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An aloha state of mind: performing Hawaiian cultural identities

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AN ALOHA STATE OF MIND:
PERFORMING HAWAIIAN CULTURAL IDENTITIES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Theatre

by

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DEDICATION

For Dad

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I would like to thank the following people for their support and encouragement in my completion of this dissertation:

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PREFACE

There are two particular memories I have which speak to my interest in identity formation and Hawai'i. The first is an observation I made on a vacation to Waikiki with my mother just after the events of 9/11. Sitting at the beach in the early morning hours, I was watching the morning light come up on the water. Numerous Locals¹ lined the edges of Waikiki, sitting on the sand and the benches, drinking coffee and looking out toward the Pacific. It was still a bit dark, and the tourists were sleeping; some Locals² were setting up their shops, or were getting in some surfing before they punched the clock, or were taking a morning jog by the ocean. A Hawaiian woman walked onto the sandy beach. She was wearing jeans and a tank top, and she had a ring of flowers encircling her head. As the sun rose above the water, she knelt and lowered her head, as if in prayer, raising her arms up and out toward the ocean in movements I'd seen in many hula dances. As the morning brightened, lighting up the beach, the woman stood and lit a cigarette; then, with the cigarette dangling from her mouth, she continued her slow hula, moving and chanting for almost 15

¹ 'Local' is a regional *Hawaiian* identity that will be defined in Chapter 5.

² I use the term 'Locals' here and throughout the dissertation with a capital L to signify residents of Hawai'i who may or may not be indigenous *Hawaiian*, but who have affinity for and familiarity with the places and customs of the *Hawaiian* islands, and who are recognized as 'insiders' by other Local community members.

minutes, before ending by reaching her hands out towards the now-risen sun. She stood after she was done, puffing her cigarette a bit, and then headed off the beach toward downtown Waikiki. To me, the woman seemed to be praying—honoring the morning and the sunlight. The striking contrast of the dangling cigarette and jeans and tank top with the spiritual depth of her Hula has never left me.

The second memory is from a writing conference I participated in.³ I read a short story that took place in Hawai'i and that was rooted in my brief time as a young child growing up in Hawai'i in the 1970s. The story was about being labeled a *haole*—a foreigner—and about the difficulties of learning the local customs and language of a unique region, and affirming personal identity as part of that region, but also being labeled as the outsider. The contrast in this story was autobiographical; my childhood in Hawai'i led to a confusing identity formation, especially after my family moved to the West Coast and I was again labeled an "outsider" by the insiders of a new regional identity. A friend of mine who is Hawaiian and Japanese-American, but who grew up on the mainland and not in Hawai'i, came up to me after the reading to congratulate me on the story. As we talked, another woman approached and

³ The 2008 Kenyon Review Writers Workshops in Gambier, Ohio.

turned to my friend, asking her: "You're Hawaiian, right? Was her story *authentic*? Did she make any mistakes about the real Hawai'i?"

I have been long gone from Hawai'i. For the past ten years I have lived in Los Angeles, and before that I went to graduate school in Louisiana and in Alaska, both with unique regional identities of their own. I have returned to Hawai'i several times over the years, once living in a sugar-cane shack on Maui and selling jewelry on the beach, and other times visiting Waikiki as a "tourist" with friends and family members. When people ask where I'm from, it's a difficult question to answer. I'm from Hawai'i, where I formed much of my cultural identity; I'm from California, where I formed much of my educational identity; I'm from Louisiana, where I formed much of my familial identity. And yet, it is still Hawai'i that I most closely identify with, even though I could never "pass" as a Local anymore, having been so far removed from the customs, language, and cultural traditions that echo in my current daily life.

This current investigation into Hawaiian performance was sparked by these two memories, and by my research into identity performances and nationalism. Early in my journey I investigated how solo-performers constructed their

identities for spectators. As a writer and performer myself, this interested me a great deal—the ways in which individuals choose to compose themselves for the outside world, and how this composition then becomes “history.” What gets left out? What gets included? What gets accentuated and de-accentuated? My desire to pursue Hawaiian performance through this frame was strengthened on a 2008 trip to Hawai’i for an academic conference. I was wandering through the government district after a pilgrimage to my old elementary school, and I saw a poster at Kumu Kahua Theatre. The play on at the time was *Pele Ma*, an adaptation of Frederick Wichman’s book, *Pele Ma: Legends of Pele from Kaua’i*, directed by John H.Y. Wat. I attended the play, of course, and was struck by the multi-ethnic casting and how the play reframed ideas about Hawaiian mythology for a contemporary audience. On another trip to Hawai’i I spent most of my days deep inside the Kumu Kahua Theatre archives where I discovered a rich history of performances by Local Hawaiians. I thought back to that hula dancer on the beach, and to that woman’s comments about my essay. Authenticity—what did that mean?

As a writer myself, I am well-aware of how identity can be composed and revised. A former writing teacher, Rebecca McClanahan, told me once to be careful how I write

down my memories, because that is how I will always remember them. This was the context for my investigation into Hawaiian performance and other representational practices. Who can lay claim to the Hawaiian label? What are the rules of being Hawaiian? Who makes the rules? How do theatre and performance work to affirm, reflect, or contest those rules and to form or dismantle the borders that define Hawaiian identities? What are the sites of construction, and does construction or revision necessarily mean fictionalized invention, as some have argued? Or can revision and construction be reclamation? From these questions and from this liminal space—from these borderlands, I began.

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ABSTRACT

There are many Hawaiian identities currently in effect. This dissertation explores several representative and contested Hawaiian identities, and how these identities develop through key performances, plays, and other representational practices by Hawaiians and by Locals. Due to its unique situation as one of only two U.S. states formerly with its own government, and as one of only two U.S. states not connected to the main land-mass of the United States, Hawaiian identity is complicated by multiple factors: sanitized historical constructions, sovereignty, intermingling ethnic identities, tourism, and reclaimed cultural practices.

Additionally, Hawaiians as a native people hold a unique place in United States history. Unlike Native North Americans in the United States, Hawaiians have never received independent rights within statehood, nor have they been given large amounts of territorial land with which they might operate their own governments and communities. Further, unlike African Americans or other Asian American sub-groups, Hawaiians were not taken to the United States from their homeland and enslaved, nor did Hawaiians move from their homeland in search of the American dream. Hawaiians had their government removed from power by United

States representatives, and have been under influence and protection of the United States since 1893.

Hawaiian identity today is a fluid and contested one with multifarious definitions, all of which lay claim to the Hawaiian label. In some contemporary representations, the goal is to expand historical understanding of the Hawaiian label; in others, the goal is to illustrate resistance towards Americanization or to affirm Hawaiian cultural practices. These representations open the possibility for negotiation and for reinscription of Hawaiian history and of Hawaiian identities. An examination of how this unique regional population negotiates its status both as insiders and as outsiders to American identity might offer important insights for theatre practitioners and scholars about the larger fabric of American nationhood, and about the roles that performance and other representational practices play in constructing and in further contesting a definitive "American" identity.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION⁴

"For the foreigner, romances of *aloha*, For Hawaiians, dispossessions of empire."⁵

Hawai'i is often characterized as a place where tourists can come to experience the *aloha* state of mind. This state of mind develops when pressing needs disappear like the multicolored glow of a Waikiki sunset; tourists and Locals sit to watch the sunset each evening, sometimes erupting into spontaneous applause at the end of the show. For the Hawaiian people, concepts of Hawaiian have been characterized differently by various forces over time, from the early days of settlers, to the aftermath of statehood, and beyond; and these characterizations have contributed to a multifarious group of performed identities.

Almost 119 years since the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy by a group of American businessmen, contemporary Hawaiian theatre practitioners (professional and amateur) utilize performance and other representational practices as actions meant to examine, to contest, and to *problematize* Hawaiian, while simultaneously affirming the fluidity of Hawaiian identity. But what does it mean to be a Hawaiian

⁴ Throughout the dissertation I've attempted to use the appropriate spelling of most Hawaiian words but have not italicized those Hawaiian-language words that are common to standard American English usage.

⁵ Trask, Haunani Kay. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i Press, 2002.

or to be a Hawaiian *American*? Who can claim Hawaiian status? How has Hawaiian and Hawai'i been constructed, dismantled, affirmed, or contested, and by whom? How does the Hawaiian identity fit into the larger frame of American identity, if it does fit at all?

Theatre and performance function as key dynamics in this reframing process. Theatre historian and feminist critic Jill Dolan's argument is that

Theatre can be a mobile unit in a journey across new geographies, a place that doesn't center the discourse in white male hegemony, but a space that can be filled and moved, by and to the margins, perpetually decentered as it explores various identity configurations of production and reception. (84).

Hawai'i's Local theatre and performance practices exemplify this idea; for these practitioners, performance is a cultural and political intervention strategy, an action that reframes identity configurations and that contests constructed meanings and appropriated identities by institutional forces that have various economic or political purposes for appropriating Hawaiian.

Some Hawaiian performances of the distant past may have strengthened negative stereotypes about Hawai'i and Hawaiians, but contemporary playwrights and performers of the recent past have used performance in the composition of and in the maintenance of identities. Sometimes their

actions reinscribe stereotypes and contest historical records, opening the possibility for negotiation of Hawaiian onto (and beyond the borders of) American. Because meaning is made by those to whom it matters most, and because it is shaped "in the [tension-filled] space between convictions and certainties" (Bogart 3), Hawaiians are moving the discussion into those tension-filled performance spaces in an effort to deconstruct and to recontextualize the *aloha* state of mind.

In her book, *And Then, You Act: Making Art in an Unpredictable World*, Anne Bogart argues that 21st Century, post-9/11 theatre practitioners must be intricately connected to the meaning of their performances through action. She believes

You cannot expect other people to create meaning for you. You cannot wait for someone else to define your life. You make meaning by forging it with your hands. It requires sweat and commitment. Working toward the creation of meaning is the point. It is action that forges the meaning and the significance of a life. (2).

If Hawaiians wish to challenge institutional definitions of Hawaiian, they will need to work toward this revision of meaning themselves, in order to control their histories, to perpetuate their legacies, and to affirm their genealogies; it is in this tension-filled space that I investigate Hawaiian cultural identities and the forces at work in

asserting, contesting, and reinscribing identities in the *aloha* state.

Hawai'i⁶ lives in the imaginations of people all over the world. Hawai'i is considered a top vacation choice by many tourists, and it represents a unique and somewhat fixed series of visual pictures in the minds of most global citizens. Sandy beaches, warm, blue waters, dark-skinned surfers, Hula dancers in grass skirts with flowers in their hair and leis around their necks--all of these visual representations are iconic symbols of Hawai'i and of what many have come to define as Hawaiian. In addition to these iconic images, Local⁷ islanders have their own unique set of symbols that represent a regional Hawaiian identity. Spam Musubi, plate lunches, *Kama'aina* rules, and speaking Pidgin⁸ are some symbols of the insider codes used by Local Hawaiians. Additionally, Indigenous⁹ Hawaiians have their own affirmative cultural codes and language.

⁶ Throughout this dissertation I will attempt to utilize the correct *Hawaiian* spelling of *Hawaiian* words.

⁷ The term 'Local' will be defined more specifically in Chapter 5. I will use the capital letter L for Local to designate it as a regional *Hawaiian* identity made up of residents in Hawai'i who are familiar with languages and cultural customs recognized by other Locals in Hawai'i.

⁸ Pidgin will be explored more in Chapter 5. Pidgin is a regional, Creole dialect utilized by Locals in Hawai'i.

⁹ I will use *Indigenous* with a capital I instead of *Native* in reference to the *Hawaiian* people who first settled in Hawai'i hundreds of years ago, and who affirm genealogical ties to *Hawaiian* ancestors. I affirm a political choice in using this term, for I wish to support the claim of Indigenous *Hawaiians* that they are not 'settlers' to the islands of Hawai'i, but are the original, pre-colonization inhabitants to the islands of Hawai'i.

Since the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, and then US Statehood in 1959, there has been an even more pronounced rift between various parties interested in performing, composing, maintaining, and reconstructing Hawaiian cultural identity. Multiple representational practices have been employed in the performance of these identities, and what has developed is a complex variety of performed Hawaiian contained in diverse forms that include: political and cultural spaces of historical importance, stage dramas, tourist attractions, television shows and films, and musical representations. These performances compose multiple and contested definitions of Hawaiian, while also separating Hawaiian cultural identity as a distinct and unique identity for those living in the islands, and for those who claim Hawaiian cultural identity despite their displacement off the islands.

The performance of unique cultural identities is not new, and is certainly not exclusive to Hawai'i; however, Hawai'i is in an historical position that warrants special attention. Hawai'i's years as an independent monarchy and busy trading harbor, as well as the influx of immigrants to work Hawai'i's sugar plantations in the 1800s, helped foster the composition of multiple identities--especially differentiating between those who were Indigenous (Native)

Hawaiian, and those who were not. Additionally, Hawai'i's location between the United States and Asia created an intermediary status, one that allowed the harboring of Asian immigrants while simultaneously affirming American statehood.

Current theatre and performance scholarship supports the importance of the performative (whether located in theatre or in performance studies) in the formation of and the maintenance of identities. Jill Dolan affirms this view:

Theories of the performative—in feminism, gay and lesbian studies, performance studies, and cultural studies—creatively borrow from concepts in theatre studies to make their claim for the constructed nature of subjectivity, suggesting that social subjects perform themselves in negotiation with the delimiting cultural conventions of the geography within which they move. (65).

Dolan's notion here is one that underscores the importance of the performative in "constructions of marginalized identities" (Dolan 65). It is theatre and performance that offer the best occasion for collaboration and identification within and by marginalized communities.

Theatre and performance provide "an opportunity for a community to come together and reflect on itself . . . It is not only the mirror through which a society can reflect upon itself—it also helps to shape the perceptions of that

culture through the power of its imagining" affirms Margaret Wilkerson, (Dolan 71). Because theatre and performance utilize real and present bodies to contest or to affirm the assumptions of spectators, the role of theatre and performance in the construction, contestation, and maintenance of identity-formation is unparalleled. Theatre scholar Elin Diamond underscores this power of the performative by describing performance as a process that can form, reshape, and/or maintain an identity. For Diamond, performance is a "cultural practice" that can "conservatively reinscribe or passionately reinvent the ideas, symbols, and gestures that shape social life" (2). Theatre and performance in identity formation, then, are important lenses through which scholars might begin their investigations.

When theatre and performance are applied to racial and cultural identity construction, the importance and impact are even more powerful. Marginalized communities that utilize the performative are able to develop visibility and to gain power. Asian American theatre scholar Josephine Lee argues for a cohesive poetics for the creative performance of race that "question[s] the assumption that plays simply imitate a preexisting Asian American experience or identity, and instead describe how race is constructed and

contested by theatrical presentation"(6). As Lee seems to suggest here, theatre and performance can be used to affirm stereotypes and to inscribe these stereotypes onto bodies of Asian Americans; however, theatre and performance can also be used to destroy stereotypes and to reinscribe more varied and complex notions of Asian American identities. The ability of creative performance to go beyond simple imitation of race and to reinscribe racial stereotypes or cultural experiences is rooted in the theatrical performance's use of live bodies.

When marginalized communities, such as the Hawaiian, perform their experiences and their stories with real bodies, the site of the performance—the body—works to revise previously-known or previously-affirmed assumptions. Spectators can view the bodies as fluid and changing sites of meaning that offer multiple ways of seeing race construction. As Dolan argues, "Performance demonstrates the ways in which any reading is always multiple and illustrates the undecideability of visual as well as textual meanings" (72). Performance can place race constructions and racial identities into a liminal badlands, if you will, that offers multiple interpretations and that illustrates the fluidity of Hawaiian identities. Dolan calls this space a "temporary and usefully ephemeral

site at which to think through various important questions" (72). Questions of racial and cultural authenticity are grounded in the spectator's observations of the performing bodies "as 'signs' of meaning" that allow "an investigation of the materiality of the corporeal, the presence of bodies that require direct and present engagement" (Dolan 72). For marginalized people like the Hawaiians, theatre and performance offer an opportunity to affirm visibility against and within a mainstream power structure that wishes for marginalized people to remain invisible by performing fictionalized versions of themselves, or versions that affirm the mainstream power structure rather than affirming the complex identities in dialogue with one another.

Performance can also serve a pedagogical function, reinstructing marginalized people by affirming alternate histories and by broadening hardened, stereotyped definitions of racial identities. Theatre and performance can become "the venue for 'public discussion' of vital issues" that allow for an "embodied relationship to history and to power" (Dolan 74). For Hawaiians, regaining and maintaining a relationship to history and to power are of vital importance.

Lee's examination of plays by Asian Americans acknowledges contributions by Hawaiian writers, but Lee's

theoretical model cannot account for the unique space from which Hawaiian theatre and performances have developed, and also cannot account for the particular issues faced by the Hawaiian community that have not been experienced by the Asian-American immigrant community. Hawaiian identity, long connected in scholarship threads with the study of Asian American humanities contributions, or even with Native-American humanities contributions, exists in quite another space altogether. As Lisa Lowe notes: "In response to the demand that the Asian American canon function as a supplement or corollary to the 'major' tradition of Anglo-American literature, Asian American literary texts often reveal heterogeneity rather than reproducing regulating ideas of cultural identity or integration" (43). This reproduction of diversity, rather than a reproduction of a stable Asian American identity, seems to signify the challenge of grouping a series of diverse Asian populations under a single canon banner.

For Hawaiian theatre contributions, the different vantage point from which other Asian American communities speak is one vastly removed from that of Hawaiians; thus, reproducing heterogeneity is actually more supportive of Hawaiian diversity. Hawaiians are not an immigrant community that has come to America for a better life or to

achieve the American Dream. Hawaiians are not a culture that has been shipped over as cheap labor in the form of slaves or indentured servants for American businessmen, contractors, and plantation owners. As Lowe writes: "Hawaiian and Pacific Islander cultures [are] not *immigrants* at all but colonized, dispossessed, and deracinated" (43). Lowe's discussion of the Asian American literary canon represents the problems inherent in the academy's establishment of ethnic literatures within particular groupings in the academy.

Thus, Lowe suggests the even deeper possibility of marginalization when Hawaiians are grouped into the Asian American literary or theatrical canon: "A 'major' literary canon traditionally performs that reconciliation [of differences between ethnicities] by means of a selection of works that uphold a narrative of ethical formation in which the individual relinquishes particular differences through an identification with a universalized form of subjectivity" (Lowe 43). Scholars cannot ask Hawaiians to give up 'particular differences;' there are too many differences for Hawaiians to be included in the banner of Asian American literatures. Hawaiians are not in the same sphere of experience as Asian Americans, and do not hold the same ideas about Americanness as other Asian American

groups. There is much evidence to support the differences between long-time Local Japanese residents of Hawai'i, and mainland Japanese; they're simply not the same culture with the same world-view. A different frame of scholarly investigation is necessary.

Asian American playwright Velina Hasu Houston addresses this need for a research and critical inquiry model that might be more representative of a larger Asian experience. Current Asian American theatre scholarship of the last 25 years is one that still mostly places the Euro-centric, heterosexual male voice at the center of Asian American theatre and performance, and is one that highlights the performance practices of Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans while ignoring the unique points of view offered by indigenous, Pacific-Islander cultures and other Asian cultures quite distinct from Japanese American and Chinese American experiences, including Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Indian, among others.

Hawai'i needs its own interpretive model of inquiry because, unlike other Asian American populations, Hawai'i has developed cultural identities in a physically separate environment away from the mainland United States. Moreover, Hawai'i and the Hawaiian people have the particular distinction of having been a nation prior to the United

States occupation, colonization, and statehood. Hawaiian performance simply cannot be examined through the same lens as other Asian American literary and performance practices. Houston affirms "the importance of self-definition for the Asian American writer" (18), but notes how previous editors of other Asian American literary anthologies and of critical studies of Asian American performance

completely disregards an entire element of Asian American theatre that has contributed an otherwise unheard voice to the scene, making no mention of Kumu Kahua, the second Asian American theatre after East West Players, established in 1970 by several University of Hawai'i students and Dennis Carroll, a University of Hawai'i professor . . . This error of omission often also is committed by Asian Americans in their conceptualization of the composition of Asian American theatre. In omitting Kumu Kahua, they may be including Asian Americans or multiracial Asian Americans who label themselves Hawaiian because they were born in Hawai'i, but they dismiss the true indigenous Hawaiian culture and the Pacific Islander American cultures—both of which are significant parts of the tapestry of Asian American theatre. (19).

Houston's critique heralds a call for theatre and performance scholarship that will not only shed light on Hawaiian performances in general, but that might also examine the unique positioning of Hawaiian performance and its important relationship to identity constructions, both as an indigenous people, and as an important part of the

development of Asian American theatre, and American cultural identity.

Hawai'i's unique positioning offers challenges to theatre and performance scholars interested in investigating Hawaiian performance as separate and distinct from Asian American performance, the most significant of which is a misunderstanding or a misrepresentation of Hawai'i's *state*. Prior to European and Western contact and colonization, Hawaiians were a First Nation people with their own political, social, and cultural models put into practice on their own lands. Hawaiians had a strong governmental structure in place—a modern monarchy, prior to which was a cohesive system of chief-rulers. Additionally, Hawaiians had a unique religious practice, later adopting a Christian-based religious practice that comingled with their status as a modern constitutional monarchy. Finally, Hawaiians had means and opportunity for their own economic sustainability that did not involve tourism, but involved instead a well-established farming community with export connections to the United States and to other governments (Daws 106-147 + 251-285).

Hawaiians, while holding some similarities with other Asian American populations, are distinct. Hawai'i's ancestors were not brought over by Europeans or Westerners

as indentured servants to inhabit and to work lands that were not their homelands; additionally, unlike the Native North American population, Hawaiians, while similarly colonized, have been consistently denied the return of their own, sovereign government since colonization; and unlike Asian Americans, African Americans and First Nation peoples, Hawaiians have not had any remuneration or redress of lands or monies or seamless assimilation as payment for colonization.

Hawaiians are in a tension-filled, contested figurative and physical space where theories of discourse applicable to other ethnic and cultural populations, despite apparent similarities, simply cannot be transferred onto the Hawaiian people or their theatrical and performance products. Instead, scholars must attempt an examination of the performance of Hawaiian identities that acknowledges their special location and time-period from which multiple and fluid identities have developed. Such an investigation would also take into account the unique restrictions that have informed these theatre and performance practices, as well as the cultural and political practices that have been utilized.

A particularly exceptional challenge faced by Hawaiians that is not faced by other Asian American or

other marginalized ethnic American identities is the identification by Non-native settlers¹⁰ with Hawai'i as a premiere tourist attraction. Thus, in addition to traditional theatre and performance representations, the inclusion of tourism performances as a performative site of investigation may help to further identify aspects of performance that contest, affirm, or revise Hawaiian identities; these types of performance practices are also deserving of special attention within the scope of examining Hawaiian identity formation and inversion.

While Lee argues that grouping playwrights by "national origin, ethnicity, or race is to imply that they participate in a common project: the reconsideration of identity as it is linked both to social representation and to artistic presentation" (4) I would argue that contemporary Hawaiian performances, particularly those developed by the ground-breaking Kumu Kahua Theatre in Honolulu, as well as other representational practices, have embraced the presentation, contestation, and reinscription of identities. At issue in understanding Hawaiian identity is whether any of the current models of identity formation of the past 30 years can be applied to an understanding of

¹⁰ I use the term Non-Native Settlers, and sometimes *haole*, to note *Hawaiian* residents who are not of Indigenous *Hawaiian* ancestry, and who don't fit into the Local regional identity for whatever reason.

the performance of and (re)construction of Hawaiian identity.

In his unpublished dissertation, *Performing Hyphenates: A Study in Contemporary Irish-American Performance*, Patrick Bynane articulates the challenges inherent in long-held identity politics theories and their applicability to hyphenate concepts, such as the Hawaiian-American. His examination of Herbert Gans's convergence idea rightly points out the danger of "globalized grayness, in which one culture, bears a striking resemblance to every other culture, and the historically traditional source of identity, difference, becomes nothing more than semantic wordplay" if marginalized cultures are assimilated by mainstream cultures (7-8).

Bynane also points to the challenges of Homi K. Bhabha's belief that hybridity might serve as a resistance counter-measure by marginalized cultures that find themselves succumbing to Gans's greyness, (8). Bhabha believes that embracing hybridity might allow for a further individualizing identity-Hawaiian-American would designate a site of contestation and reflection that could "turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of the dominant" (Bynane 8). In Bhabha's hybridized space, the assumption is that a third, contested space is made which

allows for the identity in question to introduce complex and contested new versions of identity that place the hybridized identity in opposition to mainstream identity (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 338-345).

It is precisely this hybridized model that continues to strip the Hawaiian culture of its core identity of Hawaiian. Since most Hawaiians resist Americanization and do not embrace the hybridized identity of Hawaiian American as immigrant-rooted Asian American populations might, and since this Hawaiian American identity is often fictionalized by commercialism and tourism, Hawaiians continually find themselves placed in opposition to American. Bhabha argues how

the 'locality' of national culture is neither unified nor unitary in relation to itself, nor must it be seen simply as 'other' in relation to what is outside or beyond it . . . the problem of outside/inside must always itself be a process of hybridity, incorporating new 'people' in relation to the body politic, generating other sites of meaning (*Nation and Narration* 4).

Bhabha's desire to develop a space between the binary is admirable and may be applicable to mainland ethnic-American populations, but for Hawaiians, since the hyphenated identity is also in contestation, the movement Bhabha suggests of constantly "incorporating new people in relation to the body politic" does not allow for the space

and time needed to interact with multiple versions of Hawaiianess. Instead, an examination of Hawaiian identity and Nationality must look to the multiple and fluid nature of the liminal space offered in theatre and the performance practices.

Rather than define the binaries and look into the hyphenated and hybrid spaces for reactionary responses in an effort to name and to label varied identities, scholars might attempt an examination of exactly how performance offers an opportunity for the simultaneous complicating, contesting, affirming, and reinscribing of multiple Hawaiian identities, noting the continuous fluidity of such identities. This subtle difference empowers Hawaiians; they are not (re)inventors of non-existent identities, and they are not simply contesting unwanted identity labels; they are multiple identities in motion using bodies that move inside, between, around, and through varied labels attributed to the identity of Hawaiian. This shift in power from reactionary to proactionary enables Hawaiians to explore and to engage in multifarious versions of themselves, placing various aspects into dialogue with one another.

The Hawaiian has been defined by the tourist industry, the American government, the Hawaiian sovereignty movement,

the Local Hawaiian population, the state government of Hawai'i, land-rights activists, environmentalists, and many other factions, factors, and individuals. All of these constructed identities have been shaped by and in accordance with different social, political, and economic desires, and as such, continue to reinscribe Hawaiian cultural identity in various ways.

Although Josephine Lee's "Real Asian American Theatre" is more expansive than just a theatre by Asians, for Asians, and about Asians, much contemporary performance in Hawai'i is still trying to address the need for a Hawaiian theatre at the local level, while at the same time addressing the need for a deep examination of what it means to be Hawaiian in the 21st century. While embarking on this project, I am well aware of my status as other in an examination of Hawaiian performance practice. It is important to acknowledge that the primarily Western model by which all literature has been compared (i.e., White, heterosexual, male, Greek-origination theoretical models) is ineffectual for ethnic literatures, because this model is inherently flawed; it traces performance and drama along a narrative line that excluded the performance and drama of the other as inferior to Western models. Literary scholars still discuss the well-made play as one that fulfills

Aristotilean structures; Shakespeare is still likened to a theatre God and held as the highest standard by which performance may be compared. Some scholars and theorists may argue that these Western-model practices have been dismantled in the past 20 years, but the problem is still systemic and foundational.

