Aloha!

Stoked to know you defended the dissertation. No problem on using the image. Thank you for asking. I hope all is well with you and send me an e copy when you pau.

Me Ka mahalo

Na'alehu Anthony

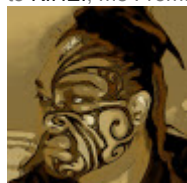
'Oiwi Television Network

[www.oiwi.tv](http://www.oiwi.tv)

FB oiwitv

Insta palikudocfilms

to KIHEI, me From: [Nalani Keale](mailto:Nalani.Keale@gmail.com) (email correspondence March 9, 2015)



[nalanikeale@gmail.com](mailto:nalanikeale@gmail.com)

Aloha Camilla,

Great news! I got permission from Freddy Von Paraz, the owner of Pa'ani Records, for you to use the cover art of my father's album "Imagine". The only condition was, no income from the use of the artwork. Mahalo for your interest in using my father's album art.

Aloha Ke Akua,

Nalani Keale

\*\*\*\*\*

## Music and Lyrics

***Island Style*** – Words and lyrics by John Cruz © 1996 and Liliko'i Records.

Printed with verbal permission (as stated in the IRB) from John Cruz.

<http://www.johncruz.com/lyrics.php?id=12>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuAQ8YjgN4o&feature=youtu.be>

***Ku'u Home o Kahalu'u*** – Words and music by Jerry Santos; performed by Olomana © 1976.

<http://islandmusicnetwork.com/sheet/kuu-home-o-kahaluu/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI0hkdyU1tY>

**Camilla**

**Vignoe** <[cvignoe@antioch.edu](mailto:cvignoe@antioch.edu)>

>

to: Jerry@olomanamusic.com  
 date: Thu, Feb 26, 2015 at 4:44 AM  
 subject: Re: Requesting permission...

Aloha e Uncle Jerry,

I fell in love with Olomana when I was just a little girl growing up in the islands. Our 'ohana love your music, in fact you played at my sister's wedding (Edwina and Kale Flagg, 1995) at the Ko'olina. I was delighted to hear that you are also a Kamehameha graduate. Although you don't know it, you have been an incredible mentor to me as I am re-learning my culture as a native Hawaiian.

I successfully defended my dissertation entitled Living Aloha: Portraits of Resilience, Renewal, Reclamation and Resistance. It is about Native Hawaiians who move away from Hawaii to become permanent mainland residents... and perpetuate the culture of Aloha. I am working on the last bits of my edits and hope to publish in a few days.

I have featured the artwork, poems, and photographs of talented Native Hawaiian artists in my writing to bring to life black words on a white sheet of paper. I humbly ask your permission to publish the lyrics of your song Me Ke Aloha Ku'u Home o Kahalu'u in my paper.

Your song touches me deeply. In my dissertation, I use a native Hawaiian framework and liken the journey of moving away from home to the journey of the Hokulea and the Hikianalia on their worldwide voyage of Aloha. You are referenced in Chapter 1 as I honor you and your work. I your song would truly add depth and meaning to what I am trying to convey - adventure, courage, lokahi, malama and Aloha..

Please would you consider giving me permission to use your song lyrics? My dissertation would be available in:

- 1) Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database [print on demand]
- 2) AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive [open access] and
- 3) Ohiolink ETD Center [open access]

It would bring your work to an international academic audience, and would help me tell my story a little better. Please respond at your earliest convenience, as I hope to publish in just a few days. Mahalo nui for your consideration. Aloha ke Akua, Me ka ha'aha'a, Cami Wengler Vignoe, Kamehameha graduate 1983

from: **Jerry Santos** <olomanamusic@hawaii.rr.com>  
 to: Camilla Vignoe <cvignoe@antioch.edu>  
 date: Wed, Mar 11, 2015 at 5:43 PM  
 subject: RE: Requesting permission...

Aloha,

Sorry for the delayed reply.

I'm honored by your interest in my mele and your kind thoughts.

You have my permission to use it.

Good luck with your paper.

J.

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