Academic and commercial theatre seasons are less about productions that offer cultural and political intervention strategies, and more about affirming a literary canon for the perpetuation of standards; a new way of affirming Western positionalities. When ethnically-diverse plays are presented within academia, they are presented in opposition to standards or classics, not as part of the larger scope of theatrical production; additionally, they may be labeled erroneously as avant-garde. Conversely, productions that are ethnically and culturally diverse, (or that employ gender and sexuality diversity), find their way into the Western canon by offering a reinterpretation of a classic, such as an all-female or all-African American version of Hamlet.

Dolan echoes this dangerous re-entrenchment of Western positionalities, asking instead for a different kind of academic theatre model: "theatre studies and performance in the academy and in culture that aren't about how they

rescue people from degeneracy, but that articulate clearly and forcefully how they offer tools for cultural intervention, ways of engaging and thinking about social relations as we know them and as they could be" (75).

Hawaiian performance and representational practices must be examined not just in opposition to mainstream productions, but with an understanding of the fluidity of Hawaiian identities; and, of course, Hawaiian theatre and performance must be examined outside of the Western-model-comparison tradition, and even outside of the Asian American tradition, despite its use of some Western-influenced praxis, otherwise an essentializing of ethnicity might erroneously define a static Hawaiian identity, which simply does not exist.

This fear of essentializing Asian American (and Hawaiian) identity is echoed by many scholars. Josephine Lee rightly notes that care must be employed in any discussion of race and ethnicity in performance, for fear of essentializing and marginalizing ethnic literatures (Lee 5); she acknowledges that the realism (i.e., Western theatrical traditions) employed in contemporary Asian American dramas works to counteract the performance of negative stereotypes by "replacing stereotypical characterizations" with "live" bodies (91). This is a good

argument for why Asian Americans and other marginalized communities might have employed the use of Western, traditional playwriting and performance techniques, and suggests how performance can be used by indigenous peoples to know themselves by placing identity into a liminal space—within the border crossings—“sites of political contestation, risk and risk taking” where the construction of identity and the location of positionality can be assessed, (Reinelt and Roach 13).

Thus, in examining such performances, the spectator must make herself aware of bias and assumptions she may bring to the examining. For myself I acknowledge the following: despite time and distance from Hawai'i, I have always identified myself as having grown up in Hawai'i, not just because of chronology and my age while I lived there, but because of the way the Hawaiian culture and Local Hawaiian customs became a part of my foundational identity-formation.

However, it is my own shifting definitions of self that draw me to a scholarly examination of identities in Hawaiian performances; (this and a perceived need to widen the scope of scholarly attention onto Hawaiian theatrical performances—an area absent of much critical examination beyond the Hawaiian practice of Hula). As a mixed-race

outsider growing up in the Hawaiian islands in the 1970s and early 1980s at the height of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, I was seen as *haole*—a foreigner. Over time, however, and in certain companies, I was a Local—perceived as an insider in Hawai'i. When my family moved to California during my middle-school years, I self-identified as Local Hawaiian, and was thus named and seen as outsider again. Summers visiting my biological father in Louisiana, I was inscribed with yet another outsider status—Westerner.

These shifting labels continued throughout my life; but as each outsider status was named, I was at other times (and most times was simultaneously) an insider. I learned not only to shift from one identity to another, but was in constant contact with all of the identities, a self-awareness that I'm sure others have experienced, thus inhabiting several selves—some self-defined, and some inscribed upon me, including: white; woman; mulatto; *haole*; Local Hawaiian; Californian; Southerner (Louisiana), and more. Despite the appearance of this scholarly-other status, I am positioned in the same tension-filled, contested space as many Hawaiians may find themselves. I am not Hawaiian, nor could I claim Local status after having been removed from Local customs for more than two decades. However, I am also not the colonizer, and having returned

to the mainland, while I am able to perform mainlander, I sometimes give myself away as an other. I am and am not many identities simultaneously.

The purpose of this examination, then, is to stay away from binary paradigms of Hawaiian race, ethnicity, and culture that are so common in identity politics. The wish is not to define any essentialism of Hawaiian, but to present varied embodiments of Hawaiian identity labels in theatre, performance, and other representational practices. This dissertation will present an exploration of how Hawaiian performance and other representational practices negotiate with the past and the present in an effort to examine how varied embodiments of Hawaiian identities are performed, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes in opposition to or in reaction to contested identities, sometimes in an effort at reclamation or reinscription.

Examining Hawaiian identity necessarily involves an open-minded model that places an affinity for and an understanding of foundational Hawaiian cultural principles at the forefront of the investigation. Hawaiian activist and feminist scholar Haunani Kay Trask feels that many Western-trained archeologists and non-native historians erroneously criticize Indigenous Hawaiians's attempts to reclaim their history, their language, and their cultural

practices as a cheap, political ploy. This approach immediately places the Hawaiian culture in opposition to so-called authentic Western models of interpretation, such as those appropriated by numerous anthropologists and sociologists who root the performance of Hawaiian identities in fictionalized, fabricated starting points. Hawaiians are accused of reconstructing traditional Hawaiian cultural practices in the present rather than believed to be reviving (and reinscribing) past cultural traditions.

Many scholars place the reappropriation of cultural tradition into a fictionalized ontology because, as Trask argues, the Western-trained historian does not attempt to understand how a culture that developed outside of Western-understood tradition might view the past, present, and future differently. Trask notes that, "what constitutes tradition to a people is ever changing. Culture is not static, nor is it frozen in objectified moments in time" (128). Thus, theatre and performance are the best means for examining the complexities of Hawaiian identity/ies formation and reinscription—especially if such an examination acknowledges the unique perspectives of Hawaiian performance practitioners and approaches the task with an understanding that Western ideas of time,

narrative, and space may not be applicable. It is Trask's belief that "remnants of earlier lifeways, including values and symbols have persisted" (128). The connection that Hawaiians have to the past and to the present has never been broken despite Western historians and anthropologists arguing otherwise. It is these lifelines that have helped to develop simultaneity and fluidity in Hawaiian identities.

The inquiry of this dissertation is into how Hawaianness is negotiated, problematized, contested, reinscribed, and affirmed through an embodiment of multiple consciousnesses in performance practices. In composing such a study, I hope not only to present some of the varied embodiments of 'Hawaiian,' but also to critically evaluate these varied embodiments and the ways in which they're presented, and for what purposes, from a unique positionality. Such an examination necessitates judgments about the privileging of certain Hawaiian identities over others, and I acknowledge that for myself, these judgments are borne not only of my training as a scholar and writer, but also out of my identity as someone who grew up in Hawai'i and who is familiar with the positive and negative effects that can come from the perpetuation of some embodiments of Hawaiian. I am empathetic to the situation

of the Indigenous Hawaiians, and this empathy might allow me to move in closer to an examination of the ways in which certain identities uphold or contest ethnic assumptions placed upon them by the 'unbiased' critical eye. I also empathize with the challenging circumstances in which Locals and Non-Native settlers find themselves, as I was once one of these Locals, and now often consider myself a displaced Local. It is this unique positioning, this transparency, that might allow me to build contact-empathy between the 'state' of Hawai'i and others unfamiliar with the political and cultural turmoil in which 21st century Hawaiians find themselves. This contact-empathy might be developed not only from an analysis of the evidences, but also a feeling-centered reflection of how the evidence impacts various identities. I do not consider this approach a weakness of scholarly examination; it is, itself, a reinscription upon the varied embodiments of scholarly investigation that are available for use.

The idea that a scholar might be completely unbiased is a fabrication long-upheld in academia. Writers know the impossible task of throwing off the ways in which one views the world, even if the scholar has consciousness of this bias-awareness. The examples I select, the evidence I uphold, and the commentary I provide are all rooted in who

I am, how I grew up, what cultural explorations I have experienced, and of course, my gender, educational experiences, sexuality, race, economic and social class, and more. The affirmation of these is a form of honest, scholarly transparency; I am making readers aware of my positionality, and that my positionality is a valid one, and only one of many that might be used to undertake such an examination as this one.

It is my hope that by questioning these multifarious embodiments of Hawaianness from my unique position and experiences, I might be able to interrogate more strenuously those embodiments that, as Lee suggests, "[maintain] the assumption that ethnicity and race are natural essences that can be transparently reflected on the stage, rather than socially fabricated categories that are made through human performance" (Lee 6) in an effort to examine and evaluate the outcomes of 'performed' identities in Hawai'i. I also wish to develop a sort of contact-empathy that might invite scholarly cultural interventions—interventions that build connections between insiders and outsiders, and allow for engaged dialogue within a borderless space.

It is my intention to shed light on the multiple Hawaiian identities at work in various performances and

other representational practices, and to privilege some over others so that more vigorous and passionate dialogue might be entertained. As Lee argues, "questions of racial difference concern our most basic gut reactions, experiences, and sensations" (7), and the presentation of such 'basic gut reactions' in this study, combined with critical, scholarly experience, might open up a new method of cultural intervention for scholars.

Such a study is important to theatre scholars, performance scholars, sociologists, literary critics, and ethnic studies specialists, because a close examination of Hawaiian performances might contribute to the larger scholarly discussion that argues for the important role of performance in the identity-making of Asian Americans in general, and of Hawaiians in particular. This dissertation will present an argument analyzing the varied notions of Hawaiian and of Hawaiian history, and will discuss the importance of Hawai'i and its people as one that has a unique cultural and national identity (that may or may not be part of a larger understanding of American identities).

While there have been numerous texts and studies in the past 40 years that focus upon Asian American and Native American theatre and performance, two categories in which Hawaiian is often included, few studies have focused

exclusively on Hawaiian theatre and stage performance, or even Local Hawaiian theatre, with the exception of a Masters Thesis and a Dissertation by theatre practitioner and feminist critic Justina Mattos, and a handful of Hawai'i-produced anthologies of Local plays.

Justina Mattos, who lives and works in Hawai'i and is a frequent and active contributor to Native Hawaiian performance practice and critique, wrote a groundbreaking examination of Local theatre for her Doctoral dissertation. In it she concentrated specifically on the development of and the history of Kumu Kahua theatre, the first theatre to actively develop and produce Local plays by Local playwrights about Local experiences, and then examined the agency of specific playwrights whose work was performed as part of Kumu Kahua theatre's repertoire of playwrights. In her dissertation, Mattos identified the key players in the development of Hawai'i's Local theatre scene, and offered a well-researched, brief history of the development of modern and contemporary Hawaiian theatre. Additionally, she spent a great deal of her opening chapter discussing a thorough and well-researched definition of Local Hawaiian, an important term that is key to understanding the unique spaces from which Hawaiian theatre practitioners operate. Mattos introduces the most well-known playwrights of the

Kumu-Kahua early years, (1970s through 1990s), and she makes a call for the important place an examination of Local Hawaiian drama might have due to its ethnically-diverse population. Mattos's study serves as a starting point for other critical investigations into specific performances, playwrights, and venues particular to Local Hawaiian culture. Mattos does not focus exclusively on how Local performances affirm or contest varied Hawaiian identities, and her dissertation necessarily neglects other representational practices that might affect the construction of Hawaiian cultural identity that may have been performed beyond the walls of the Kumu Kahua theatre.

In reviewing materials in the Kumu Kahua Theatre Archive, which included unpublished playscripts; notations and communications between actors, directors, and writers; newspaper reviews and articles; and a small sampling of critical scholarship, it was clear that a rich and diverse theatrical scene had been in operation for over 30 years, and further, that seeds of burgeoning development suggested even more performance was being explored. These seeds included the limited materials available about Hawai'i children's theatre, performances of poetry or autobiographical solo work, and Hawaiian-language plays. Clearly, Mattos's dissertation was an invitation to

multiple scholars who might begin to develop particular and unique examinations of Hawaiian theatre and Local theatre from varied perspectives and methodologies.

Two other early anthologies offered examples of Local plays that had been produced by Hawai'i's developing Local theatre scene. Dennis Carroll, founder of Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1971, edited the anthology *Kumu Kahua Plays* published in 1982. The anthology includes a preface and introduction that articulates the positionality of Local theatre and performance in Hawai'i, as well as a brief history of Hawaiian performance, from the pre-World War II pageant plays to World War II military entertainment, and through the development of Local performances that began to use the Hawaiian dialect of Pidgin in the presentation of Local experience in the 1960s. These events serve as the foundation for the origination of the Kumu Kahua theatre, Hawai'i's first Local theatre company on the islands (Carroll, *Kumu Kahua Plays* viii). This anthology includes 8 plays by Local playwrights, mostly of mixed Asian ethnicity, and a glossary that defines Pidgin and Hawaiian words. It is a useful starting place for anyone interested in the origination of the Local theatre scene in Hawai'i.

The second anthology, published in 2003, is a special issue of *Bamboo Ridge: The Journal of Hawai'i Literature*

and Arts, subtitled *He Lou Hou: A New Voice; Hawaiian Playwrights*. Edited by playwright and director John H.Y. Wat and Meredith M. Desha, the anthology includes full-length plays by 4 key Hawaiian playwrights, with a critical introduction to each play and playwright that situates the work and the playwright not only in the Local Hawaiian theatre scene, but in the identity politics issues of Hawai'i. All four plays, written by writers of Hawaiian ancestry (5), affirm and contest varied positions on the Hawaiian identity spectrum; the plays use Pidgin, the Hawaiian language, and position Indigenous Hawaiian identity issues at the forefront of the material. Dennis Carroll believes the plays "reflect the new assertiveness in Hawaiian identity as well as disenchantment with conventional 'politics'" (Qtd. on Back Cover). As a post 1990 anthology, the plays offer an even deeper avenue for investigation—how the Indigenous Hawaiian represents himself or herself in Western-style dramatic work. Wat noted "The writing and production of plays by Hawaiian writers is a relatively recent development and Western-style drama is therefore a new voice for Hawaiian artistic expression" (5). This anthology signaled, perhaps, the movement of Hawaiian drama from the islands to a national and international spectator, as many of the playwrights

included had already had works produced in mainland United States and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Some post-1980 Asian American anthologies and critical examinations of Asian American performance were beginning to name or list Hawaiian theatre as a unique avenue of performance inquiry, but none had, as yet, contributed a volume that placed Hawaiian drama firmly within the scope of and the discussion of Asian American performance. Josephine Lee's *Performing Asian America* solidifies the necessity of developing a study through the lens of nationhood/nationality/identity. Lee argued that an examination of performance must "allow for a discussion of racial and ethnic as well as other differences. Perhaps the idea of the universal standard still persists in part because critics have not developed adequate ways to discuss how theatre is a valuable or necessary practice" (Lee 5). Lee's inclusion of early Hawaiian plays by Asian Americans signaled the importance of examining Local Hawaiian work in the larger frame of Asian American performance.

Beyond these three important introductions to Hawaiian and Local theatre and performance, several texts and articles explore Hawaiian history and culture, issues of Nationalism and Identity theory, and Cultural Theory and issues of ethnic identity that are helpful to an

investigation of identity formation through representational practices. Velina Hasu Houston's Introduction in *The Politics of Life: Four Plays by Asian American Women*, deepens an understanding of the definitions of Asian, Amerasian, and Asian-American, and offers important historical perspective as well as a call for more research that might illuminate Hawaiian theatrical performance and its role in identity formation. While not quoted heavily in this dissertation, Nilgun Anadolu-Okur's analysis of several African American playwrights in *Contemporary African American Theatre: Afrocentricity in the Works of Larry Neal, Amiri Baraka, and Charles Fuller* helped offer a possible frame-work for an examination of Local playwrights. Anadolu-Okur argues for an African-American theatre to be "evaluated using its own aesthetic standards and critical judgments, rather than as a supplement or hybrid within the genre of American drama" (x). Anadolu-Okur's study pointed to the importance of the "event" rather than the play itself as the more significant aspect of African-American drama; indeed, this seemed to apply to the plays by Local Hawaiian playwrights, and echoed Kumu Kahua theatre's founding document, which pays homage to the founding manifesto of the Black Arts Movement and the call for a Negro theatre—by Locals, For Locals,

About Locals (*Kumu Kahua Theatre*). The similarities between African-American theatre formation and the development of a Local Hawaiian theatre scene were undeniable.

Foundational to this dissertation is an understanding of the political and of the historical landscape of Hawai'i, and especially of the sentiments of and perspectives of Indigenous Hawaiian critics, scholars, and historians. Ideas in this dissertation were informed greatly by Haunani Kay Trask's book, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*, as well as subsequent telephone conversations with Ms. Trask about the millennium sovereignty movement and other articles Ms. Trask contributed to various scholarly journals. Ms. Trask is a polarizing figure in the sovereignty movement to some. A Professor of Hawaiian Studies, she advocates for the immediate and non-negotiable return of Hawai'i to its indigenous people, and she is vehemently opposed to tourism and to other commercial enterprises that take rights over and ownership of the Hawaiian islands away from the Indigenous Hawaiian people. Trask's politicized examination of the state of the Hawaiian people, and the state of Hawai'i, revolutionized my thinking about issues of identity construction.

Trask's ideas were placed in opposition to those of anthropologist and former University of Hawai'i professor Jocelyn Linnekin, whose ideas about Hawaiian history and the connectivity between past culture and present practice seemed suspect. Linnekin's investigations, for this dissertation, were evidence of the inherent problems of a Western-model of anthropological and historical investigation being employed without reflection or an open-minded start to investigation. Linnekin sets out to prove her theory that the continuity of Hawaiian cultural identity is suspect, and that is exactly what she finds. These conclusions were important aspects of the challenges inherent in examining political and cultural identity and nationhood in Hawai'i.

Further historical foundation was found in Gavan Daws' *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* from 1968. Cited by many over the years, Daws' history offered a foundational understanding of the colonization of Hawai'i and the political aftermath, despite the obvious racial and cultural biases employed by Daws in his language and his examination of Hawaiian Native cultural practices. Thus, this history was tempered with other texts and articles on Hawaiian culture and identity and Pacific Islander histories, including *Pacific Diaspora: Island Peoples in*

the United States and Across the Pacific, which offered valuable statistical information and critical interpretation of the development of mixed-races in the Hawaiian islands.

Another book edited by Linnekin and Lin Poyer, *Cultural Identity and Ethnicity in the Pacific*, offered solid foundation in anthropological theories of ethnicity and identity politics as they pertain to Cultural identities of Oceanic peoples. From this book and its subsequent essays, I gained a deeper understanding of the problems of fitting a Western model of ethnicity onto Pacific identities, and learned the complications of "an Oceanic theory of cultural identity that privilege environment, behavior, and situational flexibility over descent, innate characteristics, and unchanging boundaries" (6). At once these identity theories seemed to make sense in the context of an identity examination of Hawaiian people, and also to be in opposition to assertions by other scholars about ideas of identity formation. These texts contributed to my belief that current models of understanding identity formation and the construction of communities and nations are unusable.

Indigenous people have been examined consistently throughout the decades as products of colonization, or as

having been unduly influenced by Western forces so as to negate any cultural product developed in post-Western contact. This paradigm seems problematic, for it is rooted in egocentrism of Western impact and in a lack of understanding of the unique and special forces at work in identity formation. Biology, psychology, environment, and other scientific models for the examination of identity formation don't seem to underscore any spiritual or genealogical connection with past or with objects (such as land, sky, ocean, etc.). Is it possible for Western anthropologists and historians to examine an indigenous culture from the perspective of Western models of creationism and formation? The challenges of finding alternate points of examination led me to the inclusion of nationalism.

My ideas about nationhood and identity, and theatre's important place in the exploration of these issues, have been solidified through a reading of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Homi Bhabha's texts *The Location of Culture* and *Nation and Narration*. These texts offered analysis of the shifting and malleable possibilities inherent in identity-formation and nation-making. Important in the political landscape of Hawai'i's sovereignty movement is the charge that the nation of Hawai'i is an

invented one, and that the contemporary sovereignty movement unnecessarily plunders Hawaiian cultural practice in an effort to use it for political redress. Anderson's assertion about the imagined construction of nations offered important markers to the development of past nations; applying some of his ideas to the formation of Hawaiianness helped to prove how the construction of the Hawaiian nation was actually *not imagined* in the sense that contemporary Hawaiians were somehow making up something that had never existed.

Instead, it seemed better to examine performance practices of Hawai'i as a resistance strategy of reinscription rooted in the notion of fluidity. If culture and identity are not static, then it seems incomprehensible to charge a people with the fictionalization of a non-existent nation, when all theories point to the necessary fluidity of nation-making. Borders change, communities change, names and labels change, but this does not necessarily mean that a fiction is being constructed; only that there are multiple and fluid identities working simultaneously to present ideas of nations.

Bhabha's work, especially *The Location of Culture* gave me important terminologies that I might utilize in my discussion of the fluidity and multiplicitous nature of

identity formations. Bhabha's notion of the "beyond"--of "interstices"--overlapping and displacing "domains of difference" (*The Location of Culture* 2-3) offered an enlarged view of how communities can use performance and other representational practices as empowerment strategies for cultural engagement. His ideas argue the performativity of "cultural engagement" in which varied identities work on "the social articulation of difference" in "a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation" (*The Location of Culture* 3). His notions argue against an originary notion of identity in favor of a multifarious notion of identity that "come[s] from posing questions of solidarity and community from the interstitial perspective" (*The Location of Culture* 4), a perspective that allows for the emergence of and the reinscription of community or national identities in a space between bordered identities. Bhabha argues for "the stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity" (*The Location of Culture* 5) that might offer a space within which identities can negotiate and discuss difference without worrying about "an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (*The Location of Culture* 5). For Hawaiian community constructions and notions of identity formation, these

interstices allow for examinations of regional positionings and multiple representational practices as part of the performativity process.

Identifying the regional positioning of Hawai'i and of the Hawaiian peoples seemed paramount. An investigation into Asian American, Native North American, and African American scholarship quickly proved problematic, but Leigh Clemons's *Branding Texas: Performing Culture in the Lone Star State*, offered the frame I needed as a starting point for my discussion and as a model for the inclusion of representational practices beyond theatre performance. Dr. Clemons's examination of Texas immediately resonated due to the similarities between Texas and Hawai'i, in terms of pre-Statehood governmental and economic structures, and post-statehood issues about the interconnectivity of tourism and identity-formation. It was Dr. Clemons's book that suggested the separate examination of the regional Local identity in Hawai'i, the Hawaiian Brand identity, and the pedagogical function of the performance of Hawaiian identities. While I do not quote Dr. Clemons's book throughout my dissertation, the book was of major importance in grounding my understanding of the ways I might investigate, research, and reflect on nationalism and regional performance practices.

For foundational performance concepts I turned to the following: Richard Schechner's text *Between Theatre and Anthropology* offered an understanding of the concept "restored behavior" (35), which helped me to argue against those scholars and historians affirming that the reclamation of cultural identity practices was rooted in the imaginary and the fictionalized reconstruction of non-existent or unknown behaviors, and might instead be a simultaneous presentation of aspects of identity within Bhabha's interstices. Victor Turner's *The Anthropology of Performance*, underscored Bhabha's interstices. Turner calls these "liminal characteristics . . . a threshold (*limen*) between more or less stable phases of the social process" (75) and further clarified his term "ritual" as one defined by Ronald Grimes: "transformative performance revealing major classifications, categories, and contradictions of cultural processes" (75). This move to label everything performative, as well as Judith Butler's discussion of gender performativity, gave me the foundational knowledge to talk about markers of performing various aspects of Hawaiian identity, and allowed me to forward the theory that despite performativity, the authenticity of such identities remains intact as a result of the nature of the simultaneity of varied identity labels in a single

performative action. Jill Dolan's work on performance practice and pedagogy are foundations to my politicalization of the importance of theatre and performance in cultural intervention. Dolan argues for the interconnectedness of theatre and performance, and forwarded my thinking about the importance of theatre's role—not just performance's role—in the presentation of identities.

Foundational knowledge on the intersections of race, racism, and performance are grounded by a reading of essays in Richard Delgado's and Jean Stefancic's *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. The text offers a basic introduction to several key concepts useful in an examination of the challenges colonialism left for Native Hawaiians, Locals, and Non-native settlers. Particularly, Critical Race Theory (CRT) asks how speech can be "talked back" to, when "messages, scripts, and stereotypes ... are embedded in the minds of one's fellow citizens, and, indeed, the national psyche" and calls it an "empathic fallacy—the belief that one can change a narrative by merely offering another, better one" (27). This argument helped me define my own theory that the yoking of Western ideas of Hawaianness didn't simply erase previous concepts of Hawaianness; instead, the concepts existed and were

developed within the same interstices. CRT argues "Yet in some sense, we are all our stock of narratives—the terms, preconceptions, scripts, and understandings that we use to make sense of the world. They constitute who we are, the basis on which we judge new narratives" (28); this thinking influenced my questions about how performance can reinscribe and reframe notions of identity by talking *with* other identity concepts (and spectators) through the presentation of live bodies on (or off) stage, an idea also forwarded by Josephine Lee. Indeed, the Hawaiian tradition of talk-story and the development of non-linear, monologue-style performance pieces in Local theatre does just that, by offering numerous possible narratives in agreement with and in argument with one another, simultaneously, that spectators might embrace as a whole.

The theoretical frames and language offered by anthropology, Hawaiian histories, performance studies, critical race theory, theatre, and cultural studies are most useful for the purposes of an investigation into the performance of Hawaiian cultural identity on the stage. Most theoretical discussion in the last 20 years has argued against race, ethnicity, identity, and nation-ness as fixed notions. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic affirm "races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or

retires when convenient" (7). An examination of blood quantum and its changing requirements for racial inclusion in the African American context, the Native North American context, and the Hawaiian context affirm just such a theory; the government of the United States has different blood quantum qualifiers for those wishing to claim each of these three races. This affirmation might seem to disprove an Indigenous identity, but when Indigenous is performed simultaneously from the perspective of the Indigenous and the perspective of the Hawaiian American, the convergences offer an exciting space for the examination of identity formation.

The representations of Hawaiian identities investigated in this study affirm multiple and fluid labels, the definitions and markers of which change with time, space, and circumstances. The status quo is challenged when such representations and performances question the validity of previously-accepted notions of identity while simultaneously affirming some aspects of previously-accepted notions and also forwarding new markers and interpretations. New areas of investigation are opened by a vigorous critique of Western models of interpretation. Critical Race Theory's ideas about "social construction" along with "differential racialization" offers how "each

race has its own origins and ever evolving history—the notion of intersectionality and anti-essentialism” (9). Understanding that binary models of identity are flawed, and understanding the necessity of fluidity and reformation, allows for an examination of theatre and performance that impacts cultural naming.

If one follows the assumption that “racism is part of the structure of legal institutions” (Harris xx), this would mean that the difficulty inherent in analyzing definitions of race, ethnicity, culture, and nationhood, is underscored by an institutionalized racism buried deep within Western praxis. Thus, an investigation of identities, especially Hawaiian identities, must co-exist with the *activist* and *politicized* intent to reinscribe biased assumptions by presenting alternative models of being that might simultaneously co-exist with previous models in a space which allows for the co-mingling and the interaction of these models. The important role of theatrical performance in the construction of identity, then, is that it offers a variety of spaces within which live bodies might contest identities, contribute new discourses of identity construction, and engage with other definitions.

It is my intention to investigate how a handful of Hawaiian identities are exemplified in selected theatre, performance, and other representational practices, and how these identities make meaning, contest definitions, and attempt reinscriptions of Hawaianness; these performances heed Anne Bogart's call to take proactive action on the part of Hawaiians toward the creation of meaning. To accomplish this task, I've organized this study in chapters that open first with more narrow definitions of Hawaiian, working toward larger, more broadly-accepting definitions of Hawaiian. Each of these Hawaiian identities is examined with the understanding that they work within and beyond one another, overlapping in Bhabha's interstices, where they might contest, reinscribe, or imprint upon one another. The identities are affirmed and declined simultaneously in varied presentations, and speak to the larger challenge that a 21st century Hawaiian culture faces; not just *who are we?* but how are we?—how are Hawaiians constructed, and how do they deal with the varied and contrasting identities attributed to them? This is where an *aloha* state of mind exists.

In Chapter Two the identity investigated is perhaps the most egregious and damaging to the Hawaiian people: Hawaiian Brand identity. This identity was consciously

constructed over time by a powerful tourism industry, and is perhaps the most widely recognized example of Hawaiian. A brief overview of the tourism industry and its construction gives way to an examination of the Hawaiian Brand as beacon of *aloha* spirit, despite the inherent problems in unifying multiple identities beneath an umbrella of constructed, sanitized, tourist-appropriate symbols. The Hawaiian Brand is examined in several performance and representational practices: the tourism performances of the Polynesian Cultural Center, and the outward contestation of the Hawaiian Brand in a play by Alani Apio-Kamau. The performances investigated in this chapter ask how and why Hawai'i and Hawaiian cultural identity is marketed to the rest of the world for purposes of economic gain.

Chapter Three investigates the *state* of the Hawaiian American identity, both physically and psychologically. The Hawaiian American is an identity formation constructed through the political process of annexation, and contested by sovereignty groups while simultaneously affirmed by those who must co-exist with the colonization brought by statehood. A brief examination of Hawai'i's political history serves as an overview to the examination of Hawai'i's contested physical spaces, such as 'Iolani

Palace, the former seat of the modern Hawaiian constitutional monarchy, through the street-pageant play, *January 1893*, as well as the living museum performance of *Mai Poina*, both by Victoria Kneubuhl. These performances attempt to reinscribe atop sanitized representations of Hawaiian history. Additionally, statehood and its repercussions is examined via Local playwright Edward Sakamoto's play, *In the Alley*, as well as the revised and expanded version of the play that was staged 20 years after the first version. The two versions of this play offer an interesting look at the Hawaiian American identity in context at the time of statehood, and after two decades of statehood.

Finally, the multiple voices performing in Kumu Kahua Theatre's *The Statehood Project* receive an overview. The production, staged to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Hawaiian statehood, incorporates poems, monologues, and brief sketches written by amateur and professional Locals and Indigenous Hawaiians. The production offers varied, contrasting versions of the Hawaiian American in the past and in the 21st century. The Americanization of Hawai'i through these performances will shed light on the real and present reminder of Hawai'i's identity as an island nation colonized and taken over by the United States, whose

residents must contend with their Hawaiian American interstice status on a daily basis, and in a tension-filled space.

In Chapter Four, the Indigenous Hawaiian population and the “Hawaiians at heart” population meet in the interstices to negotiate the culturally authentic Hawaiian cultural activist identity (Kanahele). A brief overview of the Hawaiian cultural renaissance is offered, as well as the outcomes of that movement, heralded in the 1970s and the 1980s as an important marker in the reaffirmation of a so-called authentic Hawaiian label. In terms of cultural artifact, there has been much scholarship on the Hula and its important position as a performance reminder of the Hawaiian historical narrative—but in Victoria Kneubuhl’s play *Emmalehua*, the hula and its symbolism as an ancient spiritual practice becomes emblematic of the continuity of tradition against contemporary pressures, and the ways in which various Hawaiians negotiate their connections to their past. Additionally, the second play in a trilogy by Alani Apio, *Kamau 'a e*, examines the challenges of affirming Hawaiian cultural practices of the past in an atmosphere that accuses Hawaiians of fabricating this past for political gain.

Chapter 5 offers an analysis of the most broadly-inclusive identity in Hawai'i today, the Local—a unique regional identity of the Hawaiian islands made up of those who self-identify as and by those who are confirmed as knowing and being able to perform the codes and cultural practices recognized by other Locals. Numerous plays and representational practices offer representations of the Local in Hawai'i—the particular and unique regional identity of individuals who may or may not be ethnically Hawaiian, but who have resided on the island long enough to adopt speech patterns, behaviors, codes of conduct, and language that separates them from non-Hawaiians.

Justina Mattos's investigation into the use of the term Local serves an important function in grounding readers, and an overview of the forces that helped to contribute to the development of the Local identity are presented in historical context. Then, a popular comedy by Local playwright Lee Cataluna is examined for the ways in which varied versions of Local Hawaiian are affirmed and contested. Additionally, Lee Tonuchi's Pidgin play monologues and dialogues give an overview of the politicization of the Local identity, and instruct spectators in the performance of and the recognition of

Locals, while simultaneously denying any fixed code of Local behavior.

In the conclusion to this study, Chapter 6, I will attempt to analyze how each of these Hawaiian identities overlaps with the other, and will offer future points of critical inquiry and possible questions that might benefit from further scholarly examination. Anytime a scholar brings previously under-represented materials up for examination, the positive significance of such a study is in how it may shed light on an area that has previously gone unnoticed or under-examined. My hope with this examination of Hawaiian cultural identities is to accomplish such a task.

Additionally, though, I would like to forward the notion that blindly affirming cultural identity as a set of elaborate performances that might suggest fictionalization unnecessarily cheapens and simplifies critical inquiry. Keeping an open mind, and approaching such a cultural examination through performance practices and with the knowledge that Western theoretical models are rooted in institutional racism (despite any desire to have thrown off these shackles in the last 25 years), provides an opportunity to explore Hawaiian performances separate from any previous groupings with Asian American, Native

American, or Multi-ethnic theatre tropes, but rather as independent and unique performance practices that highlight concerns and themes particular to Hawaiian identities. Hawaiian playwrights and performance practitioners negotiate Hawaiian identities from an inimitable positionality. Thus, questioning how Hawaiian identities are influenced, contested, *problematized*, and reinscribed by theatre and performance might illustrate the ways in which contemporary practitioners educate their populace while resisting the pull of Americanization in the assertion of a distinctive, cultural identity made up of multifarious sub-groups.

CHAPTER 2: HAWAIIAN BRAND: TOURISM IDENTITIES

"How is it, our bones cry out in their infinite dying, the
haole and their ways have come to stay."¹¹

In a commercial for Carl's Jr. Hamburgers that was aired nationally in the last decade, the spectator is treated to the following: a shirtless, blonde, Caucasian surfer is sitting in his van with his bare feet up on the dashboard. He stares out at the beach; seagulls can be heard in the background. In his hands he holds a huge hamburger, and, when he bites into it, the wet crunch of the burger can be heard over everything.



(Feministfrequency.com)

¹¹ Haunani Kay Trask, from *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*.

On his dashboard is a small, plastic, Hawaiian Hula girl reminiscent of the 1950s. She has long dark hair, dark brown skin, and a flowered lei sitting atop her ample breasts. She's wiggling, and as the young surfer bites into his burger, he stares intently at the dashboard Hula Girl. He smirks, laughs mildly, and then reaches a hand out to touch her head.



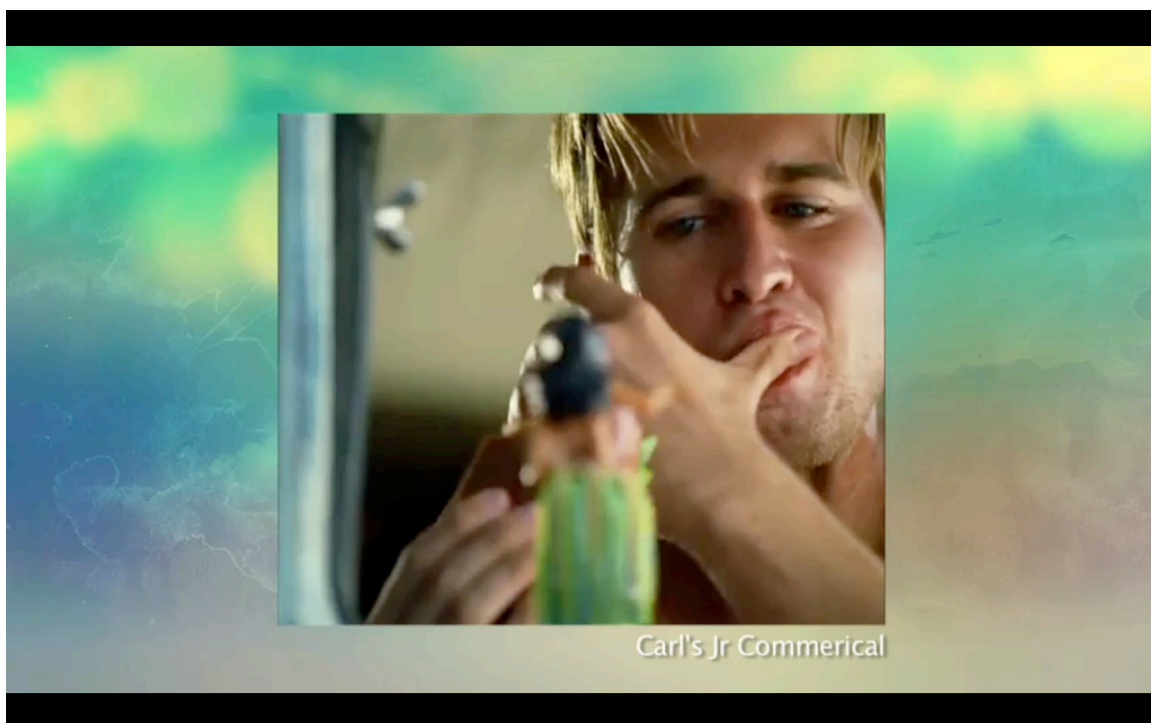
(Feministfrequency.com).

The camera moves to a close-up on the toy. The Hula girl's head is down, and her ample, brown breasts fill the screen. The hula girl wiggles her hula more furiously as the young man eats the burger and stares.



(Feministfrequency.com).

He taps the head again, and then licks his fingers and watches while the hula girl shakes vigorously.



(Feministfrequency.com).

A voiceover comes on: "When a guy can't get his *wahine* to put some *hala kahiki* all over his '*i'o pipi i wili 'ia*, then he's gotta go some place else" (My Italics, Feministfrequency.com). Of course, the average spectator might know the word *Wahine* means woman, but probably "*hala kahiki*" (*Pineapple*) and "'*i'o pipi i wili 'ia*" (*ground beef/hamburger*) simply sound exotic and dirty in the male narrator's voiceover, (Translated by the Author, Feministfrequency.com). Feminist Pop Culture critic Anita Sarkeesian argues "Not only is this exotifying and sexualizing Hawaiian culture, but she's literally a thing. This brings a whole new meaning to objectifying." The commercial branding of the Hawaiian culture—and many say, the sexualizing of the Hawaiian culture for a racist and sexist Western gaze, has long contributed to an imagined, stereotyped identity of Hawaiian. The Carl's Jr. commercial, and many commercial and print advertisements that present the Hawaiian in a similar fashion, is symbolic of the identity problems that plague Indigenous Hawaiians, and also exemplifies the problems individuals encounter when trying to examine definitions of a real Hawai'i or an authentic Hawai'i.

As conveyed in chapter 1, Hawai'i exists in the hearts and imaginations of people all over the world—with emphasis on *imaginations*. The stereotyped, touristy Hawaiian identity is largely due to the commercialization of Hawai'i—the selling off of Hawai'i's *aloha* to adoring masses of tourists, transplants, Non-native settlers,¹² and part-time/time-share residents. Even people who have never been to Hawai'i feel they have clear pictures of Hawai'i in their minds—usually defined as a tropical island paradise inhabited by happy, smiling, brown people who dance hula and surf, who eat pig and poi, who greet tourists at the airport with Plumeria and Maile leis; whose sole purpose is to serve you, to insure your relaxation and your other-worldly Hawai'i-time existence while on the islands.

Hawaiian tourism is one of the largest economic boons to the islands of Hawai'i. In a 2009, tourists to Hawai'i spent almost 10 billion dollars (Department of Business). As a result of the economic importance of tourism, there are various groups deeply invested in the affirmation of a particular image of Hawai'i, and of a particular definition of Hawaiianness. The Hawaiian Brand isn't just a series of images, but is also a construction process rooted in

¹² I use the term *settlers* to affirm Haunani Kay Trask's call for scholars and historians investigating Hawai'i to name those not indigenous or native to the islands as outsiders. (Trask, *From A Native Daughter*, 132).

Hawai'i's political and economic history and defended by the wealthy tourism industry, while simultaneously forced upon a dependent populace. However, this Hawaiian Brand is simultaneously contested and affirmed by Indigenous Hawaiians and Locals, and has been performed in numerous representational practices and plays in Hawai'i. While the commercialization of Hawaiian cultural identity is seen to limit the power of and the ability of Indigenous Hawaiians to control their own identities, it also fuels a series of Hawaiian Brand identities that echo a picture of Hawaiians as happy-go-lucky, brown, smiling people in service to the world and in desire of sharing their *aloha* with others, without any thought for themselves. In fact, the newest incarnation of Hawai'i's tourism slogan, *Go Hawai'i*, extends this *aloha* to everyone on the internet:

The People of Hawai'i would like to share their islands with you! The fresh, floral air energizes you. The warm, tranquil waters refresh you. The breathtaking, natural beauty renews you. Look around. There's no place on earth like *Hawai'i*. Whether you're a new visitor or returning, our six unique islands offer distinct experiences that will entice any traveler. We warmly invite you to explore our islands and discover your ideal travel experience. (Go Hawai'i).

Haunani Kay Trask, Hawaiian activist and scholar, argues against this tactic by the Hawaiian tourism machine and its negative effects on Hawai'i: "Today, Hawai'i suffers six

and a half million tourists annually, over thirty visitors for every Native Hawaiian . . . Moreover, the people live in a hostage economy where tourist industry employment means active participation in their own degradation" (*From a Native Daughter* 50). With so many parties vying for commercial control over Hawaiian identities, it is no wonder that the Hawaiian Brand has come to symbolize all things Hawaiian to a global society.

This chapter will include an examination of the stereotyped or tourist-image of the Hawaiian—what I'll call the Hawaiian Brand¹³ identity, and will include investigation into how the Hawaiian Brand is negotiated, contested, affirmed, and revised for various purposes by various interested parties. Trask compares this process to that of prostitution—a relationship between pimp and prostitute that finds "victims [participating] in their victimization with enormous ranges of feeling, from resistance to complicity" with the "continuity of the institution" shaped by, in this circumstance, the corporate tourism industry: pimps (140). Understanding the Hawaiian Brand may help lay groundwork for understanding the

¹³ I do not use this term lightly. The commercialization (and sexualization) of the *Hawaiian* culture, including language, music and arts, and traditional religious practices, all have contributed to a global *Hawaiian* 'brand' that can be seen in films and in television commercials, and which has been co-opted by numerous parties to 'sell' an idea of Hawai'i that many argue never existed.

political and cultural development in the last three decades, as Indigenous Hawaiians, Locals, and Non-native Settlers each attempt to place their own groups at the top of an identity hierarchy, with each group desirous of claiming political and cultural power for themselves.

I will first examine a loose history of the Hawaiian Brand's foundation in the commercial tourism industry, and then look at the performance of the Hawaiian Brand in three varied representation practices: tourism performances, live musical performance, and traditional stage performance. In all of these representational practices the Hawaiian Brand is performed for varied purposes, with the authenticity of Hawaiian cultural identity being used to market the Hawaiian Brand. In tourism performances, the Hawaiian Brand is performed to expectations of an imagined Hawai'i, but also is poked fun at by Locals and Indigenous Hawaiians who populate these performances; in live musical performances, the Hawaiian Brand is defined and affirmed by labeling specific artistic practices as uniquely Hawaiian, instructing spectators how to recognize an authentic Hawaiian Brand identity, bringing the very definition of authenticity being attempted into Bhabha's interstices, where engagement and contestation occur.

In stage performances, particularly a play by Alani Apio, *Kamau*, the challenge of affirming a Hawaiian Brand for Locals and for Indigenous Hawaiians is examined and contested, and the end-result is surprising and heart-breaking. Placing these performances of Hawaiian Brand in context may yield interesting insight into the negotiation of identities in Hawai'i, and their existence within liminal interstices.

The negotiation of and the development of the Hawaiian Brand identity is much like the development of any other commercial brand for the purposes of economic gain. The Hawaiian Brand has been defined over the course of several decades by tourism and corporate agencies interested in profiting from a unique Hawaiian experience, and is born from the mega-conglomerate corporate structure of the last 4 decades that insists on unique and special experiences for an increasingly diverse tourist. In her discussion of corporate tourism in *From a Native Daughter*, Trask points out how the idea of tourism as Hawai'i's only real economic hope has largely been constructed and affirmed by numerous agencies each vying for economic control and power. She argues

The ideological gloss that claims tourism to be our [Hawai'i's] economic savior and the 'natural' result of Hawaiian culture is manufactured by ad

agencies (such as the state-supported Hawai'i Visitors Bureau) and tour companies (many of which are owned by the airlines) and spewed out to the public through complicitous cultural engines such as film, television and radio, and the daily newspaper. As for the local labor unions, both rank and file and management clamor for more tourists, while the construction industry lobbies incessantly for larger resorts. (Trask 137).

Many Indigenouss and Locals may have resigned themselves to accepting tourism as the only real means Hawai'i has to maintain economic growth, because the State government and protection agencies continue to encourage and to affirm its entrenchment in island life. However, it is a precarious industry to depend upon. As with the majority of the United States, the manufacturing industries and the agricultural industries of the post-industrial revolution have all gone global, with corporations transporting themselves to the cheapest possible manufacturing sites, with cheap, non-union labor and lowered or subsidized production costs; agriculture has gone corporate too, with the small-family farmer losing out on the possibility of maintaining economic fortitude through an inability to compete with the production and price offerings of its oversized counterparts.

This shift in economic development has left many states, not just Hawai'i, dependent upon tourism as a means

for economic growth and stability. However, in Hawai'i, as Trask points out, tourism dollars don't necessarily improve the standards of living or the preservation of resources in Hawai'i, and tourism is at the mercy of the larger global, economic structure. She argues how "Profits, in this case, are mostly repatriated back to the home country [of corporate-owned tourism compounds]. In Hawai'i, these home countries are Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Canada, Australia, and the United States" (139). In Hawai'i, tourism benefits not the Indigenous Hawaiians or the Locals, but those multi-global corporations that continue to develop bigger and more massively encapsulated and closed Hawaiian tourism experiences. This kind of tourism fosters co-dependency between tourists and Hawaiian residents, and uses traditional Hawaiian values to facilitate the victim's participation and complicity in his or her own victimization.

The recruitment of a younger tourism work force begins, as Trask notes, in high school, when "High schools and hotels adopt each other and funnel teenagers through major resorts for guided tours from kitchens to gardens to honeymoon suits in preparation for post-secondary school jobs in the lowest paid industry in the state" (143). In this process, the young people of Hawai'i quickly learn

what is expected of them, and are often encouraged to see their participation in the tourism industry as a means for sharing the history and culture of the islands with an interested and excited tourist—to turn their very identities into profitable commodities (Trask 144). The development of the Hawaiian Brand, then, has been a calculated one, with the Hawaiian tourism industry (corporations, businessmen, and the Hawai'i Visitors Bureau) bent on utilizing the cultural attributes of Hawai'i as brand markers that could sell the islands.

In post-WWII Hawai'i, air-travel cleared the way for hoards of tourists to visit Hawai'i, and the tourism industry saw this as an opportunity to begin the construction of a Hawaiian Brand. Historian Gavin Daws points to air-travel as the beginning of Hawai'i's branding:

Tourism, then, was a big business, ranking with sugar, pineapples, and military spending. Obviously it was worth some close attention and hard thought. The Hawai'i Visitors Bureau, trying to establish just what was so attractive about the islands, concluded that the word "aloha" was crucial. It was a Hawaiian word, and it could be used as an affectionate greeting, or as an expression of good will or love. It went together with a kiss on the cheek and the gift of a lei, a flower garland. It captivated tourists descending from the skies, grateful for safe passage but still faintly stunned and disoriented after hours of high-speed travel westward in pursuit of the sun. If the tourist industry could really

dispense good will, or even a convincing imitation (a plastic lei?), the value of *aloha* as a business commodity would be incalculable, (394).

The use of the Hawaiian language to metaphorically and figuratively transport mainland tourists to Hawai'i was an ingenious one, and the tourism slogan of *aloha* spirit was born. Of course, this slogan has become far-removed from the origins of the word and its sacred meaning to the Hawaiian people, which is perhaps why new campaigns have deemphasized the *aloha* spirit campaigns of the past in favor of the "Go Hawai'i" campaigns of the present.

The word, *aloha*, is deeply rooted in the spirituality of the Hawaiian culture; "The significance and meaning of *aloha* underscores the centrality of the Hawaiian language, or 'oleo, [language] to the culture" (Trask Notes 141-142). Thus, the co-opting of a word and of the Hawaiian language in order to sell Hawai'i is a power play that challenges the revitalization of Indigenous Hawaiian culture and of Indigenous Hawaiian identities, problematizing an entire people's ability to use their own language in its honored and traditional manner. In today's Hawai'i, Hawaiians must negotiate past tourism slogans in order to affirm *aloha* as a spiritual and cultural belief system that connects Indigenous to their land and to one another.

The tourism industry in Hawai'i, then, is powerful; it attempts to control the Hawaiian Brand by utilizing the Indigenous Hawaiian, the Local, and Non-native settlers in the construction and affirmation of the Hawaiian Brand. This construction of Hawaiian Brand is most notably seen in the numerous tourism performances and representational practices available in Hawai'i, especially those performances that purport to educate the tourist in the so-called authentic ways of the Hawaiian people, such as performances and skits at the Polynesian Cultural Center on Oahu. However, the performers at these tourist shows also poke fun at themselves and other ethnicities, thus affirming the Hawaiian Brand, and also simultaneously contesting the Hawaiian Brand, acknowledging for the spectator the requirement that both performer and spectator acknowledge the show of Hawaiian identities.

Christopher B. Balme explores the Polynesian Cultural Center's importance in affirming contested identities of the Hawaiianness of the Hawaiian Brand through tightly structured tourist performances that simultaneously affirm a Hawaiian Brand identity while resisting the stereotyped assumptions of such an identity. Additionally, the Polynesian Cultural Center, or PCC, offers the Hawaiian Brand not as a separate and unique identity, but as once

piece of the larger Polynesian identity. This use of the Hawaiian Brand as a non-indigenous identity part of the larger Polynesian umbrella strengthens Western arguments of the Hawaiian people as settlers rather than indigenous natives whose cultures, traditions, language and practices are unique developments over 1500 or more years.

Several villages in the PCC illustrate the construction of this Hawaiian Brand, and also illustrate the contestation by performers of such branding. The experience begins at the entry point to the PCC. Visitors to the PCC are invited to "Go Native" and to experience the "authentic" Polynesian culture and lifestyle by visiting a series of villages that include Hawai'i, Samoa, Tonga, Maori/New Zealand, Tahiti, Marquesas, and Fiji (Polynesian Cultural Center). Each village is staged to reflect an "authentic" experience in the village's primary Polynesian cultural focus. The experience is part of PCCs larger mission:

The Polynesian Cultural Center is a unique treasure created to share with the world the cultures, diversity and spirit of the nations of Polynesia. In accomplishing this we will:

- Preserve and portray the cultures, arts and crafts of Polynesia.
- Contribute to the educational development and growth of all people at Brigham Young University-Hawai'i and the Polynesian Cultural Center.

- Demonstrate and radiate a spirit of love and service which will contribute to the betterment, uplifting and blessing of all who visit this special place. (Polynesian Cultural Center).

The PCC's primary mission, then, isn't only directed at the preservation of the Hawaiian culture. The Center was founded in 1963 as a non-profit organization that offered Brigham Young University Students in Hawai'i an opportunity to work at the center while educating tourists about the islands, and thus the center's mission is strongly rooted in the values of the Mormon church, but also in the financial support of its students—in the economic boon offered to the center through tourism.

The goals of the center are accomplished by offering spectators an opportunity to become natives, while also being educated about Polynesian cultural practices. This technique further affirms the Hawaiian Brand as a performable identity. The 2007 artistic director of the PCC, Pulefano Galea'i, expanded on this "Go Native" desire: "We want our guests to get involved in a series of new, hands-on activities;" these included preparing and cooking food in traditional ways, and then tasting and enjoying the food; (Polynesian Cultural Center *Newsletter*). Spectators visit various villages and watch performers instruct spectators in some of the finer points of Polynesian

culture. Christopher B. Balme notes how several villages, such as the Tongan and Samoan village, use humor as a form of resistance to the tourist gaze. He found that

On the other hand, strategies of resistance against the tourist gaze operate under the guise of comic routines. To achieve this subversive resistance, both Samoan and Tongan performances use a reflexive citational mode, which draws upon the expectation of authenticity that the PCC promulgates and that the tourists in the main deploy (59).

This citational mode allows performers to simultaneously perform the Hawaiian Brand, while also affirming their own unique, personal identities, and forwarding a politicized acknowledgment to spectators: awareness.

Balme's visit of the late 1990's, and the routine of the Samoan chief he observed, Sielu Avea, is transcribed in his article. In the mid 2000's, this routine, and the jokes and resistance efforts that are a part of the routine, remain largely unchanged even with multiple performers, as any tourist today can attest after visiting the PCC.¹⁴ The chief performs various authentic activities in the Samoan village, including teaching spectators how to use Samoan words, and performing traditional activities: husking a

¹⁴ In addition to visiting the PCC to witness this, spectators can subscribe to the PCC You Tube channel, as well as search for "Polynesian Cultural Center" on You Tube, and come up with dozens of videos of the exact same routines over the course of the last 8 years or so. I have included a few of the better and more complete of these videos as part of my References, but what is apparent immediately is that the comic high-points of the routines, as well as the activities performed in the routines, are mostly unchanged when compared with Balme's 1998 paper on the performances he encountered on his own trip to PCC.

coconut, cracking a coconut, and making fire, among other activities. The instructional portions of the routine are laced with comedy, most of which pokes fun at the routine as well as the spectator. In various versions of the performance recorded from 2006 through 2011, the routine remains much the same. Stock jokes for the audience include the Samoan performer explaining how the ripe coconut is a beautiful brown color "like me" says the performer, following with "some of you are not ripe yet" (theoriginalNani).

In one particular video of the tourist performance, as the performer continues with the coconut routine, right before he opens the coconut using a rock, he says, "If it doesn't crack in half, it's not my fault. I'm Samoan. This is [sic] Hawaiian Coconut, made in China" (theoriginalNani). This acknowledgment of the inauthenticity of the performance—the acknowledgment of it being a performance—speaks to an affirmation and contestation of the Hawaiian Brand. When the performer asks spectators to speak various words in Samoan after he speaks them, then speak the English translation of the words after he demonstrates, he is making the tourist simultaneously perform the role of colonizer as well the role of native or colonized. The Samoan to English translation is followed by

various other translations from Japanese to Indian to Spanish to Chinese to Korean, and more, all followed by spectators repeating the words in increasingly slurred versions of the various languages, with the Samoan performer humorously sharing that he doesn't know what he's saying (the original Nani). It is important to note that the spectators are made up of multiple ethnicities, and so almost all spectators will take a turn in their languages as insiders or colonizers, followed by taking multiple turns speaking unknown languages as outsiders, not just to Polynesian culture, but outsiders to all of the other cultures that make up the tourist-spectators as well.

These performance demonstrations are examples of the Hawaiian Brand being affirmed and contested. Balme correctly notes how "The performative demonstration of Samoan culture [at the Polynesian Cultural Center] is clearly aimed at this expectation of a pre-contact authentic traditionalism merged with elements of contemporary culture" (59-60). These performances, then, are less a performance of authentic Polynesian cultures, and more a performance of what is perceived to be authentic by the tourist gaze (Balme 60). Because both the performer and the spectator are in on the joke, the subversion becomes complete. Spectators understand that what they're

seeing is not authentic, just as the performer understands that what he or she is performing is not authentic.

Authenticity, in this case, is a Hawaiian Brand identity constructed for the purposes of catering to a tourist industry and for the purposes of selling itself as educators to the populace. That the Hawaiian Brand is of a Samoan chief and not particularly or specifically Hawaiian makes no difference; the Samoan performer is well-aware that his brown body and his placement in a theme park in Hawai'i are all being read as Hawaiian by tourists whose prior stereotypes and expectations have been developed by the very industry that has constructed the Hawaiian Brand identity for them. That the Samoan points this out—"I am Samoan" is an attempt to reinscribe Hawaiian identity.

Other means of subversion of this Hawaiian Brand occur in the performance of authentic actions in context of the theme park as a living museum and educational complex. In the Hawaiian Village at the Polynesian Cultural Center, for example, the resistance is rooted in pedagogical performances aimed at offering a reinscription onto the commercialization of the Hawaiian Brand. Performers do not place performative distance between themselves and the spectator, as in the Samoan Village. Instead, the Hawaiian Village performers instruct spectators on the authenticity

of various cultural artifacts rather than historical activities. A discussion of the Ukelele is offered, with an explanation of its appropriate pronunciation, its history and development, and a brief example of the music. The Hawaiian nose-flute is demonstrated as well, accompanied by historical context. Spectators can get lessons on the ukelele or nose flute while at the PCC. This different mode of participation, one that is instructional, versus the comical "going native" participation that is experienced by spectators in the Samoan Village, is simply an alternate form of resistance: education. The mode of delivery, rather than character-generated performance, is much like a teacher might instruct a student. The performers ask questions of the spectators and use their erroneous or correct answers to further instruct and correct.

For example, at one instructional session, the performer held up a Ukelele and asked if anyone in the audience knew what it was; the audience answered "Ukelele" pronouncing it "You-kah-lay-lay;" this erroneous pronunciation gave the Performer/Teacher an opportunity to correct the spectator pronunciations, and then played the instrument for the spectators.¹⁵ This presentation of so-

¹⁵ A version of what I witness at PCC can be seen on various PCC-sponsored and You Tube published videos. I have listed a few of the better versions of this particular demonstration in the References.

called authentic cultural performance, while in the context of the Hawaiian Brand presentation, attempts to teach the history, culture, and language of the Hawaiian people in an effort to reinscribe Hawaiian cultural identity.

Theatre scholar Leigh Clemons examines this phenomenon in the similar performance of the Texan cultural identity and finds that the performance of Texan cultural identity through pedagogy is "marketed for overt tourist consumption and covert indoctrination as the attitude toward the events and their major players" (37). Hawaiian performance at the Polynesian Cultural Center and in other tourist-aimed performances on the islands seems to attempt the same thing: a covert attempt to instruct spectators in the "right" ways to think about Hawaiian cultural identities, affirming an alternate Hawaiian Brand while simultaneously presenting the expected Hawaiian Brand to a clamoring populace. This reinscription process allows the identities to exist in liminal interstices—Bhabha's "beyond" which allows for "a revisionary time, a return to the present to redescribe our cultural contemporaneity; to reinscribe our human, historic commonality" that fosters "the intervening space 'beyond' [which] becomes a space of intervention in the here and now" (*The Location of Culture* 10). Tourists

thus witness the here and now, but reframed from the beyond.

While performers at the PCC Hawaiian Village and at other venues do perform to the expectations of tourists (by performing hula, ukelele, lei-making and more), some scholars believe these covert coaching lessons may not be strengthening their attempts to disintegrate a Hawaiian Brand and to regain national power for Indigenouss. This instructional method is seen as having a negative impact on the ability of the Hawaiian to truly repudiate the Hawaiian Brand. In his examination of the political reclamation of Hawai'i by Hawaiians, sociologist Kevin L. Dooley argues that Hawaiian political groups

have all utilized the same image of how the Hawaiian past intersects with the Hawaiian present. Unfortunately, however, it will be argued that the image of the native Hawaiian is ultimately a negative one; based on a composite sketch of a pre-Western, pre-civilized people. The result of which has rendered the native Hawaiians (Kanaka Maoli) one of the most disenfranchised indigenous groups in the United States (35).

Dooley feels that today's presentation of a Hawaiian history and a Hawaiian culture is so rooted in the business interests of the post-WWII era, and a desire to make money off of the Hawaiian Brand, that it is impossible for contemporary Hawaiians to affirm an authentic identity that

is not tainted by a Western or a European sensibility. He believes "The Hawaiian culture that had existed and had long been defined by inter-island warfare, a strict caste system, and a connection to the environment was replaced by a caricature of past Hawaiian culture that portrayed Hawaiian life within a dichotomy that was both approachable and exotic" (36). However, Dooley doesn't acknowledge the resistance strategies at work in a Hawaiian Brand performer reflecting back to spectators a revised version of Hawaiian Brand, thus taking back the tourism-industry-constructed identity and placing it into dialogue with the previously-known Hawaiian Brand stereotype in spectators' imaginations, as well as placing it into dialogue with other Hawaiian Identities vying for power.

Dooley feels, instead, that Hawaiians continue to affirm the noble savage identity developed by their oppressors, and thus "create (or re-create) an identity that [is] so distant, that it [further] its own exploitation" (39). This limited view discounts the reaffirmation of and the performance of Hawaiian cultural practices that attempt reinscription; Dooley calls it "reconstructing" a non-existent past (Dooley 36). However, Hawaiian Brand performers are, in fact, problematizing and contesting the presentation of Hawaiian Brand while

simultaneously rewriting it. They are not reconstructing a non-existent past; their past is very much present.

Beyond the tourist gaze, one way in which Hawaiian Brand revises itself is through recognition beyond the stereotype in mainstream American and global popular culture. For Hawaiian Brand, that recognition is most easily transmitted through music. While tourist performances can transmit corrections to the individual tourists who visit the island, music has long been a universal method by which global identities have reconstructed and transmitted themselves beyond borders. A clear example of this is seen in the new wave of Korean and Japanese Hip-Hop and Rap artists, all of whom attempt to perform an aspect of contemporary African-American identity. For Hawai'i, recognition of its music as a unique cultural product has helped Hawaiians to revise the Hawaiian Brand.

Don Ho's familiar song, "Tiny Bubbles" is a late 1960s staple for many who hear the echo of Hawaiian Music; through the 1970s and 1980s, groups like Keola and Kapono Beamer, and like Country Comfort, straddled mainstream and Hawaiian music. Simultaneously, traditional Hawaiian music came through singers like Aunty Genoa Keawe singing in the *Ha'i* (Hawaiian Falsetto), and perhaps most recognized to

contemporary listeners of the 21st century, through Bruddah Israel "Iz" Kamakawiwo'ole and his ukelele rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" now a staple of American college graduations throughout the 50 states. In fact, "To most mainlanders . . . Hawaiian music has always meant exotica, transporting if often tacky. Tin Pan Alley churned out "hickey-boola-boo" ditties, and later there came imagery of little grass shacks (and skirts), followed by tiny bubbles (and bikinis)" (Chinen). But the mainstreaming of Hawaiian music beyond the Hawaiian Brand has been a long and contested road, and is evidence of the Hawaiian Brand's affirmation of and resistance to Hawaiian Brand identities.

Prior to 2005, Hawaiian music was included in the World Music category of the Grammys, but in 2005, the Grammys created the Best Hawaiian Music Album category (Grammy.org), and in its brief infancy as a Grammy category, (the category will change in 2012 and be included in the new category of "Best Regional Roots Music Album") the field has faced numerous challenges, including charges of affirming Hawaiian Brand by mostly non-Native Hawaiian musicians awarding music that was more palatable to Western ideas of what Hawaiian music was, rather than truly celebrating authentic or traditional Hawaiian music

(Chinen). Daniel Ho¹⁶, a musician and music producer, produced, arranged, or worked on the winning Hawaiian Album in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011. Many Hawaiians and Locals are upset by this monopolizing trend, in which the mainstreaming of Hawaiian music may be affirming negative stereotypes about Hawaiians and Hawaiian music, or may be allowing itself to be assimilated by the American mainstream; but, as writer Nate Chinen argues in the *New York Times*,

The reality is more complex, involving issues endemic to Hawai'i: the tension between culture and commerce, authenticity and appropriation. So along with a small credibility issue for the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, which presents the awards, the last six years' [the article was written Feb. 4, 2011] results have stirred up a larger question of who gets to make *real* Hawaiian music [my italics] and by what standards it should be judged.

The history of contemporary Hawaiian music illustrates a musical development that has assimilated Portuguese and Spanish instruments, and Christian musical aesthetics (Chinen); however, the accusation that Hawaiian music is not *real* or authentic Hawaiian because it assimilated Western and European musical instruments and arrangements is a ridiculous one.

¹⁶ Daniel Ho is no relation to Don Ho.

In its musical development, Hawaiians have held the power. In 1971, the Hawaiian Music Foundation was set up to preserve and develop Hawaiian Music (Kanehele).

Additionally, activist George S. Kanehele points to the Hawaiian music movement as one of the main sparks for the Hawaiian cultural renaissance of the 1970s. In his important treatise on the Hawaiian cultural renaissance movement and its goals, he said:

Significantly, the impetus for the resurgence in Hawaiian music has come almost entirely, if not entirely, from the local community. It has not come from the outside nor from the tourism industry. You can tell by the songs: the lyrics are in Hawaiian, the themes are Hawaiian, the composers, for the most part, are Hawaiian. The most popular Hawaiian groups almost disdain the tastes of the visitors. And what can be more Hawaiian than the chant which has been a vital part of the current revival in Hawaiian music? Rather than have themselves and their music be further co-opted and assimilated by the Western mainstream, Hawaiian musicians have selectively taken *from* Western culture themselves, changing how an instrument sounds, (such as the tuning of the Slack Key Guitar), or developing a unique vocal element in conjunction with the Ukelele.

These unique Hawaiian developments point to the Hawaiian musician's assimilation of Western instruments and artistic practices into a Hawaiian cultural aesthetic, thus centering Hawaiian musical development firmly in the hands of Hawaiians and Locals.

Additionally, Hawaiian music and musicians work to be inclusive and instructive, contesting limited definitions of what Hawaiian music is and how it is performed. At a 2009 special pre-Grammy concert honoring the Hawaiian category nominees, the performance of Hawaiian Brand identity was mixed and varied, and some performers were mixed-race or other Pacific Islander groups, such as Samoan. In an audience filled almost entirely with West Coast relatives and close friends of the nominees, various performers casually took the stage while spectators shouted out to the musicians, and the musicians shouted back.

For example, when well-known Local singer and slack-key guitarist Bobby Moderow began his song, a woman in the audience who was not a family member shouted out Bobby's name, and in the middle of his song, he yelled back "Good to see you, aunty!"¹⁷ Moderow also called his wife up to the stage to dance hula for his song as a last-minute choice based on the previous performer's formal hula group that had been brought to entertain the audience. Wearing jeans and a tank top with a Hawaiian-print sarong tied around her jeans, Moderow's wife performed hula on the stage while Moderow sang, in opposition to the previous troupe of hula girls, wearing traditional muu-muu's and flowers. This

¹⁷ In Hawai'i, 'aunty' is a term of endearment used for close friends and loved ones.

visual challenge to spectators' stereotyped ideas about what a Hawaiian woman performing hula should look like (i.e., grass skirts, long dark hair, leis around the neck) helped to reinscribe the Hawaiian Brand identity onto spectators, contesting commercialized, tourist expectations in favor of rooting the Hawaiian Brand in contemporary performances of Hawaiian identity. Moderow, of course, is Portugese, raised in the Hawaiian islands as a Local, and married a mixed-race Hawaiian woman. He is seen as Hawaiian Local, as is his wife. Trask points out the conflicting contrast of these versions of the Hawaiian woman:

In the case of Hawaiian women, the definition of us as alluring, highly eroticized natives is anchored by a tourist economy that depends on the grossest commercialization of our culture. Because of mass-based corporate tourism, our women have become purveyors of our dances, our language, our islands, in other words, all that is beautiful about us. This is cultural prostitution, often with our own people's willing, if unexamined, participation. (Trask 160).

This prostitution is mitigated by the move into the mainstream of Hawaiian music and of Hawaiian musicians.

In addition to the mainstreaming of Hawaiian music contributing to the contestation of the Hawaiian Brand, further challenges come through Hawai'i's Local drama. Hawaiian Brand identity on stage is complex. Those who live on the islands are well-aware of the limited economic

opportunities available outside of the tourism industry. Most who participate in the tourism industry are aware of the challenges of affirming such an industry—one that uses up many of the natural resources on the islands, and which affirms an imaginary Hawaiian identity that most tourists actively participate in by suspending their disbelief in order to experience Hawaiian Brand. As Trask argues, “Tourists flock to my Native land for escape, but they are escaping into a *state of mind* while participating in the destruction of a host people in a Native place” (My Emphasis 137). Alani Apio’s play, *Kamau* explores this imaginary “state of mind” and its effects on the tourist and on the Indigenous.

First produced by Kumu Kahua theatre in 1994, Apio’s play examines the complexities of the Hawaiian Brand in a story about an Indigenous Hawaiian tour guide’s attempts to affirm his Hawaiian identity while trying to feed his family. The play also examines how *haole* tourists come to terms with their own impact on the islands and on the people who serve them during their vacations. Fifteen years prior to the play’s development, the effects of the burgeoning tourism industry were just beginning to be felt, and the landscape of the Hawaiian islands was changing in order to cater to soon-to-be corporate entities. Dooley

notes how, "in the 1950s there emerged a number of "Hawaiian" theme-based hotels (Hilton Hawaiian Village, Princess Kaiulani), restaurants (Trader Vic's) and beverages (Blue Hawaiian, Mai Tai); each to preserve the *aloha spirit*" (35), all of which were attempting to develop a specific and unique commercialized Hawaiian Brand identity that might be recognized by tourists the world over, and then translate into profit.

By the mid-1970s, that Hawaiian Brand had come to be symbolized by grass skirts, flowered leis, and hula girls, along with renditions of "Tiny Bubbles" at every Waikiki Bar. In the midst of all of this tourism development, the Hawaiian cultural renaissance was in full swing in Hawai'i. George S. Kanahale summarized the movement's development and defined its importance in 1979's "The Hawaiian Renaissance." In the document, Kanahale says the Hawaiian Renaissance was/is an outgrowth of many of the ethnic movements of the 1970s, from the Native American movement to the Chicago movement; Kanehele points to many cultural rebirths, from Hawaiian music to traditional hula, but most significant is the change in feelings about Hawaiian identity by the Hawaiians themselves:

We said earlier that one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Renaissance is a great interest in studying the past and in the pursuit

of knowledge in general. There is no mistaking that this is also true of the Hawaiian Renaissance. From young composers to canoe paddlers, from ethnomusicologists to artist [sic], from students to professors, there's a kind of stampede back to the past. Everybody seems to be shouting, 'Ho'i ana i ke kumu' or Back to the source.

This desire to affirm the past—to return to the source--no doubt weighed heavily on those who were forced to work in the burgeoning tourism industry, such as Apio's main character, Alika, in *Kamau*.

Kamau is the first play in an unfinished trilogy of plays about two cousins attempting to find a balance between their cultural ties and their places in the contemporary, Americanized Hawai'i, where they must find a way to make a living and to support their families. Director of the first production, Harry Wong III, called it "an unsafe play" clarifying further: "This play is not what you would think of as a 'Hawaiian' play. The depiction of Hawaiians can be quite unflattering. This play airs dirty laundry, and leaves it out there for everyone to see. Consequences are shown, and it all rings true" (Qtd. in Desha 13). The play's "dirty laundry" is the darker side of the Hawaiian Brand identity. A third cousin has committed suicide over the overwhelming demands of his family obligations coupled with his need to develop a strong

identity as a Hawaiian man. Another cousin, Michael, spends his time attempting to solidify his relationship with the past, while coming to an understanding that his connection with the past is one borne out of colonization. The third cousin, Alika, feels guilt over his own complicit participation in the destruction of his Hawaiian heritage—both physically and spiritually—in order to put food on the table and to take care of his cousin's family. The characters all have their demons, and at the end of the play, there is no winner: the battle still rages.

The plot of *Kamau* focuses on Alika. Alika works as a tour guide in contemporary Honolulu and feels the strain of responsibility for taking care of an adopted family—the wife and daughter of his deceased cousin. In the play, Alika is confronted with a common circumstance for many Hawaiians—the taking away of family land for commercial purposes. Alika's other cousin, Michael, wishes to fight the takeover, but Alika is portrayed as a realist who sees the inevitability of the takeover. Alika's hope, instead, is that he might get a good job and benefits out of the exchange so that he can make a better living for his cousin's family. Michael, however, violently resists the takeover and is ultimately taken to jail, while Alika moves forward. The movement in the play is developed through a

series of waking dreams that work to reconstruct the nation of Hawai'i as an alternative to the Hawaiian Brand identity that Alika is living.

Bhabha calls this "narrating the nation" (Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* 1). The play's main character is actually haunted by the nation of Hawai'i in the form of his ancestors, who call out to him to fulfill his duties as a Hawaiian man. The private interests of Alika's family begin to flow into the interstices; as Bhabha clarifies: "In Hanna Arendt's view, the society of the nation in the modern world is 'that curiously hybrid realm where private interests assume public significance' and the two realms flow unceasingly and uncertainly into each other 'like waves in the never-ending stream of the life-process itself'" (Bhabha *Nation and Narration* 2). For Alika and Michael, the two central characters in *Kamau* the Hawaiian Brand identity that Alika must perform flows unceasingly into and out of the Indigenous Hawaiian identity attempting to contest and complicate the Hawaiian Brand. The identities are simultaneously performed and become engaged with one another in the present.

Adult Alika is a Honolulu tour guide and a borderline alcoholic who has taken on the burden of caring for his young cousin, Stevie, and Stevie's *haole* mother, Lisa,

after Stevie's father, (Alika's cousin), committed suicide. This set of circumstances is a tragic, common present for many Hawaiians. The lack of any industry other than tourism pushes Hawaiians into jobs that make them dependent upon commercializing their customs and stereotyping their identities as a global commodity. The circumstances of Apio's play exemplifies Haunani Kay Trask's affirmation that the identities of the Hawaiian people are being raped, and that the co-dependent relationship of pimp-prostitute is strengthened in this exchange.

Apio represents the Hawaiian past in his play as a nostalgic time when families were poor but were spiritually rich with customs, traditions, and closeness; Apio's present is a dog-eat-dog world requiring sacrifice and eating crow in order to survive—something Alika is willing to do in order to provide for his family and to ensure the survival of his family line. Alika learns that the company he works for has purchased the land he and his family have lived on dating back to Alika's grandfather, and now Alika must uproot himself, his adopted family, and his cousin, Michael, who only wishes to live out his days fishing at his family's beach. The family never owned the land, but rented it from another family that has finally decided to sell.

As a tour-guide, Alika performs his Hawaiian Brand identity with appropriate showmanship. At the opening of the play, Alika shouts to his spectators as if they were the tourists on his route: "We at *Aloha* Tours are here to serve you, so if you have any questions at all, just ask!" (Apio 19). This performance and its difference from the real Alika are made clear as Alika shifts back and forth between casual conversation with his bus driver, and the scripted, performative Hawaiian Brand for his tourists. Alika also shifts seamlessly back and forth from the past to the present, to dreams and to reality. This constant shifting *problematizes* any assumption that the Hawaiian Brand is a happy-go-lucky, satisfied citizen yearning to share *aloha* with the rest of the world. In Alika's world, sharing his *aloha* means losing his cultural heritage, letting go of any opportunity for political agency, and basically hiding the real him in order to survive.

Alika's Hawaiian Brand is not letting the tourists in on the joke, as with the Polynesian Cultural Center's performance of Hawaiian Brand; Alika's Hawaiian Brand is also not instructing his tourists or educating his tourists on the real Hawai'i. In depicting the reality of Hawaiian Brand lives outside of the traditional performance venue of the tourist show, Apio places spectators into an

uncomfortable dialogue with the Hawaiian Brand. No longer able to suspend their disbelief, spectators must watch as Alika struggles to maintain a cohesive core while shifting and moving from one reality to the next, all the while knowing that none of the realities are ultimately the right one for him.

Alika's existence illustrates the complexities of Hawaiian Brand's liminal interstices; Alika must find a way to journey from one identity to the next, through these interstices, and at the same time learn how to survive as a Hawaiian Brand, an Indigenous Hawaiian, and a man. In the play, Alika is offered a promotion in the wake of the purchase of his family's land as a way to make up for what is happening to him and his family, and while the promotion may allow him to improve his prospects and to provide a more prosperous future for Stevie, his cousin's daughter, Alika and his cousin Michael are put at odds with one another in the wake of the sale. This physical representation of Indigenous Hawaiian (Michael) and Hawaiian Brand (Alika) makes clear the difficulties inherent in affirming and contesting Hawaiian Brand identity. Alika wishes to succumb to the sale and survive, while Michael wants to fight and sees Alika's willingness

to give up his culture as disconnection with his past and his heritage.

However, Michael is no renaissance Hawaiian; this fact underscores a central question about claiming Hawaiian versus performing Hawaiian Brand: Can Alika and Michael be real or authentic Hawaiians if they don't know the history, language, or religious and spiritual practices of their ancestors? Can they still claim to be Hawaiian if they assimilate? Michael knows little of formal Hawaiian history, and does not even know his own language; he relies on the Local traditions passed down to him in stories by Alika's grandfather. In fact, at one point in the play, Michael is shamed by a Hawaiian security guard that he attempts to argue with, and the security guard responds by speaking Hawaiian, which Michael does not understand. Michael's short-lived protest against the tourism corporation, during which he fights with several security guards, lands him in jail, and the family land is inevitably lost.

Alika is confronted with his performance of the Hawaiian Brand identity by a tourist when he is asked to clarify the meaning of *aloha*. *Aloha* has become a saturated, overused, meaningless commodity. As discussed previously, Trask points out how the spiritual complexity of the

Hawaiian language has been commercialized to the point of non-meaning. When Alika offers to answer questions, Mrs. Clements, the tourist, says, "now what I'd like to know, Mr. Alika, if you please, is what the meaning of *aloha* is. You see we're from the South, and at home we have what we call 'Southern Hospitality.' But I don't believe it's the same thing as your '*aloha*,'" (Apio 36). Alika gives her the stock tourist answer in response: "hello" "farewell" "I love you" (Apio 37), and all the while, Mrs. Clements's husband takes photographs of his wife standing and talking to Alika. The introduction of the photography places Alika into the role of object rather than human being in this exchange, and the performance of Hawaiian Brand is clear: Alika is just like the Polynesian Cultural Center performers; only there as a representation of a constructed Hawaiian identity created for commercial purposes.

As the conversation continues, Mrs. Clements herself performs the role of tourist, not only asking questions, but incorrectly pronouncing Hawaiian words and placing cultural stereotypes and assumptions about the Hawaiian Brand on display, further complicating another aspect of Hawaiian Brand:

Mrs. Clements: And when I was studying in college, I found Hawayee—I hope I'm pronouncing that right—to be the most fascinating place of all because here you all are -so many different races and religions in such a small space—but you all seem to get along just fine. And the more I read, the more it seemed that you could do this because of something called "aloha." Because you're a Hawaiian, let me ask you this . . . you see it's real important for me to understand this. As a Hawaiian, what's your understanding of "aloha?" (Apio 37).

Mrs. Clements, through her dialogue, defines the Hawaiian Brand and the Hawaiian islands as the stereotypical, American melting pot, and as the shining beacon of racial and ethnic intermingling in peace and harmony that has been so carefully constructed by the commercial tourism industry. When Alika attempts to answer the question, he's not fully able to clarify it for Mrs. Clements, and is rudely interrupted by a Young Male Tourist who asks, "Hey man, where can we get, you know, lei'd?" (Apio 38). This simultaneous stereotyping places Hawaiian Brand into the liminal beyond where otherness can be engaged in dialogue (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 10); spectators witness the stereotyping of Alika by Mrs. Clements, and witness the representation of a stereotypical tourist, placing the Hawaiian Brand in conflict with tourist expectations.

This performance of the Hawaiian Brand doesn't only perform the expectations, but appropriately omits what

doesn't fit the definition. For example, when Alika continues the tour for the tourists, when they pass 'Iolani Palace, Alika omits the unedited history of the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy in favor of a sanitized version of Hawaiian history: "In 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani, the last reigning monarch of Hawai'i, gave up her throne to become part of the United States. First, a Provisional Government was set up to convince Congress that we were really ready to be a state." He continues later, saying "With the help of American merchants . . . " (Apio 40-41). This omission would not be lost on the Local spectators in the audience of such a play, but the significance of the omission may be lost on tourists unfamiliar with the history of Hawai'i and the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy by merchant settlers. Thus, not only does Alika perform the Hawaiian Brand in the play, but the Hawaiian Brand is placed into opposition with what Locals know, and just as Mrs. Clements wanted to ask questions, so too is dialogue encouraged here, with spectators asking themselves how they might engage in the Hawaiian Brand performance.

Most who gain familiarity with this play and its situation will see it in print, in its anthology, rather than on the stage in its limited run at Kumu Kahua Theatre. Thus, the performance of the anti-Hawaiian Brand is done

for a Local audience and a handful of tourists, while the writing of the anti-Hawaiian Brand sits on the page in its placement as a play in an anthology of Hawaiian plays. This written composition thus becomes a deeper act of resistance to the Hawaiian Brand. Bhabha explains how writing is a political act because it is linked to power and agency. This kind of critical literacy is, according to Olson and Worsham's interpretation, "intimately connected to the question of democratic representation" (3). Writing, for Bhabha, "constitutes, in a dialogic way, new relationships" and is a "revolutionary" activity because "literacy is absolutely crucial for a kind of ability to be responsible to yourself, to make your own reading within a situation of political and cultural choice" (Olson and Worsham 3). Affirming agency and contesting the Hawaiian Brand is, for Apio, accomplished not just in the performance of his characters on a stage, but also in the composition of his characters on the page, situating the challenges his characters face into a contemporary Hawai'i that insists on the performance of Hawaiian Brand.

Further contesting the Hawaiian Brand in the play is the Security Guard who challenges Michael to leave the family beach once the company legally owns the property. Michael calls the Security Guard a *haole*. The Security

Guard responds using Pidgin: "Eh, I get Hawaiian blood just like you" (Apio 55). When Michael instead seeks solidarity upon learning this self-identification from the Security Guard, the Security Guard scoffs: "I'm doing my job, brudda. 'Cause I get one family to feed too" (55). Michael continues to challenge the guard, who shames Michael by speaking the following translated phrase in the Hawaiian language: "My guts, my family and the Hawaiian language. Yes, I speak the mother tongue. What about you?" (Apio 81); of course, Michael does not understand because he doesn't speak Hawaiian. Some spectators may understand, and others won't; those reading the printed play can translate. This layered spectator view is also a contestation of the Hawaiian Brand, and places the competing versions of Hawaiian Brand identity into the intervening space of the "beyond" (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 10). These competing versions are in direct opposition to Mrs. Clements's claim of the peaceful 'melting pot' of Hawai'i—since there are obviously differences in how individual Hawaiians view the performance of authentic Hawaiian. This scene also engenders dialogue about the "authentic" Hawaiian.

When Alika later breaks character on his tour bus, he is challenged by the tourists, who have their own tales of

disenfranchisement. Alika tells the truth about 'Iolani palace, and asks the tourists: "So I'm asking you, do you think something wrong happened? I mean 'cause now, most of us Hawaiians we don't have a place to live. But when it was our country, we did" (Apio 69). Alika has broken the fourth wall throughout the entire play, treating the spectators as tourists, with well-placed actors in the theatre seats to respond. Spectators are already placed into the liminal, intervening space of spectator/participant. This further break in character complicates the spectator's ideas about the Hawaiian Brand even more resolutely.

Mr. Clements responds to Alika's questions with anger—and this is precisely the kind of dialogue that might normally go unspoken in a non-theatrical encounter between Tour Guide and tourist, but Apio writes a scene that develops a dialogue about the untenable, tension-filled situation, and offers no solutions:

Mr. Clements: Hey, Mister Alika . . .

Mrs. Clements: Now Henry, mind your manners.

Mr. Clements: Mabel, I believe I have a right to speak my mind . . . Mr. Alika, my wife and I have been saving twenty years to come here. And you know why? 'Cause everyone told us how nice it was here and how nice the people were. Twenty goddamn years! (Apio 69)

Mr. Clements goes on to explain his family's disenfranchisement in the coal mining industry, and ends his rant by telling Alika, "you don't know shit, kid. We all got sob stories. So now, why don't you just give us that speech we paid for?" (Apio 70). It's a difficult scene to watch. Alika's desire to stop performing the Hawaiian Brand is met with the tourist's unwillingness to stop performing Hawaiian Tourist. It seems that everyone is complicit in the performance of their roles, and the ongoing development of Hawaiian Brand identity. Even after Mrs. Clements attempts to placate Alika, he can't hear her wish that life is about love—about *aloha*. Alika declares he will quit; "I hate this job. I hate the lies I havta tell. I hate pimping my culcha. You don't care about Hawaiians. you don't care dat we been hea foa centries. We ain't youa firs' concern—da bottom dalla, da's all you care about" (Apio 72-73). The end of Alika's performance really comes when he lets go of Standard American English and unleashes his real feelings on his boss—using Pidgin—the Hawaiian Local dialect, and not the Hawaiian language. The Hawaiian Brand is further complicated in this argument between boss and worker; it is an argument that maintains markers of being authentic Hawaiian as complex and multifaceted.

For Alika, the return to his tour guide job at the end of the play is possibly the most heartbreaking simultaneous affirmation of and contestation of Hawaiian Brand. Here is where Alika fully acknowledges his desire to stop performing, but must choose to actively perform the Hawaiian Brand in order to continue to provide for his family. His cousin, Michael, is not so lucky at the end of the play. Having performed his own Hawaiian Brand, he is taken to jail for attempted murder of the Security Guard.

As evidenced through varied representational practices, the performance of the Hawaiian Brand is affirmed, contested, and problematized by the tourist, the Local, the indigenous Hawaiian, and other non-Native Settlers. Trask's affirmation of "The disastrous effects of mass tourism on island cultures" is clear in Apio's play;

The multibillion dollar [tourism] industry has resulted in grotesque commercialization of our Native culture, creation of a racially stratified, poorly paid servant class of industry workers, transformation of whole sections of our major islands into high-rise cities, contamination and depletion of water sources, intense crowding—with densities in the worst areas exceeding that of Hong Kong—increases in crimes against property and violent crime against tourists, and increasing dependency on corporate investments. (Trask 106).

While the Polynesian Cultural Center and some musical practices offer resistance to the Hawaiian Brand through

comedy and pedagogical instruction, Apio's play is an example of the even stronger resistance utilized in stage performance. The limited understanding that many scholars have of how Indigenous Hawaiian people may have viewed the assimilation they were undergoing in the 1950s is easily disproven through an examination of contemporary Hawaiian performance. The idea that Indigenous Hawaiians might be indifferent to negative portrayals of themselves (Dooley 36) doesn't take into account the many ways in which Indigenous Hawaiians have demonstrated their outrage over the construction of the Hawaiian Brand identity. Rooted in post-WWII travel and the development of a corporate tourism industry, the Hawaiian Brand has mitigated any understanding of an 'authentic' Hawaiian identity that may have existed prior to its construction. Tourists continue to flock to the Hawaiian islands in search of the 'Aloha Spirit' and to experience an 'Aloha state of mind;' however, the selling off of the Hawaiian language, the Hawaiian body, and of Hawaiian history continues in the form of aloha shirts, rainbow shave-ice, and little grass skirts, as well as in museum visits and cultural explorations.

These performances of Hawaiian Brand only make it more difficult for various parties to navigate through the

multiple and fluid Hawaiian identities that exist in contemporary Hawai'i. The latest incarnation of the tourism industry's shift in perspective, now that the 'Aloha' brand is nearly meaningless, is a desire to highlight the beneficial aspects of tourism by developing 'eco-tourism,' tours which, according to the International Ecotourism Society, works to "[Unite] conservation, communities and sustainable travel" and wishes to "[promote] responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people." This newest incarnation of Hawaiian tourism is pedagogical in nature, and affirms Hawaiian Brand tourism. Some may argue that this type of tourism, which takes into account the fragility of the Hawaiian islands, is an effort to deemphasize the Hawaiian Brand in favor of enlarged and diverse representations of Hawai'i. This continues to develop Hawai'i and Hawaiians as commodity, however. Critics, like Trask, would argue that such a move simply pimps out Hawai'i in a different way: by continuing to use the cultural beliefs of Hawai'i to sell the Hawaiian Brand.

For example, the Hawai'i Ecotourism Association invites "Hawai'i Businesses, Tour Operators, and Community members" to:

Learn how [they] can work within HEA to promote ecological sustainability and well-being of our island communities in Oahu, Maui, Hawai'i, Kauai and Molokai through ecotourism. The many benefits of membership include exposure to visitors, travelers and explorers seeking Hawai'i activities, adventure, nature, and culture...

This attempt at rebranding the overused "Aloha Spirit" into "*malama 'aina or aloha 'aina, 'care and love of the land,'*" (Trask 141) is just, according to critics, the latest attempt at developing and revising a Hawaiian Brand identity for the 21st century (and for an increasingly large tourist population). Others, though, might argue that tourism could have a beneficial effect on Hawai'i and for Hawaiians.

Many tourists are genuinely interested in learning more about Hawaiian culture and history beyond the glossy brochures offered by tourism corporations. The tourists visiting the Polynesian Cultural Center pay a great deal of money to learn about Polynesian culture within the scope of PCCs instructional villages. These tourists could easily be spending their money on liquor, surf lessons, and upgraded hotel rooms; instead they're learning about the varied forms of hula and are watching demonstrations of the nose flute, cloak-making, and other historical practices of the Hawaiian people. Apio's character, Mrs. Clements, is

another example of such a tourist. A teacher, she has long held Hawai'i in her mind, but was aware that she didn't know the 'real' Hawai'i. While her husband simply wants a vacation, Mrs. Clements seems genuine in her desire to know more about the 'real' aloha of the Hawaiian people.

Should all tourists be 'branded' in the same fashion that Hawaiians are being 'branded'? Or is it possible that tourists, too, have varied and multiple identities tied to their purposes for visiting the islands? Perhaps demonizing tourists isn't the real issue, but the corporate conglomerates that control tourism on the islands. Would the tourism industry be different if Hawaiians were in control of the industry? Investigation into Native American casinos or Cajun-owned and operated tourism excursions might offer an interesting avenue of research into how Hawaiian tourism may or may not change the Hawaiian Brand depending on who is calling the shots.

However, Trask and others still argue vehemently for the end of any visitation invited by the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, and tourism is one of those types of visitations. She feels that if visitors and spectators are truly outraged and wish to stand with the Hawaiian people, her solution is this: "If you are thinking of visiting my homeland, please do not. We do not want or need

any more tourists, and we certainly do not like them. If you want to help our cause, pass this message on to your friends," (146). Of course, this call to boycott Hawai'i as a tourist location in an attempt to move Hawai'i toward sovereignty is not a view shared by all indigenous Hawaiians—and the Mr. and Mrs. Clements's of the world may react with their own stories of disenfranchisement to counter Trask's objections of Hawaiian disenfranchisement. Trask, though, most likely understands this reaction, since "Even those [Hawaiians] who have some glimmer of critical consciousness do not generally agree that the tourist industry prostitutes Hawaiian culture. This is a measure of the depth of our mental oppression: we cannot understand our own cultural degradation because we are living it," (145). The antidote to this mental oppression is perhaps rooted in cultural reclamation and reinscription, and a decolonization not only of the physical spaces of Hawai'i, but more importantly, of the minds of Indigenous Hawaiians and Locals. However, the complex and complicated identities and desires at work in contemporary Hawai'i continue to make the task of decolonization challenging.

CHAPTER 3: HAWAIIAN AMERICANS:

SOVEREIGNTY AND STATEHOOD

"Bring the children to chant for our dead, then stand with the *lahui* and burn their American flag."¹⁸

Hawaiians are still highly visible as Hawaiians in a way that many other regional American identities and indigenous populations are not. As evidenced in Chapter 2, Hawaiian Brand is a highly commercialized, highly recognized, global identity that places the Hawaiian front and center of many ethnic identities. Additionally, Hawaiians are often erroneously seen as victims that America saved from a supposedly egregious monarchy that limited the freedoms and actions of its people. This construction of Hawaiian Americans having been lucky enough to be given the freedom, the democracy, and the American values bestowed upon them, is one that has persisted throughout the 118 years since the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy by business merchants in Honolulu. This erroneous perception is mostly due to the repetition of performed facts in tourism shows, in history books, and on national platforms. Hawaiian Americans¹⁹ whether due to

¹⁸ Trask, Haunani Kay. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i Press, 2002.

¹⁹ For the purposes of this discussion, 'Hawaiian Americans' will be defined as residents in Hawai'i who have been labeled as *Hawaiian Americans* by the State government of Hawai'i and by the United States of America. In using this term, I do not offer acknowledgment of or support of 'Americans' for Indigenous

their separation from the mainland United States, or due to their unique status as a modern monarchy prior to colonization, annexation, and statehood, are an imagined people whose history has been rooted in misinformation and misrepresentation. Thus, the Hawaiian American identity label has been contested, protested, and reinscribed by numerous plays and performance practices that complicate the identity by contesting historical accuracy of poignant events in Hawai'i's history, including the 1893 overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani, and the annexation and 1959 Statehood of Hawai'i. For the purposes of this discussion, Hawaiian American identity is defined simply as a label attributed to residents of the islands of Hawai'i by the State government of Hawai'i and the United States government. This generic definition offers a wide interstice for varied versions of Hawaiian American to dialogue with one another in the contested beyond, sometimes affirming and sometimes reinscribing the identity.

Popular culture affirms this generic definition. In March 2011, writer Sarah Vowell appeared on *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart to promote her new book about Hawai'i, *Unfamiliar Fishes*. Their humorous exchange illustrates the

Hawaiians, Hawaiian Locals, and Non-Native Hawaiian Settlers unless they wish to assign this label to themselves.

mainland²⁰ American's lack of information about Hawaiian history and about the role of the United States in that history. Vowell talks about the year 1898 as the year Hawai'i was annexed and then later became a state, in a summer of conquests made by the United States as it reached out to become a world power for the first time. Vowell rightly characterizes the action as an unlawful takeover, and Stewart responds:

Stewart: "But we also freed people--from tyrants; the King of Hawai'i--"

Vowell: "Queen"

Stewart: "Yes . . . was making those wicked Tiki dolls that bring bad luck."

Vowell: "Right. You're getting your history from the Brady Bunch, I think . . . That's actually more Hawaiian history than most people in this country know." (The Daily Show).

Stewart's response, both humorous and filled with erroneous stereotype and misinformation (i.e., "wicked Tiki dolls" and "we also freed people"), reveals the staggering challenges inherent in a contemporary Hawaiian American populace affirming or denying an American label; these challenges include the mainlander's ignorance of history, the misunderstanding by mainlanders of the reasons behind

²⁰ Mainland is a common term used by Locals to talk about the main land-mass of the United States. This term is similar to Alaskans using 'the lower 48' in talking about the major land-mass of the United States. Thus, 'mainlanders' is a term attributed to those who live in the main land-mass of the United States.

politically-motivated actions against Hawai'i in the past, and the pervasiveness of American mythologies. Many mainland Americans, and even many self-reflective and inquisitive mainland Americans, know little of Hawaiian history, and rely instead on the sanitized version of the story.

A brief overview of the major incidents in the political history of Hawai'i will serve as a foundation for the examination of living history performances by Victoria Kneubuhl, a stage play by Edward Sakamoto, and a handful of brief sketches, poems, and performance pieces that were included in Kumu Kahua Theatre's stage presentation of *The Statehood Project*, the performance of which coincided with the 50th anniversary of Hawaiian statehood. These performances illustrate a timeline of control and colonization that serves to instruct Indigenous Hawaiians, Locals, and Non-Native Settlers²¹ in the history and the development of Hawai'i's contemporary political climate, but also offer opportunity for intervention. As Bhabha notes, "The negating activity is, indeed, the intervention of the 'beyond' that establishes a boundary: a bridge, where 'presencing' begins because it captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the

²¹ I use the term Non-Native Settlers to differentiate short-term and recent-transplant residents in Hawai'i from Indigenous *Hawaiians* and Locals.

world—the unhomeliness—that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations” (*The Location of Culture* 13). For the Hawaiian American identity, this homelessness can be quite palatable, but these performances develop connections between American and Hawaiian, placing the two homes into dialogue with one another.

Representing historical events for the purposes of instruction works to teach the varied populace of Hawai'i about the history of Hawai'i as well as teach the performed markers of particular identities. Additionally, many of the historical events are presented in the original physical spaces that align with historical points of contention, allowing spectators to broaden their understanding of history while simultaneously teaching Indigenous Hawaiians and Locals to broaden their own understanding of past events. Performance and other representational practices have served, in the past few decades, to instruct Locals in how to be Local, and have instructed Indigenous Hawaiians in ways they might contest and resist stereotyped representations of themselves, thus affirming a reinscribed Indigenous Hawaiian history and lineage. Even the Hawaiian Brand has been performed as a way to instruct spectators (i.e. Tourists) about the history and culture of Hawai'i, while helping performers deliver opposition to the Hawaiian

Brand. The Hawaiian American identity has been equally represented as both a contested and affirmed identity, and performances and representations of this identity have offered numerous opportunities for reinscription and for resistance to Americanization, underscoring performance as a key dynamic in the practice of political and cultural intervention.

Yes, Hawai'i lives in the *imaginations* of a global society more interested in the exotic paradise images of Hawaiian island life than in recognizing Hawai'i as a real place with real people populating its shores. In order to understand the performance responses to Hawai'i's history, it is important to lay an historical and political foundation from which the Hawaiian American identity label can be investigated. Most mainland Americans hold to the basic mythology that the United States acts aggressively only to free a chained populace, to champion the rights of a downtrodden people, or to avenge an evil injustice done to the United States or its allies. According to sanitized history books, Hawai'i is a happy customer of American benefaction. Unfortunately, the pervasiveness of this myth has continued even after historical documentation has provided alternate and competing points of view; and especially when an Indigenous Hawaiian populace fights even

harder, through political activism in the form of sovereignty movements, for a revisioning of the history books. These Indigenous Hawaiians are seen as ungrateful and anti-American for their political agency, although they are Hawaiian American through the positionality of their bodies in United States spaces.

Contemporary plays and representation practices rooted in Hawai'i's attempt to redress historical inaccuracies through their own repetitions of historical acts might contest and even revise incorrect historical representations. Judith Butler's examination of the performance of gender is useful in understanding the desire of Indigenous Hawaiians to perform Hawaiian history, sometimes in an overly-politicized manner. One such performance is the pageant play *January 1893* written by Victoria Kneubuhl. This play was developed as a loosely-scripted, improvisatory street pageant, and was performed as part of the commemoration festivities in Honolulu in 1993 on the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian government. This repetition of historical acts in a performance is used "to underscore the fictionality of an ontologically stable and coherent gender identity;" in this case, performance underscores "the fictionality of an ontologically stable and coherent [Hawaiian American]

identity" (Diamond 4). This Hawaiian American identity has been constructed by outsiders (colonizers); so, in order to contest these stable historical accounts, performance works as a device for reinscription over the fictional Hawaiian American identity.

Elin Diamond, exploring the ideas of Judith Butler, affirms:

Gender is rather a *'stylized repetition of acts . . . which are internally discontinuous . . . [so that] the appearance of substance is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief.*(4).

The "appearance of substance" for Hawaiian Americans performing in this type of representational practice is important; it shouldn't suggest that there is *no* substance, only that by re-performing the historical events of January 1893, the "appearance of substance" to outsiders might demonstrate the validity of contestations about the facts, thus reinscribing onto the sanitized historical accounts a more complex and full accounting of events, and of the players in those events.

The sanitized history of Hawai'i rarely points out that Hawaiian Americans took no affirmative role in their annexation and statehood, and that they have, in fact, been

fighting for independence ever since (Trask 29). Instead, Western versions history have justified the colonization of Hawai'i in historical accounts through various arguments that characterize Indigenous Hawaiians as Polynesian settlers instead of an indigenous people with a country and government of their own prior to colonization (Trask 29-30). Also, some accounts characterize past Hawai'i as an unsafe, threatened government in need of protection. Hawai'i's political history, though, is a complicated one, and many factors led to the illegal dethronement of Queen Lili'uokalani and Hawai'i's eventual annexation, none of which were grounded in a necessity for the United States government to intervene on behalf of a so-called threatened Hawaiian populace.

Scholar Robert Stauffer points to changes in land laws introduced by *haole* pressure on the monarchy (Vowell 161); Trask points to this land ownership as well, and also to the debt-ridden government and the inequality of the electorate which, "To ensure *haole* domination of the legislature . . . was severely restricted by income qualifications of \$600 or \$3,000 worth of property" (Trask 11) allowed missionaries, their descendents, and wealthy *haole* businessmen to be the primary voting populace for issues concerning Hawai'i. Additionally, Trask feels the

"constant interference of U.S. naval forces to quell civil disturbances in the city of Honolulu" also contributed to the perception by outsiders that the monarchy could not control its subjects. These interferences were rooted in economic desires of white plantation owners and businessmen, and are directly responsible for the eventual overthrow of the Hawaiian government and the delivery of that government and its land to the United States, thus creating the fictional Hawaiian American identity.

The timeline of the overthrow, as represented in multiple documents is as follows. In January, 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani desired a new constitution that might restore some of the monarchy's power, and that might reaffirm a Hawaiian-controlled senate. In his assessment of the historical context of events, Gavin Daws believes

Liliuokalani took the position that her cabinet was obliged to support her, but eventually the ministers convinced her that she should at least postpone the proclamation, [of making a new constitution] if not abandon it altogether. When Liliuokalani appeared on the balcony and announced that the day of freedom had not yet come, there was a stir among the natives in the crowd, but they were persuaded to go away quietly. (271).

The speech sparked a group of businessmen, calling themselves "The Committee of Safety," to illegally remove the queen from her throne with military support from the

United States Government. The Committee of Safety had already been meeting to plot just such an outcome, but they misled U.S. Government representatives by exaggerating a fear of impending violence as justification for the immediate overthrow. Trask calls these men the "'missionary gang' of white planters and businessmen [who] plotted with the United States Minister to Hawai'i, John L. Stevens, to overthrow the lawful Native government of our last ruling ali'i, Lili'uokalani" (12).

Lili'uokalani had, herself, gone to the minister to get his support should such a coup happen, but eventually she was forced into ceding her authority for fear of violence against her people. However, she ceded her authority to the United States government, not the provisional government, and it is this important difference that has helped to fuel sovereignty movements and anti-Americanization over the past 118 years:

I yield to the superior force of the United States of America, whose minister . . . has caused United States troops to be landed at Honolulu . . . Now to avoid any collision of armed forces and perhaps the loss of life, I do under this protest, and impelled by said force, yield my authority until such time as the Government of the United States shall, upon the facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representatives and reinstate me in the authority which I claim as the constitutional sovereign of the Hawaiian Islands, (Qtd. in Trask 13).

This language is important in understanding the true nature of the overthrow and the yielding of the crown to the United States government as one that was rooted in protest against a *provisional* government faction. Queen Lili'uokalani's desire was to yield to the United States under the assumption that the United States would restore her once the facts of the dethronement were shared. Unfortunately, because the desire to overthrow the queen grew from an imperialist desire to control not just the lands of Hawai'i, but its economy, no manner of petitioning on the part of the Hawaiian people was able to return the Queen to her throne. The aftermath of the dethronement saw many protests by the Hawaiian people; some of these protests involved occupation of 'Iolani Palace, and others involved petitions, marches and picketing.²²

It is in this environment that Victoria Kneubuhl chooses to set her street pageant, *January 1893*, which *problematizes* the fictional Hawaiian American label. The Author's Note clarifies the setting of the play: "This living history program was written especially for performance on the 'Iolani Palace grounds and the adjacent

²² Any tourist traveling to Hawai'i today and who visits 'Iolani Palace and some rural areas of Hawai'i will see the streets around the palace and the highways lined with activists holding signs for sovereignty.

historical district in January 1993 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy which took place in that same month in 1893" (Kneubuhl). The play opens with a *Kupuna Wahine*—a revered female ancestor or grandmother—speaking directly to spectators, affirming the past and bringing the dialogue into the present.

Kupuna Wahine: You come here today, young and old alike, to hear a story of the past. (Pause). Yes, the past. And where is our past? Lost, far away in the midst of Kahiki? Gone like dried leaves blown away by the wind? 'A 'ole, it is here. Here in our blood, here in our bones, here in our ancestors that we carry on our back. Yes, the past lives her with our ha. The [breath]of life, from the aumakua. It comes from them, the past made present. The past becomes present also in the making of things, the things that flow from one generation to another. Our ancestors in their wisdom made many things—beautiful feathered cloaks, exquisite fishhooks, the finest kapa scented with leaves. But above all these beautiful things they left us their eyes, their ears, their voices in chants, hula and the telling of stories. They knew the importance of a living past, of that unbroken line of knowledge, of recounting of things so that all would not fall, lost into the deep chasm of time. They left to us a bridge so that we might return and visit and learn.
(Kneubuhl 2).

This opening monologue continues with an indigenous chant, and then the creation myth of the Hawaiian people is shared. Kupuna Wahine develops a clear lineage in her creation myth, by linking the earliest Hawaiian people with the land of Hawai'i going back hundreds of years. As an opening to a pageant play about the political overthrow of

the modern Hawaiian monarchy, the performance of this monologue is both a remaking of Hawaiian sovereign identity, and a contestation of the Hawaiian American label.

The monologue contests historical accounts that argue Indigenous Hawaiians were settlers on their own lands, rather than a people who were tied to their land for many hundreds of years. This monologue is a political act for sovereignty and is an attempt to reinscribe the Hawaiian American label through what Richard Schechner calls "restored behavior" (Schechner 37). Schechner identifies performance as a political act that allows the performer a degree of behavior restoration, and restored behavior as an opportunity for actions that can be "'worked on,' changed, even though it has 'already happened,'" (37). Additionally, Schechner argues how restored behavior, a form of ritual, "is symbolic and reflexive: not empty but loaded behavior multivocally broadcasting significances" (36). Kneubuhl's performance works on multiple levels as a political act of restored behavior that contests a fictionalized Hawaiian American identity.

Kneubuhl's 'restored behavior' in *January 1893* involves conscious choices and constructions that transform "living behavior" which "can be rearranged or

reconstructed; they are independent of the causal systems (social, psychological, technological) that brought them into existence" (Schechner 35). The behavior of the Kupuna Wahine in Kneubuhl's play is an attempt to bridge the past with the present, both physically and metaphorically. And, in Hawaiian mythology, the Kupuna Wahine, actor or not, can serve as the vehicle through which the ancestors of the past can be called forward into the present moment. In the monologue, it does seem as if the Kupuna Wahine is calling the past into the present as she performs her monologue, and then, as she and the crowd chants a traditional Hawaiian chant, the performance of the ritual serves as an act of restored behavior as well. This act of restoration, of calling forward the stories of the past and the ancestors of the past into the present, is an important opening step to the reframing of the January 1893 historical account. In order to reinscribe a revision of this event, and a revision of Hawaiian American, the performer must incorporate substance, and must transmit this appearance of substance onto the performers for the spectators. That the performance is also site-specific is another example of how the pageant will revisit the past from the present-day vantage point in order to redress historical inaccuracies.

The Kupuna Wahine situates spectators into the past with her monologue and chant, and then moves spectators through a mythologically-rooted Hawaiian history of being "guided by stars, clouds, waves, winged birds, visions, dreams and voices" to the Hawaiian islands, transporting spectators even further forward, through the times of the ali'i (chiefs), the "coming of foreigners" and the "mahele"—the division of lands that sold off Hawaiian land to *haole*. In this history lesson, the Kupuna Wahine uses Hawaiian words, translating them along the way for the spectator; she also characterizes the changes that came to Indigenous Hawaiians by placing these changes into dialogue with affirmed ideals: "pride in our country, our government, our homeland" clearly forwarding for spectators the existence of a sovereign Hawaiian nation that was ruled by "our chiefs, whom we now called kings and queens" in opposition to the land of the Hawaiian American, who is ruled by the United States government (Kneubuhl *January 1893* 3).

The history lesson pauses at the beginning of the longer story that will be performed: the removal of the queen from her throne. The Kupuna Wahine closes her monologue with an appeal: "Remember my *pua*, the great race which gave you life. Cherish the roots from which you

bloom, the living blossoms of *Na Po'e Hawai'i* and let this event unfold before you once again so you will remember what was done. May you bring only honor to your ancestors (My Italics, Kneubuhl *January 1893* 3)." This appeal to Pua, loosely translated as "my blossoms" or "my flowers," is a metaphorical embrace of the blossoming of the Hawaiian people—the reinscription of life upon a history that says the Hawaiian people are dying or non-existent. Instead, Kupuna Wahine places into the minds of spectators a seed that the Hawaiian people are just getting ready to bloom—an appeal to reclamation and a desire for sovereignty.

The play moves through several locales throughout Honolulu's historical government district: the space behind the burial site, large trees near 'Iolani Palace, the coronation stand, and then a procession through the streets and up the Palace steps that takes the Queen into the palace and onto the Palace balcony. Because of the walking-marching nature of the performance, and its present-day movement through the busy streets of the downtown district in Honolulu, many spectators viewed the performance in the liminal, "betwixt and between" (Turner 75) transcendent spaces orchestrated to bring 1893 and 1993 into a shared space; bringing history present, and spectators past, intermingling their bodies, their voices, and their

histories in order to reinscribe and to reclaim historical memories. Spectators were transported through time.

Kneubuhl's *January 1893* brings many points of argument into dialogue with one other. Chinese and Greek settlers are represented as loyal to the Queen and interested in promoting and sustaining the monarchy they pledged to support. This characterization changes the spectator's ideas about the Hawaiian kingdom by developing and expanding the ethnically-diverse nature of the Hawaiian Kingdom and by contesting the identity of the *haole* and Local. This new presentation, placing non-Native Hawaiian settlers into the Hawaiian Kingdom as subjects, suggests a connection with the America as a melting pot stereotype; Kneubuhl orchestrates Hawaiian as part of a melting pot too. The *haole* businessmen working to dethrone the Queen are presented negatively, but Kneubuhl is careful to demonize only those particular *haole* businessmen who were disloyal to the monarchy.

For example, her character Ah Sing remembers how the previous Hawaiian King was threatened into giving away Hawaiian land: "Ah Sing: You be quiet, you don't remember. I remember those *haole*, oh sorry, you two, those certain *haole* business men. They threatened the king, forced him to sign that constitution with guns. They were going to kill

him. And that constitution, they only made it up themselves a few days before." (Kneubuhl, *January 1893*, 12).

This complex representation works on several levels to reinscribe historical events, and to reframe the Hawaiian American. First, the character Ah Sing, a non-Native Hawaiian settler, is portrayed as a loyalist in service to the Queen. He is speaking to two *haoles* who are also loyalists in service to the Queen, so he pointedly separates them from the non-loyal *haoles*. Additionally, Ah Sing reframes the spectator's understanding of the constitution that led to the current state of affairs in Hawai'i as a constitution signed under duress, which would nullify it, thus nullifying the existence of Hawaiian Americans.

The performance of living history in this context plays an important role in grounding the current sovereignty movement in a fictionalized Hawaiian American identity label. The living history lesson can teach Indigenous Hawaiians and Locals about their pasts in a way that might spark or ignite desires to work toward Hawaiian independence and sovereignty. Additionally, it might illustrate for spectators the reasons why such a movement exists, and the problems inherent in a Hawaiian American label.

The success of *January 1893*, despite its single performance, inspired another historical walking tour performance by Kneubuhl, *Mai Poina* translated as "Don't Forget." Says one reporter, "The experience transcended the traffic noise and the humidity. It became deeper than an intellectual history exercise. People were dabbing away tears" (Cataluna *Mai Poina*). *Mai Poina*, like *January 1893*, is meant to present historical facts, but works as an oppositional performance to other celebrations of statehood at the time of *Mai Poina's* first series of performances. The piece was commissioned by Hawai'i Pono'i Coalition, an organization made up of Native Hawaiians wishing to serve the Native Hawaiian community by offering "Hawai'i's true history" (Aluli).

The performance, a living history walking tour, is rooted in *January 1893* and another centennial pageant of Kneubuhl's, *Oni Pa'a*, and gives spectators a review of events surrounding the 4 days of the January 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, performed in the specific spaces where those events took place (Kneubuhl). Tour guides and role players in period costumes reenact the four days surrounding the overthrow at six tour stations around the historical district. The combination of historical spaces, living bodies, first person narrative, and (re)presented

Hawaiian history facts, makes for a compelling reinscription onto the minds of spectators.

The performance's main function was a pedagogical one, meant to teach as well as offer opposition to other historical reenactments and celebrations. According to Kneubuhl, whose early performance history is rooted in Living Museum performance, her goal was to:

use that historic district and talk about the events of 1893 around the places where they happened. And I think it's quite effective to hear this story told in that setting. There's something about hearing stories of the past in the places where they actually took place that I think is quite moving to an audience in ways that might not be so moving if they saw it on a stage or in an environment that is detached from the actual place that it happened" (Kneubuhl, *Na Oiwi Olino*).

Presenting the events in this way, and repeating the key points of the events over and over, works to counter alternate views of history, and to counter the very existence of a Hawaiian American identity. As lawyer and producer Yuklin Aluli notes, "we [Hawai'i/Hawaiians] were a country, and that's what you get [from a performance like *Mai Poina*]" (*Na Oiwi Olino*). Her organization wanted to "juxtapose [*Mai Poina*] against this big statehood celebration they ended up having down at the Statehood center, and we had something at 'Iolani Palace to tell another story that is just as valuable" (*Na Oiwi Olino*).

These stated purposes from Aluli and from Kneubuhl underscore the important aspects of using performance as a political and cultural intervention technique; one that works to shift the perceptions of spectators, and also to move spectators from the edges of borders and into an engaged dialogue within liminal interstices where more than one story can negotiate and interact, and where performers and spectators can come together. When this interaction between the two happens, performers and spectators can communicate with one another and dialogue about identities, ideas, and events that help to reinscribe Hawaiian American labels.

Kneubuhl's feelings about the importance of such performances communicates the pedagogical praxis of many of her plays, which serves to offer varied perspectives, and also to widen the scope of historical knowledge for the spectator, in order to orchestrate a consciousness change. She acknowledges

We [Hawaiian people] got a certain version of history, and I think that's one of the reasons I love doing these programs so much. Nobody told me these things when I was growing up. There were no classes in Hawaiian history . . . history has another perspective that is probably more real to some of us than the one that we were fed when we grew up. (*Na Oiwī Olino*).

These living history/oral history performances help bring spectators new factual points of history into previously-

constructed timelines, allowing spectators to underscore the facts with the physical spaces of the performance tour, as well as the living and breathing Hawaiian American bodies performing the roles. Seeing the bodies live, and hearing the historical narrative and dialogue in the spaces in which the events occurred, moves spectators through time, thus changing the way they will remember the events of the past.

Schechner affirms the power of this type of living history or narrative performative practice. He argues that first-person interpretation in living history performances offers an authenticity that can transcend the fictionality of contemporary spaces (88). For Kneubuhl, the use of contemporary physical spaces, and the knowledge that the events being performed now happened *here* in the *then* offers an even more powerful opportunity for the reinscription onto sanitized history, and serves the function of planted seeds into the minds of spectators—the pua, in hopes that these seeds of reinscribed history might blossom; these tiny seeds of resistance counteract mainstream historical representations and resist the Americanization of Hawaiianness.

At the end of *January 1893*, as in *Mai Poina*, the restaging of the Queen's speech affirms a desire in the

present to continue fighting for a Hawaiian nation. When the Queen yields her authority "to the superior of the United States of America" she then speaks directly to her people—the spectators and the actors who have mingled together on the 'Iolani Palace grounds. She tells her people:

Hold fast to the [sic] pride and love you have for your heritage and your country. Yes, your country! For your nation! Onipa'a! Hold fast! . . . We ask you all, to never give up—to seek through peaceful, political means to unite as one people. For we are one people. As long as one ounce of Hawaiian blood runs in our veins, we carry our ancestors with us. (103).

The Queen's speech serves a dual function here—not only to reenact the duress under which Queen Lili'uokalani ceded her crown, but to call out to contemporary Hawaiians to continue the fight for independence. By placing the Queen's call into the contemporary, present world, the call takes on an urgency not found in the history books. The Kupuna Wahine closes the play with a similar call to contemporary spectators, asking them to "not forget this story, a true[sic] story of your people. You have seen and may you now remember, forever. May you tell this story to your children and your children to their children and in this way may it walk through generation after generation. May you bring only honor to your ancestors." (103). Kupuna

Wahine's return at the end of the play signals a return to the present, but Kupuna Wahine asks that the spectators keep what they have learned from "the past" with them now, in the present, in order to reinscribe the present.

Joseph Roach characterizes this kind of performance as a sort of reinvention of culture in reaction to what it is not. He believes

The key to understanding how performances worked *within* a culture, recognizing that a fixed and unified culture exists only as a convenient but dangerous fiction, is to illuminate the process of surrogation as it operated *between* the participating cultures. The key, in other words, is to understand how circum-Atlantic societies, confronted with revolutionary circumstances for which few precedents existed, have invented themselves by performing their pasts in the presence of others. (5).

This assumption that a performance of historical events is somehow an "invention" that is "a convenient but dangerous fiction"—is a view rooted in an examination of non-Western cultures through a Western lens. This is problematic.

Such a view cannot be affirmed; Trask argues against such erroneous views, vehemently, such as in a response to Roger Keesing's 1989 article forwarding the popular academic notion that native cultures invent their pasts:

Beyond his poverty of sources, there is Keesing's willful ignorance of solid evidence from Native forms of history-genealogy—which reveal that in pre-*haole* Hawai'i our people looked on land as a mother, enjoyed a familial relationship with her

and other living things, and practiced an economically wise, spiritually based ethic of caring for the land, called *malama 'aina*" (*Natives and Anthropologists* 160).

It is Trask's contention that the hierarchal view of historical events forwarded by Western academics does not take into account the multiple and fluid *realities* of Hawaiian communities and their histories and ways of forming identities. Lineages are rooted in stories, and stories are rooted in oral histories and performative utterances and rituals. For Hawaiians, theirs is a history meant to be retold and reaffirmed throughout time because they understand a circular, non-static nature of time and its passage. The Western accusation of history was *this* and now you're saying it is *that* which makes your version a fictional invention is incomprehensible to a cultural community in which the circular and interconnected nature of people with things (things that Westerners deem as non-living like land, or water, or sky) is paramount. In Hawaiian history, land and bodies are the same; it is impossible to reinvent something that was never fixed in the first place; thus, today's living history performances are contributing to the academically-unsound versions of *haole* (Western) history so that a more full and complex

version can be engaged in dialogue. It is not reinvention—it is reinscription.

Understanding how Hawaiian histories are conceived and told, and how these histories work against the Hawaiian American identity, helps underscore the importance of the modern-day sovereignty movement and its connections with the Hawaiian cultural renaissance of the 1970s. It is logical that Indigenous Hawaiians's desires to obtain political power and redress would come through the education of its populace in a manner consistent with Native identities and practices. Many Americans are unaware of the development and strengthening of the independence movement in Hawai'i. In his examination of the modern-day sovereignty movement, Anthony Castanha clarifies the players and the purposes: "The sovereignty movement in Hawai'i is being led by Indigenouss seeking the return of lands, some form of political autonomy, and full independence based on the international right of self-determination." Castanha, Trask and others note how the sovereignty movement has, in the last 25 years, become interchangeable with Hawaiian independence, defined as "the fundamental authority of a state to exercise its power without being subservient to any outside authority" (Castanha). The history of Hawaiian occupation, and the

desire for decolonization, as it is characterized by many in Hawai'i, has become a focal point of Indigenous Hawaiian identities.

For those in Hawai'i, the Hawaiian American identity, especially in light of statehood, is complicated, and is loaded with political and economic ramifications fueled by competing interests. Hawaiian sovereignty groups have assembled themselves, composed charters, and have launched political and legal actions—sometimes to competing interests from other sovereignty groups, in an effort to resist statehood's Americanization of Hawai'i. Many Locals, long denied the special status often awarded to the Indigenous Hawaiian populace, no matter how long they and their past generations have lived on the island, affirmed an American aesthetic, with some individuals fighting for the United States in various military actions despite less-than-equal economic and political status. Some non-Hawaiian settlers and short-term transplants have fought against pro-Hawaiian laws and special statuses, arguing for an American state that affirms the constitution of the United States government and that fosters assimilation. As in living history performances, in statehood performances various aspects of the Hawaiian American identity serve to instruct a populace whose education and whose access to

history has been controlled by the colonizer, but also to foster dialogue and discussion.

This kind of reaction explores what Derrick Bell calls "interest convergence" (146), using performance and other representational practices to unearth the majority group's reasons for allowing or disallowing political advancement, and to develop revisionist interpretations, not fictional inventions, that might reinscribe Hawaiian history.

Hawaiian playwrights have dealt with Statehood both directly and indirectly in an effort to shed light on the differing reasons for the advancement or disadvantage of various political groups and their platforms. The general American presumption is that the state of Hawai'i is happily ensconced in Americanization and is a proud participator in American culture. Staging various viewpoints on Hawaiian statehood helps to reframe the historical significance of statehood from celebratory to contested, and *problematizes* the Hawaiian American label. Edward Sakamoto's original play, *In The Alley*, examines the complexities of Americanization and the Hawaiian American identity inherent in the racial and cultural confrontations that happen regularly in Hawai'i, and is an opportunity to examine the evolving identity associated with the Hawaiian American label.

Sakamoto's play was first produced by the University of Hawai'i theatre group in 1961, and then was restaged at the Kumu Kahua theatre in 1974, and has since been restaged many times in Hawai'i and on the mainland. Sakamoto revised and enlarged the scope of the play in 1982, further reflecting the complicated developments of a post-Vietnam Hawai'i fully ensconced in tourism and the Hawaiian Cultural Renaissance. Kumu Kahua founder, Dennis Carroll, calls the play "possibly the best short play ever written in Hawai'i on the dynamics of racial conflict" (Carroll, *Kumu Kahua Plays* 123). What is interesting in Sakamoto's play is the desire each character has to become successful, which they define as Americanized/insider status, even though their Local identities confirm another sort of insider status. This success will be accomplished by the characters in various ways; yet, the characters harbor deep anger and frustration at a system that has marginalized them to second-class status behind their colonizer, the American.

When Sakamoto's play begins, brothers Manny and Jojo are hanging out on the Local scene. Manny is the older brother, hardened by an alcoholic mother and father; he has a plan to save money and to move to the mainland to open a garage and fix cars. Jojo, younger and more naïve, is

hopeful about the future. Jojo looks up to his big brother and wants to follow in his footsteps, although Jojo recognizes that the blind hatred his big brother has for all *haoles* seems misplaced, and so Jojo argues with his brother that not all *haoles* are the same. Beth Bailey and David Farber note how the importance of race was paramount in 1940s America, just 20 years prior to Sakamoto's play: "For those not classified as "Caucasian" race was the fundamental fact of life. Legal Jim Crow flourished in the South and discriminatory conditions existed throughout the country" (21). This racial environment and its discriminatory practices had been mostly aimed at the African American communities, but quickly spread to include other ethnicities. Post-WWII America was characterized by pro-America nationalism that moved into the 1950s; the Vietnam war and its anti-nationalism backlash began to develop in the mid-1960s and into the 1970s. Sakamoto's first version of *In The Alley* outlines the detrimental challenges involved in Hawaiian Americans affirming a Hawaiian American label in the midst of pro-America and anti-America factions clashing on political fronts. As a result, the desire to see *haole* as a diverse and fluid identity wasn't fully shared by most Hawaiians. The racial and ethnic makeup in Hawai'i was already a mixed and

diverse populace. Bailey and Farber acknowledge that "Hawai'i's population was a mixture of racial and ethnic groups unlike anywhere else in the United States" and also that

In Hawai'i, 'whiteness' was not the natural condition. Here, white men were suddenly made to feel that *they* were the ones who were different. Such a reversal of 'normality' was all the more disconcerting because it took place in what was, after all, America. Few of the white mainlanders really understood the complexities of Hawai'i's racial system. (23).

Sakamoto's characters exist in this politically volatile interstice—a Hawai'i that reflects them, but also a Hawai'i that has been labeled American.

When Manny's friends, Bear, Champ, and Cabral join Manny and Jojo, the four older boys cut-up back and forth about their anger and frustration over *haole* servicemen—the epitome of American, coming to the islands to take advantage of Hawaiian women. There is a perception that the Local girl *wahines* are property of Hawai'i'; Manny and his friends don't want the foreigner Americans taking what doesn't belong to them. When a slightly inebriated *haole* serviceman happens into the alley with his date, a fight ensues. The Local girl described in the character's list as "A not too pretty and not too young local woman . . . She is dressed quite gaudily" (Sakamoto 125) suggesting that

she's a prostitute. Manny and his friends beat the serviceman unconscious, and after the four older boys leave, Jojo returns just in time to see the serviceman waking up; however, the two barely have a moment to introduce themselves and to apologize to one another before a group of other servicemen come forward and beat Jojo to unconsciousness. At the end of the play, Jojo is left in the alley alone.

The brief play offers ample opportunity to examine the complexities involved in an affirmation of Hawaiian American, and the ways in which Hawaiian Americans attempted to resist Americanization despite affirming aspects of Americanization that seemed appealing. The play also complicates mythological notions of America, and especially Hawai'i, as the idea melting pot where racial tension is mitigated by brotherly love.

These appealing aspects of Hawaiian were framed in the word success, despite the clear and visible differences between Locals about to become Hawaiian Americans, and *haole* Americans. The use of Pidgin in this play is significant because it designates difference between Local and Indigenous Hawaiian versus Hawaiian American. This tension of difference is rooted in the oncoming assimilation by the Americanization that will come with

statehood—and this is symbolized by the American serviceman. Sakamoto's play has no easy good guys or bad guys, as all of the characters, including the Local girl and the servicemen, are at the mercy of forces beyond their control: a system that encourages a hierarchy and that emasculates the Hawaiian American man in favor of the American *haole*.

All of the characters seem uncomfortable with their malleable identities. Jojo genuinely wants to see people as individuals, some good, and some bad, and yet at the end of the play, he is the one who is left unconscious and beaten, having performed no violence, and having attempted to help the *haole* and to bridge racial tension with kindness. Jojo's brother and his brother's friends perhaps felt momentary elation at their physical power against the serviceman, but this power is short-lived. The boys escape into the night, but their situations in life and their options for a hopeful future are no better than before the beating occurred.

The serviceman and his buddies also don't stick around to help Jojo, despite knowing that Jojo was doing nothing wrong. Their ideas about Locals as anti-American are reaffirmed here, and further complicate the Hawaiian American label. They get to maintain their power for their

ability to drive away the boys and to continue their blind colonization of the islands. It's clear here that even though they accept their role as American servicemen who are supposed to stand up for democracy and the American way of life, the Hawaiian American label will not fully protect Locals or Indigenous Hawaiians. Like the complex arguments for and against statehood, Sakamoto's play offers no solution for how these cultures will blend together to form a unified United States or to facilitate positivity in association with the Hawaiian American label.

Sakamoto returns to these characters in 1982 with *A'ala Park*, an expansion and revisioning of his original play. This play could be termed a sequel, or a reframing, or a reinscription on the original play. In literary circles, it's termed a revision, which is an interesting note in light of the discussion here about whether or not the reinscription and revisioning of cultural identity is fiction or not. In the reinscripted play, Sakamoto has settled the time and place of the play specifically into "Late summer, 1959, the year of statehood" (*A'ala Park* 27). The revision comes just after the height of the second Hawaiian cultural renaissance and is at the height of the sovereignty movement. In the revision, the beating of the *haole* soldier and the events leading up to the beating are

much the same, except the serviceman is not on a date with a Local girl prostitute; instead, he's attempting to pick up on Manny's girlfriend. Clearly the Hawaiian American has now become more complex, with conscious and negative agency being attributed to the serviceman. Jojo does not get beaten and left in the alley in this version, as he does in the original. Instead, the *haole* soldier is left in the alley, alone and unconscious, and no one comes to save him. This leaving behind rather than extending a helping hand or even offering oppositional characters to Manny and his Local boy friends, may be indicative of the context of the late 70s and early 80s in Hawai'i. The Hawaiian American now no longer wants the Americanization that comes with the label. In effect, the boys beat down America in this version, and leave it there to die.

Throughout the revision, spectators have the benefit of an older Manny stationed in the play as an observer commenting upon the actions of a young Manny. This frame allows enough distance from the events so that Manny can attempt to reinscribe upon himself a new way of thinking and seeing—he attempts restorative behavior onto his younger self. Older Manny doesn't participate in the beating of the soldier, but he does participate in beating up his mother's boyfriend, and in begging younger Manny to

do and say things that the older Manny should've said and done at the time. Manny is thus able to alter his own past in this way; he gives himself an opportunity to evolve (not invent or fictionalize). Sakamoto presents a grittier working class neighborhood in his revision of the original, which reflects how the Hawaiian American label has not brought the prosperity and the mythology of achieving the American Dream to the people in Hawai'i. The hopelessness in the play is deafening.

Manny is torn between leaving Hawai'i for the imagined success he sees on the mainland as an American, or staying in Hawai'i to provide for his mother and to look after his brother, Jojo. Manny is well aware of the lack of opportunities available to him and to his friends as Hawaiian Americans; yet, there is still hope when they're young that with statehood will come "first-class American" citizenship (*A'ala Park* 51). However, the pressures of family life and of assimilating into an Americanized Hawai'i are too much for Manny. After the beating, he leaves Hawai'i for the mainland. It is the older Manny who lets spectators know how everyone's lives turned out. Manny's mother died of a brain-tumor without ever hearing from Manny again. Manny never speaks to his brother, Jojo, again, and Jojo's success of attending a university and

becoming an accountant is viewed with distaste and a sense of inevitability rather than pride. Jojo has affirmed his Hawaiian American identity and has found his American Dream by assimilating into American culture, but Manny's experience disassembles the success of Jojo's Hawaiian American identity, placing American into a fictionalized interstice to underscore the fictionality of a Hawaiian American label.

Manny's friends also affirm and contest Hawaiian American. Cabral joined the army but died in Vietnam; Bear drove a taxi for tourists; Champ became an onion farmer on Maui. Each of these three characters and their outcome represents possible Hawaiian American trajectories after the adoption of statehood in 1959. From his vantage point two decades later, Manny realizes that he'll never be able to return home until "I ma-ke, die, dead. And not befo' dat. 'S why hard" (*A'ala Park* 67). Manny has not affirmed the Hawaiian American identity; he also seems unable to go home—to return to his Hawaiian identity, despite home being America.

Comparing the 1961 version written right after statehood with the 1981 revision and expansion written in the heart of the Hawaiian renaissance, spectators learn how attempts at Americanization have largely failed the

Hawaiian American. Moving to the mainland and assimilating into mainland American culture as a Hawaiian American has not helped either; this action has only separated Manny from his home and his people—and he also doesn't fit in on the mainland. Yet, returning to Hawai'i would not correct his homelessness; the Hawai'i he'd return to is not the romanticized Hawai'i of his youth. Economic opportunity is largely absent, and the old neighborhoods have been replaced with tourist attractions, resorts, and construction.

Manny's character is an example of the ex-patriate Hawaiian American, forced out of Hawai'i by an untenable cost of living and a lack of economic opportunity, and unable to return, and Manny's acknowledgment that he will only get home after he's dead, affirms Bhabha's notion of "a pure 'ethnically cleansed' national identity can only be achieved through the death, literal and figurative, of the complex interweavings of history, and the culturally contingent borderlines of modern nationhood" (*The Location of Culture* 7). Just as the American soldier is left to die in an attempt to 'ethnically cleanse' Hawai'i, so will Manny's eventual death be symbolic of America's attempt to ethnically cleanse Hawai'i. Manny's situation and the outcome of his brother's and his friends' lives reinscribes

upon the Hawaiian American label and upon Hawaiian history many fluid "Americanisms." These variations of the Hawaiian American label are represented further by the multiple voices in Kumu Kahua Theatre's *The Statehood Project*.

Developed to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Hawai'i's 1959 statehood, Hawaiian writers and performers worked with Kumu Kahua Theatre and Fat Ulu to develop monologues, poems, and brief performance pieces on the issue of statehood. In the preface to *The Statehood Project: A Spontaneous Collaboration*, the purpose of the performance and the production is shared: "The position of Fat Ulu and Kumu Kahua Theatre was to permit writers to freely explore and create their own stories . . . Each piece is a testament to the individual ideas and ideals of the writers" (7). The contributors are amateur and well-known writers in Hawaiian literary and performance circles. The performance pieces of *The Statehood Project* complicate the idea of Statehood by decentering the historical narrative, splintering it into multiple versions of Hawaiian American experiences, thus contesting, resisting, and affirming the Hawaiian American label, and statehood, in a simultaneous representation of a fractured state.

The many pieces in *The Statehood Project* include sketches, monologues, first-person narrative documentary

theatre, poems, and brief dialogues. The Hawaiian American identities represented in the performance pieces include old and young, Local and Indigenous Hawaiian, *haole* and non-Native Hawaiian settlers. The incorporation of Pidgin in the first monologue by Denny Hironaga, titled *Da Statehood Newspaypah Boy*, immediately contests Hawaiian American identity while affirming an American aesthetic through the 1950s iconic newsie. The monologue is spoken from the present by a man who identifies himself as a boy in a famous photograph holding up a Statehood paper; "Yeah, fifty years and plenty plate lunches ago. I was just one small kid back den. So much as changed . . . and some tings still da same" (10). The monologue, as the opening performance, questions the believability of historical facts by sharing his story about a friend who lied on his Driver's License about his height. The character is upset not only by his friend's lie, but by the lack of oversight by a new government:

Suddenly, Chauncy stay looking real small. Da bugga wen lie and nobody even boddah for check da facts. Dat make me tink . . . maybe some of da stuff written in da newspaypahs and history books is not always da truth. Maybe da writer stay biased or self-serving like Chauncy was and nobody wen boddah fo check the facts. Maybe dey leave out some stuff on purpose like how come dey neva report about my grandpa and dose people crying at da 'Iolani Palace. (10).

The newspaper boy identifies this troubling knowledge, but then quickly deemphasizes his own ability to put the record straight by arguing that he only sells the papers, not writes them.

This troubling affirmation is contrasted against the documentary-style monologue, *Dear Mr. Kaapuawaokamehameha* by Ron Williams, Jr., who co-mingles documentary text with his own, satirical response to historical events in the form of a response letter to Mr. Kaapuawaokamehameha by contemporary governor Linda Lingle. This writer's attempt to make things right happens not only by the placing of the historical record in front of the spectator, but also through pointing out at the end of the scene the problems of interpretation—how the committee overlooked the nature of Mr. Kaawaapuokamehameha's intent in testifying by characterizing his testimony in support of statehood instead of in affirmation of cultural pride.

In his introduction to his documentary sketch, Williams notes that all of Mr. David Kaapuawaokamehameha's words are taken directly from the 1946 congressional record, when a Congressional Committee convened to hear testimony in response to the statehood issue. Mr. Kaapuawaokamehameha was referred to as "witness #31" (12) and was an unscheduled witness in the proceedings. That

this monologue appears after the newspaper boy's monologue, one that questioned the authority and authenticity of historical facts, heightens the contestations of a Hawaiian American identity. The role of performance in contesting this identity is further heightened in both of these monologues and especially by their placement. Like the performance from Kupuna Wahini in Kneubuhl's *January 1893*, the first-person narrative offered in these two performances allows for a greater degree of decentering of the Hawaiian American label by individual voices whose personal experiences contest the fictionalized Hawaiian American label.

In *Race and Ethnicity on the Stage*, Josephine Lee argues against the "traditional relationships between playwright and theatrical company, which encourage a finished playscript—detachable from its initial performance venue and marketed to individual readers and theatres for re-production" because they "do not allow for a more probing investigation of performances" that many single-actor pieces by Asian Americans might offer (24). The performance pieces in *The Statehood Project* were first written and received a staged reading at Kumu Kahua, and then were developed in conjunction with other writers and storytellers, in an effort to offer "a significant, and

refreshingly different addition to both the commercial promotion and journalistic reportage that has been celebrating *Hawai'i's* 50th anniversary of statehood" (Kumu Kahua Theatre *The Statehood Project*). Because the production allowed for polished voices and amateur voices, and not only traditional stage scripts but mixed stories and poems and sketches, the authenticity of such performances is affirmed. There have been no revisions to these pieces; they are performed with the intention to offer diverse interpretations of Statehood and its impact on and development of the Hawaiian American label.

Some statehood performances attempt to reinscribe historical accounts by presenting Local views on Statehood at the time of statehood. Like Edward Sakamoto's *In The Alley*, "The Dance" by Wendy Burbridge takes place in 1959 and presents two Hawaiian Local girls and their divergent reactions to the Hawaiian American identity. Mary is the younger sister and is positioned uncomfortably in the role of conspirator to the construction of a new Hawaiian American self. Mary breaks the fourth wall at one point during the performance; after speaking with her military serviceman date, she turns to the audience, saying:

I would buy that damn cannery and make Daddy the Luna. He would never say anyone was lazy or stupid, Hawaiian or not. And we wouldn't have to

go away to O'ahu to be taught missionary ways, and how to speak good American English, and be civilized. And Mommy wouldn't ever have to worry about anyone in our family being fed. (36).

Mary contests several stereotypes of Hawaiian here: lazy or stupid and not being civilized. However, Mary is now a Hawaiian American, although she resists the label. When Max, her date, reaches out a hand, she doesn't take it. He tells her, "America will give us all that, Miss Mary. And more" but she uses her time to speak to the audience, reframing statehood within a contested historical authenticity:

Mary: That's what America promised. That's what Max said. Becoming a state made it easier for Hawai'i to make our own decisions and vote and give us better opportunities for the future. We would be better off than we had ever been before. We were the 50th state now. And all Hawaiians had the same rights as all Americans. Well, some Hawaiians anyway. Not all. We never got rich. We were never better off. Our opportunities were the same. Military, marriage, babies. That's about it. (36).

Mary not only breaks the fourth wall to re-educate the spectator about the realities of post-statehood, she pushes spectators into the future with her. At the end of the play, she does take Max's hand. The stage directions suggest that she takes his hand out of a sense of inevitability, but also almost as if she wants to take his hand, too. This simultaneous performance of Hawaiian and

Hawaiian American in the taking of Max's hand, and in the movement from play-present to spectator-present amplifies the contestation of Hawaiian American, placing it into dialogue with varied versions of itself in an effort to complicate binary observations of Hawaiian American (Lee 27).

One of the more interesting aspects of these three pieces, and others included in *The Statehood Project*, is the presentation of subject offered through realism. Josephine Lee suggests that realism might have an alternate purpose. Realism is believed by many critics, such as Jill Dolan, to be problematic due to the ways in which spectators are positioned as "privileged voyeur[s] of theatrical scenes" (Dolan 27). Lee offers an alternative possibility for the use of realism by Asian American practitioners: "Realism might in fact work in another way, be self-consciously countering stereotypical portrayals of Asians and teaching an audience how to see real Asian Americans" (27). In these pieces discussed from *The Statehood Project*, and in Kneubuhl's and Sakamoto's presentations, realism can work to "complicate notions of a homogeneously white audience having power over the objectified Asian object" (Lee 27). Hawaiian practitioners take this one step further.

As Lee suggests, Hawaiian practitioners may utilize realism to teach Local, Indigenous Hawaiian, tourist, and non-Native Settler spectators how to view the Hawaiian American body on stage, expanding their understanding of Hawaiian American identity in its many constructions; but Hawaiian practitioners may also complicate realism by using their actors to break the forth wall and speaking directly to spectators, or to utilize spectators as characters, in an effort to affirm spectators as co-conspirators in the processes of identity (re)formation necessitated by the performance of the Hawaiian American. Like the performance of the Hawaiian Brand in tourism-catered performance, and similar to the performance of the Local identities (discussed further in Chapter 5), realism and the deconstruction of the fourth wall works to comingle spectator and performer, developing co-dependency in the construction of and contestation of varied Hawaiian identities.

The performances that involve staging various versions of the Hawaiian American identity reference varied points on the Hawaiian political timeline; they also promote particular ideologies of various interest groups, and they continue the important oral tradition of the Indigenous culture by offering multiple and fluid, contested versions

of varied points in history. As Haunani Kay Trask notes, these efforts work to decolonize the minds of spectators and reinscribe.

The landmark historical events in Hawai'i's history are made up of varied and multiple versions; these versions of history require Hawaiian Americans to exist in "a highly politicized reality, one filled with intimate oppositions and psychological tensions. But it is not Natives who create politicization" according to Trask; "*That was begun at the moment of colonization*" (*Natives and Anthropologists* 163). The ongoing accusations of Hawaiians as inventing the past in an effort to forward political movement are flawed arguments; thus, the realism affirmed in staged and living history performances of the Hawaiian American works to contest these assumptions. Hawaiians fighting for sovereignty and resisting statehood must consistently look to their pasts in an effort to bring them forward, not for political gain, but for reinscription of Hawaiian identity over the colonization of the last 100 years. (Trask, *Natives and Anthropologists* 164). History is fluid; understanding history as a living, breathing, changing spectrum suggests that history is a liminal interstice with blurred boundaries that invite living, breathing, present bodies to reinscribe and reform as is needed for continuous

understanding, and to become *visible*. This is not fiction; this is history. Present is visibility, and visibility is power.

Hawaiian historical memory argues for the heroic and steadfast opposition to Americanization even as the Hawaiian people are reassembling the events of their past into an understandable and teachable narrative that can exist not just in opposition to the narratives developed by the tourism industry for the purposes of commercializing a people, and not just in opposition to the Western-based narratives forwarded by colonizers, but as opportunity for dialogue and a deeper understanding of the complexities of the Hawaiian American label. Trask argues that, "As Hawaiians enter the new century, they are well-grounded in the lessons of their past: we are Hawaiians, not Americans" (Trask 79). The Hawaiian American is a fluid and contested identity fraught with complicated movements, one of which is the cultural traditions and vital legacies of the Hawaiian people, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: CULTURALLY AUTHENTIC: HAWAIIAN CULTURAL ACTIVIST IDENTITIES

"Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The 'past-present' becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living."²³

Hawai'i has had a number of activist organizations and activist individuals calling for a return to the cultural roots of the Hawaiian islands. In the great Hawaiian cultural renaissanceⁱ Hawaiians were encouraged to reaffirm and to explore their cultural heritage, one that had all but been wiped out by the missionary movement in the early days of the occupation and assimilation of the Hawaiian islands and their people. Much of the renaissance movement toward a reaffirmation of Hawaiian cultural heritage encouraged the speaking of and the relearning of the Hawaiian language, the reaffirmation of surfing as a hallmark of Hawai'i's uniqueness as an oceanic people, the exploration of traditional Hawaiian music, Hawaiian arts and crafts, Hawaiian talk story, and the restoration of the traditional Hawaiian Hula. Reaffirming such a rich cultural heritage would ensure that Hawaiians laid groundwork for a genuine and special Hawaiian identity, separating Hawaiians

²³ Homi K. Bhabha from *The Location of Culture*.

from the foreigners whose increasing numbers were taking over the Hawaiian islands and who were assimilating the Hawaiian people into their ranks through the enforcement of Western cultural traditions over Indigenous cultural traditions. The Hawaiian cultural renaissance was developed almost simultaneously with the sovereignty movements of the Indigenous Hawaiian people. The members of the movement desired not just a return to Hawai'i's old ways and cultural traditions, but also sovereignty and self-government through Native Hawaiian Nationalism.

Chapter 2 investigated how outsiders compose a Hawaiian Brand identity for commercial purposes that are important to the selling off of Hawai'i and of Hawaiian *aloha* as a global brand, sometimes marketed by Hawaiians themselves, but simultaneously contested (and affirmed) by anyone who chooses to place themselves into an *aloha* state of mind. Chapter 3 examined the ways in which the Hawaiian American identity is contested and resisted, and later reinscribed, through the living history performances of Victoria Kneubuhl, and the statehood plays of Edward Sakamoto and various other amateur and professional writers, artists, and storytellers in Hawai'i.

In Chapter 4 I will examine the presentation of Hawaiian political and cultural activism in several plays

that attempt to affirm and validate an Indigenous Hawaiian nationalism through the presentation of cultural traditions unique to Hawai'i, and through the presentation of characters whose desire for an Indigenous Hawaiian sovereign government comes through the reclamation of Hawaiian cultural traditions. According to Homi K. Bhabha,

What is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial, is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself, (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 2).

If Bhabha's notion is true, then further examination of "These in-between spaces" in the context of cultural reclamation through theatre and performance is vital for understanding how Indigenous Hawaiians and "Hawaiians at heart"²⁴ have attempted to contest and to problematize the other identities in effect, include Hawaiian Brand, Hawaiian American, and Local, in order to strengthen Indigenous Hawaiian resistance to assimilation.

²⁴ This is a term developed by Kanahele regarding people in the cultural renaissance movement who were non-Native Settlers and Locals, who affirmed an affinity for the *Hawaiian* people, the *Hawaiian* islands, and the *Hawaiian* cultural traditions, and who joined the cause to preserve and to maintain ties to these cultural traditions. This view of including 'Hawaiians at Heart' in the reinscription of *Hawaiian* cultural traditions is not an uncontested one.

In Hawai'i, the cultural and political arenas often converge; tourism and the exploitation of an imagined Hawaiian Brand for a global market sometimes consists of so-called genuine representations of Hawaiian cultural identities, but these are matched with composed fabrications of Hawaiianness, making it difficult to separate any perceived authenticity from stereotype. Hawaiian cultural traditions, passed down through generations, despite Western colonizers's attempts to eradicate Hawaiian cultural tradition in favor of Americanism, is often a conflation of pre-colonization traditions and modern and contemporary traditions, each claiming its own, special and genuine Hawaiianness.

The space between the borders of any so-called authentic Hawaiian identities and any imagined Hawaiian identities is a rich intermingling of contestations and compromises that raise many questions about how competing claims articulate themselves and position themselves for greatest empowerment. Hawaiian theatre and performance offers a unique perspective for the examination of how these many Hawaiian identities engage one another. As Bhabha asks:

How do strategies of representation or empowerment come to be formulated in the competing claims of communities where, despite

shared histories of deprivation and discrimination, the exchange of values, meanings and priorities may not always be collaborative and dialogical, but may be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual, and even incommensurable? (2).

For Hawaiians, the conflicting and fluid definitions of Hawaiian require that Hawaiians be capable of negotiating through the spaces in which all of the permutations of Hawaiian exist. Hawaiians and other ethnicities, imported to work the sugar and pineapple plantations, have had to come together for decades with one another, and in turn, have had to survive and thrive as a colonized people under the thumb of Western forces pushing a Western identity and world-view. These places and spaces that Hawaiians and Locals have had to come together within, Bhabha's "interstices" (2), emerges where there are multiple and competing identities attempting to affirm their versions highest on the hierarchy. When Hawaiians reclaim, practice, perform, and affirm special cultural traditions, they affirm power and privilege over the colonizer because they are able to identify themselves as uniquely Hawaiian in multiple and fluid manners.

However, more empowerment comes to the Indigenous Hawaiian nationalism movement when multiple and fluid versions of Indigenous Hawaiian dialogue with one another -

- argue, question, contemplate, contest -- and allow for the acceptance necessary to move beyond fixed interpretations that give way to clamoring for hierarchy. The performance of these interstices—these spaces between—engenders not just a re/connection with past traditions and belief systems, but more importantly, offers an opportunity to renew the past, as Bhabha suggests, by bringing it forward to the living present in conversation with other formulations of Hawaiian identities.

There are two particular plays that offer a unique opportunity to see how Hawaiian cultural identity affirms and contests its many versions within Bhabha's interstices. These two plays, written by Indigenous Hawaiian playwrights, work through contested and problematized Hawaiian cultural identities in an effort to bridge communication to the past, and pull the past forward to present, through the medium of theatre: *Emmalehua* by Victoria Kneubuhl, and the second play of an incomplete three-play family trilogy by Alani Apio: *Kamau A'e*.

One of Hawai'i's most well-known and celebrated playwrights is Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl. Kneubuhl's playwriting has been prolific since an early workshop in 1983 at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where founders of Kumu Kahua Theatre were investigating ways to develop

Native Hawaiian and Local playwrights. Kneubuhl's plays are often held up as examples of Indigenous Hawaiian plays because Kneubuhl examines the complexities involved in connecting the Hawaiian cultural past with present-day Hawai'i. Additionally, Kneubuhl's plays often question the spiritual and cultural traditions of Hawai'i, bringing into dialogue contemporary notions of Hawaiian religion and spirituality with past representations of Hawaiian cultural practices.

In her plays and representational practices, Kneubuhl employs a variety of performance strategies that work to affirm Indigenous resistance towards assimilation and Americanization. Previous examinations of *January 1993* and *Mai Poina* offered an opportunity to explore the trajectory of Kneubuhl's later work, which has found expression in museum performances and living history plays. Kneubuhl often utilizes Pidgin (Hawaiian Creole) that is so common in many contemporary plays written by locals and Hawaiians, but Kneubuhl also develops complex cultural commentaries by employing contesting versions of Hawaiian cultural practices, including Hula and Indigenous Hawaiian spirituality, embedded with Hawaiian music and the political and cultural history of Hawai'i. Craig Howes, in his introduction to Kneubuhl's 2002 collection of plays,

references the commentary of Jonathan Okamura, and of Kumu Kahua Theatre founder Dennis Carroll, both of whom see Kneubuhl's plays working towards "Surreal stylization" as "a common strategy for undermining narrative conventions which might reinforce the political or social status quo) (Howes IX)²⁵. *Emmalehua*, Kneubuhl's first full-length play (Howe IX), offers an exciting opportunity to examine a well-practiced playwright at the start of her illustrious playwriting career.

In *Emmalehua*, Kneubuhl presents less of this surreal stylization that would come to characterize some of her later history plays meant for the stage; but *Emmalehua* does employ non-traditional (i.e. non-western) organizational structures that lay groundwork for an exploration of how past and present comeingle in interstices, framing the integration of "cultural heritage with the necessities of . . . contemporary existence" (Qtd. in Howes). *Emmalehua* is set in Honolulu, Hawai'i in 1951. The title character, Emma, is Hawaiian/Caucasian in her 20s, and is married to Alika, also Hawaiian/Caucasian in his 20s. The play opens

²⁵ In Craig Howes's introduction to Kneubuhl's 2002 play collection, he quotes University of Hawai'i theatre professor Juli Burk: "UH Theatre Professor Juli Burk once remarked when describing Kneubuhl's work, 'The plays share non-realistic structures, as events are interwoven rather than presented in linear progression, and stories unfold rather than develop.'" Burk went on to stress the importance of gender in Kneubuhl's work, noting that 'larger issues' of acculturation, assimilation, and racism are explored in the plays 'through the lived experience of their central female characters, who survive through integrating their cultural heritage with the necessities of their contemporary existence'" (IX).

with Emma waking from a bad dream. Her husband, Alika, is getting ready for work, and Emma is trying to still the voices of the *Chorus* around her while she helps her husband look for a tie pin. When she finds the pin, she also finds a *lei hoaka*—a boar tusk necklace sacred to her family. Alika leaves for work and Emma's father, Kaheka comes by and they talk about her dream and about having found the *lei hoaka*. Kaheka believes the *lei hoaka* found Emma for a purpose—but Emma tries to brush off his comments about the *lei hoaka* and its connection to her family's sacred hula practice, even as the chorus chants *Feed us. Feed us love. Feed us perfect. Feed us hula*, (88). Kaheka remembers Emma's tutu (grandmother) had meant to lift the kapu (curse) off of Emma, but died before she was able to.

The opening situation of the play and its use of a Greek-style chorus blends Western stage tradition with the Hawaiian cultural tradition. The chanting of the chorus is reminiscent of the chants Emma is familiar with as a sacred child. In the Hawaiian community, Hula is an important cultural expression—"a multifaceted complex of poetry, vocal recitation, and choreography" and "a site of cultural memory" (Stillman 187-188). Kneubuhl knew immediately when she took Dennis Carroll's playwriting class in 1984 that she wanted to write a play about Hawai'i that would be

about hula and "the difference between its commercialized forms and its status as a Hawaiian cultural rite. This sacred dimension intrigued her as a writer" (Howes xx). The play immediately sets up the tension between various Hawaiian cultural identities from the start of the play.

Alika, Emma's husband, and his disgust over the boar-tusk necklace, place him as a character contesting the affirmation of a Hawaiian cultural identity. Emma simultaneously affirms and denies her Hawaiian cultural identity. As a half-caucasian, half-Hawaiian, she is working within a binary identity paradigm. However, unlike her husband, she is still tied to her cultural heritage; she can still, literally, hear the past calling out to her and asking her to affirm and strengthen connection with the past.

As the play progresses, spectators witness Alika speaking to a group of investors about the importance of letting go "of the dark ages of Hawai'i's past" and "[replacing those] days with new days, days of opportunity, growth, economic prosperity—and open to everyone" (*Emmalehua* 90). He is an engineer and plans to build over an ancient fishpond despite many Hawaiians contesting the development. A male chorus listens on, clapping, as does Native-American character Adrian Clearwater, who observes

the speech from the side. It is clear in these early scenes that is Alika affirming his new Hawaiian American identity, grafting it onto the future of Hawai'i, even though the play takes place 8 years prior to statehood. On the heels of WWII, and in an era of pro-American nationalism, Alika seems eager to move forward into the future, barely setting himself into the present moment. The decade prior to 1951 saw an increase in union activities of plantation workers and the start of an economy that would shift dramatically from plantation exports and agriculture to a tourist economy (Howes xxi). All of these actions placed the Hawaiian Cultural identity at odds with itself and with the burgeoning Hawaiian American identity, and even with the political aspirations of an enlarged Local identity.

When Emma meets Adrian Clearwater, there is a strange connection between the two of them—a spiritual connection that underscores a belief in the cultural connections between various indigenous peoples. *Haole* (foreigners) are at the dinner party too, gawking over Emma's sister's hula show—a touristy *hula 'auana*, which is later compared to a guest's retelling of a commercialized Vegas version of hula at the "Palms" casino. This oppositional presentation of Hawaiian cultural identity in the form of Emma's half-

sister, a hula practitioner who has affirmed the global phenomenon of Hawaiiana that developed in the late 1940s and early 1950s, places Emma and her sister in opposition to one another. Spectators might begin asking who is more authentic—Emma or her sister? Additionally, spectators might ask why Emma's half-sister can't also be authentic as a Hawaiian Asian; she desperately wants to learn and to practice the cultural tradition of hula, just as Emma wants so badly to distance herself from the spiritual hula of her Hawaiian cultural past.

This cultural opposition is negated in the character of Clearwater. Kneubuhl had an interest in the time of the play's development in the commonalities between certain indigenous cultures (Howes xx). Howes notes how "Adrian and Emma are drawn together because they share an awareness of the spiritual dimensions lying beneath their daily activities in a modern American devoted to speed, force, development, and profit" (xx). As the party continues, Emma and Clearwater are isolated and talk to one another in a stylized fashion—one that accentuates the separation the two feel from their Hawaiian American and Hawaiian Brand counterparts.

Spectators later learn that Maelyn, Emma's sister, is part Chinese and Part Hawaiian, and that Clearwater has a

connection to his Native American past through his grandfather, just as Emma's connection to her Indigenous Hawaiian past is through her grandmother. These facts are important, in that they offer further contestation of Hawaiian Cultural identity. If Emma is half Hawaiian, and her sister is half Hawaiian too, why are the two so different in their presentation as "authentic" Hawaiian Cultural identities? How does it come about that "certain aspects of Hawaiian culture had been commodified for tourist consumption long before World War II. Dancing, singing, surfing, and cooking Hawaiians were essential to the visitor industry—a guarantee offered by the native people themselves that a laid back, accepting, generous, and genial spirit pervaded this American territory—the *aloha* spirit" (xxii). As the plantation economy developed into a tourism economy, clearly distinctions were drawn between those who wished to affirm and to preserve Hawaiian cultural identity, and those who accepted the dictum that Hawaiians should "accept their own insignificance, to abandon or suppress much of their cultural inheritance, but to perform the role of happy, culturally distinct natives before outsiders, and on demand" (Howes xxii). This tension-filled space—one that demanded the happy native but also demanded the nationalistic Hawaiian American is seen

in the development of Kneubuhl's characters as they each come to terms with their own affirmation of or resistance to Hawaiian Cultural identities.

As the play progresses, Alika and Clearwater connect over their shared history as war veterans. While Adrian sees his veteran status as an opportunity to show his American values, Clearwater cautions Alika about high hopes regarding Hawaiian statehood equalizing racial relationships. In this instance, Clearwater attempts to de-emphasize the Hawaiian American identity, knowing full well as a Native American what the outcome of such desires will most likely entail. Conversely, Maelyn and Emma dialogue about the *lei hoaka*. Maelyn wants it to use when she does hula, but Emma aggressively takes it away from Maelyn, saying "it's not a decoration" and argues that their grandmother gave it to Emma. Maelyn is hurt, pointing out that Emma doesn't dance hula anymore—but there is clearly a difference here between the touristy hula that Maelyn performs, and the "secret dances" that Emma doesn't think Maelyn knows. Maelyn steals the *lei hoaka* from Emma anyway, and places Hawaiian Cultural identity in conversation with the varied parts of itself.

Rather than a play of reinscription, Kneubuhl's *Emmalehua* is attempting to investigate and to present the

multiple tensions involved in affirming and in denying Hawaiian cultural identity. Contemporary spectators of the revised version of the play directed in 1996 might understand the difficulties inherent in affirming a Hawaiian cultural identity that is seen as so oppositional to ideas of success being affirmed by mainstreamed Americanization. Thus, the distinction between a private Hawaiian cultural identity, and a public Hawaiian cultural identity forward even further the notion that "the psyche and the social develop an interstitial intimacy" (19) according to Bhabha, in his discussion of literature in *The Location of Culture*. His ideas are applicable here, however. The tension within a subject as the subject attempts to affirm or contest particular identities reaches a tipping point; "it is an intimacy that questions binary divisions through which such spheres of social experience are often spatially opposed. These spheres of life are linked through an 'in-between' temporality" (19). Bhabha argues that the temporality that develops "inhabits a stillness of time and a strangeness of framing that creates the discursive 'image' at the crossroads of history and literature, bridging the home and the world" (19). For Emma, this stillness of time and strangeness of framing comes often, in her interactions with Adrian Clearwater,

and in the dreams she experiences each night; even in the voices of the chorus as they attempt to override her desire to run from her past.

When Emma is praying to Laka, the hula goddess, later in the play, her husband, sister and their friends interrupt her, and Maelyn and Alika kiss after Maelyn dances a seductive hula. Maelyn's performance of a sexualized native hula dancer problematizes the Hawaiian cultural identity, and Alika's affirmation of this highly sexualized and eroticized performance places him squarely into the Hawaiian American identity and its desire for Hawaiian Brand. When Emma sees the *lei hoaka* around Maelyn's neck, she yanks it off of Maelyn and slaps her; Alika thinks it's because he kissed Maelyn, but Emma is less concerned by his transgression, and more enraged by Maelyn's lack of respect for the *lei hoaka* and, presumably, her own Hawaiian cultural identity.

Emma affirms her own Hawaiian Cultural identity at this point. She tells Maelyn, "I won't erase the past and hand you the future. I won't." When Emma enters the dream world with her Kupuna, and the female chorus readies the stage for traditional hula, Emma and the chorus dance the sacred *hula kahiko*. Rather than affirm here the anthropological view that "the traditional/modern

distinction is one of historical imagination rather than historical fact" (Mageo 4), this staging of Emma's sacred *hula kahiko* in conjunction with the chorus at the behest of her Kupuna illustrates how the creative reworking (Mageo 4) of the Hawaiian cultural identity isn't inauthentic or invented at all, but instead is connected through space and time not only through Emma's grandmother, but through Emma's belief in the spiritual connection of her Hawaiian cultural identity to traditions of the past.

Hula researcher May Ku'uleialoha Stillman affirms how the Hawaiian hula is a site of cultural memory. Stillman argues: "The potential for expanding meaning structures was replaced instead by the continuity of hula as an emblematic system that authored cultural identity, one through which Hawaiians could mark a clear boundary between Hawaiianness and foreignness" (190). Thus, Emma's performance of the traditional Hula is one that offers spectators a clear and affirmed distinction between a perception of authentic Hawaiian cultural identity and an inauthentic identity that is offered through Maelyn's sexualized, Hawaiian Brand hula. Both identities, though, engage one another in dialogue, thus broadening the definition of Hawaiian cultural identity, placing the two side-by-side.

At the end of the play, Emmalehua recounts the memory of her grandmother's deathbed, and her grandmother's physical action of breathing a last, dying breath directly into Emmalehua's mouth. In the story, this action lifts the kapu that had been placed on Emmalehua, and releases Emma to make her own future for her time—inviting Emma to affirm a contemporary Hawaiian cultural identity. It also transfers to Emma the cultural knowledge and life history of Emma's lineage. This ending was not the original ending to the first draft of the play, and it is significant that Kneubuhl chose to revise her play. *Emmalehua's* development, revisioning, and restaging, and not just its subject matter and content, might also speak to the ongoing development of Hawaiian identity.

The play has gone through numerous revisions and restagings over the 25 or so years since its first production, and these changes might offer a unique example of reinscription over time. The play was first written as a class exercise and then later developed and expanded at the encouragement of Kumu Kahua founder Dennis Carroll, who wanted it staged at the then-new Kumu Kahua theatre. The first produced version of the play was directed by Kneubuhl's uncle, John, in 1986. Himself a well-known playwright and writer, John Kneubuhl "radically changed the

ending, and the characters' lines and motivations as well" (Howes xxiv). Because Kneubuhl was an amateur playwright at the time, she has said in several interviews since that she was uncomfortable speaking up about the changes her uncle made to her play, but as she became more fluent in theatre practice, she revised the play in 1996, contextualizing it as a restoration of the importance of Emmalehua's connection to the traditional hula and to the Hawaiian past as paramount to the production.

Kneubuhl also expanded the role of Adrian Clearwater, and added aspects of Indigenous Hawaiian and Native American culture through dance, chant, and story, (xivv). Victoria Kneubuhl's inclusion of the religious dais as a major set piece, and Emma's prayer to the goddess Laka, are important components of the play that mark Hawaiian cultural identity for spectators, and that work in Bhabha's interstices to contest other Hawaiian cultural identities. Emma, by kneeling and praying to the dais, attempts to reconnect with her past. When Emma is confronted by present-day Hawaiians (in the form of her husband Alika, her sister Maelyn, and their non-Native Settler friends), who make fun of her for affirming Hawaiian cultural tradition of the past, Emma, in turn, looks down on them for not respecting their own cultural pasts. These

religious elements are blended in with the use of the chorus, which creates a direct and ongoing presence of the past with the present, all simultaneously presented on the stage. The spectator witnesses not just the past come alive through the voices, memories, and suggestions of the chorus, but the spectator also witnesses the contemporary characters embroiled in argument, dialogue, and contestation with the demands of the past and the expectations of the present.

In this reclaimed version of the play, Alika is turned into an evil, Western, Hawaiian American devil, not only for his abuse of and his disregard for the Hawaiian land by way of his engineering project, but also for his abuse of and disregard for Emma, whom he physically abuses at the height of their conflict, and whom he emotionally abuses through his sexualization of Emma's sister. Maelyn's desire to connect with her own Hawaiian past is strong, but her acceptance of the Hawaiian Brand identity and her desire to be an object of affection makes it difficult for her to affirm a positive association with Hawaiian Cultural identity. At the end of the play, Emmalehua forges a bond with her sister, promising to pass on the traditional hula and *lei hoaku* to her sister, who is eager to let go of the trappings of a contemporary, Hawaiian Brand identity that

she's been performing. Maelyn wants to build connection with her past too, affirming her own Hawaiian cultural identity. This allows for even further reinscription of the possible Hawaiian cultural identities that can be simultaneously performed.

Additionally, Emmalehua lets go of Adrian Clearwater, who himself is searching for a way to coexist with his own Native American past and to affirm a Native American Cultural identity. By letting him go, Emmalehua transfers her own strength to him, signaling him to the important roles that she and he were designed for, telling Clearwater that they both were "raised . . . to take their places, and we have an obligation. We are their dreams, all of their dreams." In sending away some parts of her preset life, Emmalehua makes room for her present and her past to coexist—not necessarily peacefully, but in dialogue—in order to build for herself and her family line (through Maelyn) and unknown future rooted in the affirmation of Hawaiian Cultural identity.

The setting of the play in 1951, prior to statehood and at the start of the Hawaiian tourism industry, might suggest a sad future for Emmalehua, her sister, and the possibility of bridging past and present together. But Emmalehua's ancestors offer her the freedom to develop

"something deep and new" for herself. The Kupuna says that "The goddess remains kapu, but you, the woman, are free." This freedom is an uncertain one—because while it gives Emmalehua the opportunity to make a new way for herself in contemporary Hawai'i, and while she does physically carry with her the breath of her grandmother (and as such, the past and all that it means), at the end of the play she is left alone to carry this forward. This uncertainty leaves the spectator in the interstices—no clear future, which is a kind of freedom, but is also a burden that each Hawaiian cultural identity must carry forward. For Alani Apio and the characters in *Kamau A'e*, this freedom to choose Hawaiian cultural identity is much more restricting.

Native Hawaiian playwright and artist Alani Apio wrote two plays in what was to be a trilogy about a contemporary Hawaiian family. *Kamau A'e*, the second play, takes place 10 years after *Kamau*, discussed previously in Chapter 2, and focuses on Michael, who is being released from jail early, and who wishes to reclaim the ancestral land that was taken when he went into jail. He gets help from a Hawaiian sovereignty group made up of Hawaiians and non-Native Hawaiian settlers (Hawaiian at heart), some Locals, all of whom wish to affirm Hawaiian cultural identity through the recreation of a sovereign nation in Hawai'i. Apio's plot

is not so far-fetched. In 2005, the Los Angeles Times ran a story about Bumpy Kanahele's Oahu village in Waimanolo—a village made up of Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians, all of whom learn the Hawaiian language and who work traditional Hawaiian jobs in service to the Hawaiian community. The village was partly developed after Kanahele, after 14 months in prison after a previous protest, led 300 protesters to an occupation of Makapuu beach in 1993 on the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. The occupation led to a land offer, and the village began in 1994. This real-life scenario is similar to Apio's plot in *Kamau A'e*.

In the play, Michael returns home to find that his cousin, Alika has done well for himself by affirming a Hawaiian American identity, working in management for the company that took over their family's ancestral land. Michael informs Alika of his plans to stage a protest at the site of the ancestral fishing shrine entrusted to him by their elders, and although Alika pleads with him not to do it, Michael moves forward with the plan. He and the other activists stage traditional Hawaiian ceremonies at the site of the shrine, attempting an uneasy connection between past traditions and contemporary needs and desires. In the end, Michael and Alika find themselves on opposite

sides of the sovereignty argument, and in contested and oppositional versions of Hawaiian cultural identity, with Michael fighting for a return to their ancestral past, and Alika moving forward into the citizenship of present-day *American Hawai'i*.

Apio's second play, like his first, was produced at Kumu Kahua Theatre in the mid 1990s, and examines what it means to affirm Hawaiian Cultural identity in a Westernized, colonized Hawai'i. It is a tension-filled space, one in which the Westerner wants to displace the Hawaiian and to own Hawaiian land for commercial tourism, and the Hawaiian wants to affirm Hawaiianess—a unique Hawaiian Cultural identity—in order to separate himself from the colonizer. Rather than affirm right or wrong versions of Hawaiian cultural identity, instead, Apio offers spectators an opportunity to simply acknowledge the tragedy of the Hawaiian state. This state is defined by Apio as one in which a colonized people live in a homeland whose cultural customs have been conquered and forever altered by foreigners. What the play offers is the opportunity to pull the past into the present, as Kneubuhl's play did, and to use the theatre as "an insurgent act of cultural translation" (Bhabha 10) which enables its characters (and spectators) to emerge from

nostalgia into a place where the past might be affirmed as a living guide for how to practice Hawaiian Cultural identity in the present.

Apio clarifies his play's central question during an interview with Meredith Desha:

My dad taught me to fish—not as a living, but to provide for our family. We were poor in a Western sense, but rich in family and spirituality. In writing, I realized the ways I was taught to be as a Hawaiian man didn't jibe with what I was taught to be as an American citizen. (Qtd in 13).

Apio's personal past, growing up in the 1960s and 1970s in Hawai'i, is harkened in his first play through Alika's nightmarish 'dreams' in which Alika hears the voice of his mother and of his dead cousin guiding him to make different decisions and to honor his responsibility to take care of his family. In these dreams, Alika also sees images of himself and his cousins growing up fishing together, and images of the three boys cutting up in school. These images develop a sense of nostalgia for a simpler Hawai'i that no longer exists. Because Alika is visited by his ancestors in his dreams, the past remains an unreal, imagined place that cannot be brought forward into Alika's present, and that cannot become a transforming influence on Alika's ability to intervene in what is happening to him and to his cousin's family. In that play, Alika must choose between

affirming his Hawaiian Brand identity as a tourist guide, and contesting the identity in favor of his Hawaiianness.

Apio noted that part of his interest in exploring a contemporary Hawaiian family and their challenges came from men he knew from when he was growing up who committed suicide as they got older. Apio's desire was to figure out what about the contemporary Hawaiian experience was leaving Hawaiian men feeling so hopeless. This tension between living in a Western world and needing to assimilate in order to survive, and the desire to live in a manner in line with Hawaiian cultural identity--its customs and its traditions--ultimately finds no resolution in Apio's two plays. However, in the second play, the past and the present collide with one another in the present. Michael's ancestors, as Emma's did, speak to him in an effort to encourage him to affirm his Hawaiian Cultural identity in the face of any and all obstacles.

Kamau A'e' picks up 10 years after the last play ended. Michael is being released from jail, and Alika has moved forward by taking the promotion at the tourism company and using the promotion and his new position of authority not only as a means for improving his niece's, life, but also as a way to utilize corporate dollars to educate tourists and Hawaiians about the real Hawaiian

past. Alika's new position, and the projects he's developed, have given him a sense of accomplishment, self-worth, and connection to the past in a way that he didn't have before. In the presentation of Alika, spectators see a character who simultaneously affirms Hawaiian cultural identity and Hawaiian American identity. On the surface, Alika seems to have it all balanced and under control, while Michael's time in jail has politicized him and enriched his Hawaiian cultural identity connection.

Apio utilizes hallmarks of the sovereignty movement as a way to critique contemporary Hawaiian politics and the many sovereignty groups that can't seem to reach consensus about a future for the Hawaiian people and a connection to Hawaiian cultural identity of the past. Michael, while in jail, has been educated about the Indigenous past and has learned some of the Hawaiian traditions and customs. Michael is approached by a sovereignty group that wishes to protest the colonization of Hawai'i by foreigners. The group wants to use Michael's case to launch their first, major protest—an occupation of the beach where Michael's family's fishing shrine is hidden. This kind of Indigenous Hawaiian struggle has been a common political development since the 1970s. Johnson argues how,

in some moments of struggle, various Native Hawaiian groups have worked together to announce claims against external challenges of various sorts. Frequently, however, Native Hawaiian groups struggle with one another over the terms of their traditions in contexts as diverse as sovereignty debates, repatriation disputes, and the revival of open-ocean sailing. These struggles are not merely political [...] When contesting one another over the terms of their traditions—proper ritual protocol, for example—Hawaiians are actively constituting culture and traditio.(247).

These struggles are exemplified in Apio's play, and serve as a counterpoint for versions of Hawaiian cultural identity at odds with one another, in concept and in practice.

In Apio's play, the group occupies Michael's family beach, now the location of a major tourism development that his cousin, Alika, helps to manage. Michael changes his name to a traditional Hawaiian name, Kawaipono, and has living-dreams and flashbacks about Alika's grandfather teaching him to care for the land as a sacred trust. The weight of such an expectation weighs on Michael. Still, the group attempts to live as their ancestors did in the sacred fishing cave on the land, eating by campfire and performing sacred rituals, despite doing some of these rituals poorly or incorrectly, pointed out by Apio in stage directions. This reconstruction of Hawaiian cultural practice in the

present, while rooted in rudimentary knowledge of the past, is presented by Apio only as contemporary Hawaiian cultural identity trying to work in the present in a meaningful and productive way. That the members of the group disagree, and that points of contention arise of desires to revise less-than-appealing aspects of past cultural tradition, seems to affirm the varied presentations of Hawaiian Cultural identity currently engaged in dialogue.

Apio's use of current political trends in his play argues for opening this dialogue between even more sovereignty groups. The last 30 years in Hawai'i has seen many Hawaiian sovereignty groups protesting and drawing up constitutions, but none of the groups has agreed on a similar path for the future of Hawai'i, and many groups have had difficulty in maintaining political ties with one another. Many have tried to take over 'Iolani Palace, Kaho'olawe, and other sacred sites in Hawai'i, and Apio references some of these botched attempts through Alika's dialogue. Dooley characterizes groups similar to Michael's as "Elite involvement" in the Indigenous Hawaiian sovereignty movement (34). Dooley sums up the motivation of such groups by defining two principles upon which the Elites take it upon themselves to affirm a Hawaiian Cultural identity on behalf of the Hawaiian people;

First, it is usually assumed that the elites, whose beliefs must be reflected in and accepted by the members of the group, are motivated by some benefits to the nation in question . . . Secondly, and more importantly, the success of a national movement is determined by concessions gained or battles won against a colonial or dominant power which usually takes the form of linguistic protection, voting rights, some degree of political autonomy, etc. (34-35).

Dooley points to Elites within the sovereignty movement as having "co-opted the image initially created by the MNCs [multinational corporations] and is attempting to reassert Hawaiian independence" (35). Dooley's characterization of sovereignty groups as affirming images created by Multinational corporations seems to be illustrated in Apio's characters. The elites of Michael's group want to negotiate for land for their organization, and this motivation is the source of group splintering later in the play.

During the occupation, Alika urges Michael not to continue his stunt for fear of Alika losing his job and looking bad in front of his bosses. Alika also argues that he doesn't want to go back to living off the land, and that he wants and deserves some of the American status symbols others have—because he has been assimilated and considers himself an American. Michael thinks Alika is misguided and doesn't see the bigger picture—that when tourism goes away,

the Hawaiian people will be left with nothing. The two cousins argue over who is more authentically Hawaiian:

ALIKA: When I came back to work here, after you went to prison, I had the hotel move those rocks in front of the cave to hide the entrance. You think you know me . . . We've never let anyone know about the cave. No one's been inside it, nothing's been touched. It's still sacred to me too, you know.

KAWAIPONO: What!

ALIKA: You say you see the bigger picture. I tell you too many people will suffer if you try to reclaim this land.

KAWAIPONO: Too many people are suffring. Dat (pointing to the Hotel) may put food on da table now, but it don't feed ouwa souls - it pits us against one anodda: Windward against Leeward, union agains ouwaselves. An' when we no moa aloha an' nobody like come hea, den what? 'Ouwa souls tied to dis' land - da sand between youa toes. When you bury it . . .
(Apio, *Kamau A'e'* 37).

The two cousins are pitted against one another, and Apio not only uses traditions and beliefs of the past to show how present Hawai'i is in turmoil, he also utilizes Pidgin and American English to illustrate the non-assimilated and the assimilated, both of whom perform Hawaiian cultural identity, but are trying to understand their places in a contemporary Hawai'i with an uncertain and unstable future. Dooley and Linnekin argue that the development of Hawaiian cultural identity, and the Nationalism movement, needed:

a tangible and immediate problem; i.e. an issue that was destructive to those living in the present based on a description of the past. Hawaiian scholars point to two events that helped shape Hawaiian nationalism and today's sovereignty movement. The first, the protests surrounding the U.S. Navy's bombing of the unpopulated island of Kaho'olawe and the second, the protests surrounding the development of the Kalama Valley of O'ahu. (37).

Linnekin theorizes that the development of the Hawaiian nationalism movement was invented for rallying-cry purposes. Dooley says Linnekin

has consistently argued that the protests were much more a result of an elite driven depiction of the sanctity of the land, than the sanctity itself. In other words, Linnekin has claimed that the "kapu" of Kaho'olawe is recent invention utilized by Hawaiian elites and intellectuals who needed a visible rallying point. (37).

Dooley agrees with Linnekin, noting that the Hawaiians offered "little to no objection" for air strikes on Kaho'olawe in the 1950s. However, Dooley's assumptions are not contextualized appropriately in the political climate of a post WWII Hawai'i. After the Pearl Harbor attacks, the U.S. military took control of Kaho'olawe for training within a year. Some Japanese residents were forcibly returned to Japan, and some Japanese residents were interred in camps. Residents in Hawai'i were under martial law, required to be fingerprinted and to carry identity cards with them at all times. Blackout rules and night air

raids were common occurrences. By the late 1940s, Hawaiians were just beginning to emerge after almost a decade of military encampment. Despite Mr. Dooley's assumptions, I doubt Hawaiian residents were in any position to stage protests against the bombing of Kaho'olawe that might have been recorded as something other than wartime infractions. This point of view, though, is a common one; but it makes sense that as other indigenous peoples and ethnic movements such as the civil rights movement, began to emerge, Hawaiians might have been energized and empowered differently than a 1950s context might have allowed.

Apio's play does attempt to present these kinds of doubts in his presentation of multiple and fluid Hawaiian cultural Identities. When Michael is singled out by the tourism company liaison to negotiate a peaceful resolution, he learns they're willing to give him 75 acres of land elsewhere on the island, but he refuses. The liaison representative is one of the few clearly evil characters who presumably has no right to have a place in decisions regarding Hawai'i's future because those decisions are rooted in economic gain and not in a Hawaiian at heart philosophy.

When the group finds out Michael refused the offer, they are angry and they kick him out of the group.

Eventually, this lack of a cohesive leadership structure in the group causes egos to flare up and the group to disintegrate. This disintegration is illustrated in Michael's and Alika's competing versions of authentic Hawaiian Cultural identity. Alika represents one view of the Hawaiian Cultural identity:

We demand that you stop running around saying you represent us! You don't represent me! You don't represent the majority of Hawaiians. Nobody does. And you know why? Because the majority of Hawaiians don't care . . . We may learn Hawaiian but we think *american* [sic]. (Apio, *Kamau A'e* 59).

Alika and many others see no reason to go back to a past they never actually experienced themselves; Alika wants to embrace some but not all of the Hawaiian cultural beliefs of the past, and use them to pave the way for a new and more prosperous American future. But Alika's claim that Hawaiian's "don't care" seems defensive, and might suggest a desire for a different life, but one that Alika can't see a way into. Alika points out that Ka'ahumanu, Kamehameha's wife, abolished the traditional Hawaiian Gods and Goddesses almost 200 years ago, and the people did not rise up then and stop it. Like Dooley's claim against sovereignty groups today, Alika seems to be arguing how the Hawaiians are responsible for their own cultural identity destruction. Alika says, "We burned the idols, smashed the *heiau*. We

gave up the sacred. We stopped believing" (59). While Alika is trying to make peace with this new state of Hawai'i, Michael argues against such a cultural identity, wishing just to be a fisherman again and to be left alone with free access to Hawai'i and its resources; he sees it as his right as an Indigenous Hawaiian. He's willing to share, but he wants things to go back the way they were. At the end of the play, after everything has disintegrated, Michael tries to cast his net out to sea, and is cuffed and taken back to jail for trespassing.

Apio's play uses the presentation of sacred Hawaiian rituals, the affirmation of Hawaiian cultural beliefs, use of the Hawaiian language, use of Pidgin, and the practice of traditional Hawaiian customs of the past as well as current political trends of the present, in order to develop the contested interstice of Hawaiian cultural identity, and the groups vying for consideration in that interstice--not just Indigenous Hawaiians and *haole*, but Locals, Hawaiian Americans, and non-Native Hawaiian settlers too. For Apio, the essential or authentic Hawaiian cultural identity is multifaceted and in contestation with itself, because what Hawaiians believe in cannot be agreed upon by all of the Hawaiian people--and what is "Hawaiian"

anymore, anyway? This is Apio's central dilemma, and is ultimately his unanswered question.

Both Kneubuhl's and Apio's explorations of Hawaiian cultural identities seem to affirm and to contest versions of the Hawaiian cultural identity while simultaneously practicing past and present versions of Hawaiian cultural identities. Dooley argues that the group of elites interested in the education of the Hawaiian populace were perhaps most complicitous in an affirmation of "an image deemed authentic" but instead "projected an identity and a culture that was inextricably bound to a pre-American and pre-Western past, i.e. a noble savage" (39). Dooley and other scholars and anthropologists might look on Apio's and Kneubuhl's plays as misguided attempts to create a Hawaiian cultural identity that ends up being "the projected image of the oppressors" (Qtd. in Dooley 39). However, these scholars and historians who argue that the cultural renaissance movement of 1970's Hawai'i revived long-dead traditions cannot account for the manner in which the Indigenous Hawaiian population may have sent its cultural artifacts underground at the time of colonize, where these cultural practices likely flourished in different and varied ways, and were passed on from family member to family member until they were able to resurface again.

The accusation by Dooley that Hawaiian cultural reaffirmation "had more to do with building Hawaiian identity than building ancient canoes" (39) seems to argue against the reaffirmation and reinscription of Hawaiian cultural identity as negatively associated with a revival of nationalism and a tool for nationalism. Trask points out the problem with anthropologists and others theorizing about Hawaiian Cultural identity from Western positionalities:

For Hawaiians, anthropologists in general (and Keesing in particular) are part of the colonizing horde because they seek to take away from us the power to define who and what we are, and how we should behave politically and culturally. This theft testifies to the stranglehold of colonialism and explains why self-identity by Natives elicits such strenuous and sometimes vicious denials by members of the dominant culture. These denials are made in order to undermine the legitimacy of Native nationalists by attacking their motives in asserting their values and institutions, (*Dialogue* 163).

Trask's argument is an important one. The power dynamics at play in an assessment of the reasons for reinscription of Hawaiian cultural identities by Indigenous Hawaiian activists, and by theatre practitioners, should be set aside. The object of discussion should not be whether these Hawaiian cultural identities are invented, or why Hawaiians seek to contest and to deemphasize Americanized versions of Hawaiian Cultural identities. The answer to those questions

should be quite clear. What is more important is precisely how Hawaiians affirm, contest, and reinscribe their own, liberated identities for spectators.

CHAPTER 5: LOCALS: REGIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE ALOHA STATE

"In the city, immigrants claiming to be natives; in the country, natives without a nation"²⁶

In Chapter 5 I will examine the ways in which Local Hawaiian identities claim special status because of their connection to and/or affinity for Hawai'i, their many years on the islands, and the ways in which they affirm and contest shared history as Locals. While most tourists and outsiders are acquainted with Hawai'i only through glossy and shallow pop culture and tourist industry images, Locals²⁷ are treated to so-called authentic renderings of themselves via Local playwrights who affirm and contest the markers of Local status. The representations of Locals in plays like *Living Pidgin* by Lee A. Tonouchi, or the comedies of Local Hawaiian playwright Lee Cataluna, facilitate an affirmation of Locals by reflecting back to Local spectators the approved markers of their insider status. However, the plays also simultaneously affirm Local stereotypes for the insider community that outsiders might deem racist, thus differentiating the Local from mainstream American identities and from Indigenous Hawaiian

²⁶ Trask, Haunani Kay. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i Press, 2002.

²⁷ I will use the capital L for Local rather than ongoing quotation marks or italicizing when referring to the Local *Hawaiian* identity defined in this chapter, which includes individuals of Hawai'i who are recognized as those with long-time affiliation that enables them to understand and perform various markers of the Local identity.

identities, setting themselves apart as a unique sub-community.

In this chapter, it will be useful to begin with historical context about the development of the Local community in Hawai'i, which many scholars and historians believe is rooted in the Sugar Cane plantations of the 1800s. I will then offer a working definition of the Local Hawaiian—a regional community identity unique to the Hawaiian islands, which has its own codes of conduct and rules of performance.²⁸ An examination of performances that highlight Local identities might offer ample opportunity to see how the Local is actually a series of fluid and hybridized identities that work in the “in-between spaces” (Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* 4), negotiating, affirming, and contesting inscriptions and stereotypes, and even teaching the populace various possibilities of being Local, allowing for the “[passionate] reinvention” (Diamond 2) of the Local identity that might work with the populace to revise negative narratives about the Hawaiian Local.

Lee A. Tonouchi, Hawai'i's self-proclaimed “Pidgin Guerilla” uses his performance piece, *Living Pidgin* to poke fun at the assumption that there are rules to the

²⁸ In this instance, I use ‘performance’ to offer that perhaps the Local can recognize and see particular and specific gestures and speech patterns to show their status as Local to an outside viewer.

performance of being a Local, and then instructs his spectators to resist the racist assumption that proclaims Pidgin-speaking Locals as ignorant and in need of learning proper English. Local playwright Lee Cataluna, uses comedy and the performance of Local stereotypes to affirm and contest a variety of Local characters and the ways in which they support the Local community. Both of these playwrights diagnose the challenges of affirming a Local identity in a community that has become increasingly Americanized and which would rather affirm a mainstream identity that reflects Americanization. Tonouchi's and Cataluna's plays work instead to benefit their Local communities by writing characters who can affirm for Local spectators the power and prestige of Local status—an insider status that allows the Local to poke fun at himself or herself. Their plays also present the challenges characters face in attempting to maintain that unique Local culture and community, and to resist encroaching Americanization.

In order to examine Local identities, an understanding of what Local means in the context of Hawaiian culture is an important first step. Theatre scholar and practitioner Justina Mattos, in her 2002 unpublished dissertation on the groundbreaking Kumu Kahua theatre in Honolulu, argues for a definition of Local as "a resident of Hawai'i who shows by

his or her actions a familiarity with the history and customs of the various ethnic groups of Hawai'i, a concern for the welfare of Hawai'i's people and environment, an appreciation of the uniquely local things that make Hawai'i special, and a commitment to be a part of Hawai'i—in good times and bad" (15). This definition forwards the notion that Locals must not only "show" "actions" that visibly mark them as Locals (i.e. *perform* being Local in ways recognizable to others), but that the Local must have a love and understanding of Hawai'i—both the land and the people (a Hawaiian-at-heart aesthetic). This definition of Local highlights the importance of Local markers that presumably any new resident can pick up and perform after careful study. Mattos' definition is offered in order to lay groundwork for her definition of Local theatre: "theatre which reflects the unique culture of Hawai'i to which all of Hawai'i's ethnic groups have contributed. These are plays which are set in Hawai'i and deal with some aspect of life in Hawai'i as experienced by "local" people" (15). This definition, which affirms all of Hawai'i's ethnic groups as contributors, presumably includes not only Indigenous Hawaiians and mixed-race individuals, but *haoles* as well. It is an inclusive definition that supports a unique sub-community.

Mattos offers extensive discussion in her dissertation of the markers of Local Hawaiians, Native Hawaiians, *haoles*, Kamaaina (Local) *haoles*, and "the *kamaaina haole elite*" (Qtd. in 11), all of which have varying prestige (or lack of prestige) and goals as Hawaiians. These multiple and fluid identities named by Mattos are but a few of the possible aspects of Local identities. In defining Local Hawaiian then, it is important to understand that the length of time an individual lives in or spends on the islands doesn't affirm or deny an individual's status as a Local (Mattos 11). Any individual with affinity for the islands, and who is able to perform particular markers of Local status to the satisfaction of other members of the community, would be welcomed as a Local.

Other ethnic studies scholars, like Jane Desmond, point out how multiple generations of family ties sometimes affirm a Local *haole* status—which is sometimes one of the most contested of Local identities (Qtd. in Mattos 11), and that it is the markers and codes of being Local which one is able *to perform* that truly signify an individual's insider or Local status. Mattos's definition, though, needs expanding if the political and cultural climates of Hawai'i's last decade since her dissertation composition are to be taken into account, as well as the recent

migration of Hawaiians and Locals to the mainland in the wake of economic change. Locals need not be limited to the space of Hawai'i any longer; Locals can move to other locales, and still perform the marks of a Hawaiian Local. Additionally, it is problematic to affirm as part of the definition that a Local will have a concern for the welfare of the islands. Such a thing is possibly immeasurable in these turbulent political times as various factions seek power over the future of the Hawaiian islands, while other groups offer contrasting definitions of what is best for the welfare of the islands.

However, I will offer a more broad definition of the Hawaiian Local; building on Mattos's definition, I would add that the Hawaiian Local need not live in Hawai'i, but should be familiar with the locale of Hawai'i beyond a simple, outsider understanding of the spaces of Hawai'i; additionally, the Hawaiian Local may have varying understandings of what will benefit the welfare of the Hawaiian islands, but should be interested in the welfare of and future of the island community, however the Local defines that for himself or herself. Finally, I would offer that the Hawaiian Local should at least have a cursory familiarity with some of the markers of Hawaiian Local culture, including but not limited to an understanding of

and ability to utilize Pidgin, and an understanding of and use of Hawaiian Local customs.²⁹ The development of the Local identity and its roots in the Hawaiian cultural and political landscape can serve as a foundation for understanding the ways in which Locals are performed in various representational practices.

Most Hawaiian history scholars point to Hawai'i's sugar-plantation boom of the 1900s as the birth of a Hawaiian Local identity. Hawai'i's unique social and ethnic variety results from the subsequent influx of migrant workers from several places, including: Portugal, the Philippines, Japan, and China, all of whom had to learn to communicate and co-exist in a place foreign to them all. In *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawai'i*, Takaki interviews numerous Asian plantation workers who describe the beginnings of a Local culture and identity on the islands; this Local identity was markedly different from the identity of Caucasian traders and businessmen whose interests had little to do with becoming a part of the Hawaiian culture, and had much more to do with making money while exploiting workers from many countries. The new Hawaiian Local sub-culture was marked by special foods,

²⁹ This familiarity might extend to an understanding of the traditional Local food dishes, Local entertainment, and concepts such as 'Local time,' all of which are seen in Tonouchi and Cataluna's plays.

particular living customs, and most markedly by a unique Creole language that came to be known as Pidgin. In fact, Pidgin came to be one of the most visible markers of a Hawaiian Local, and rooted the sub-community in cultural pride. Says one Japanese plantation worker, "'Our English in those days was really funny,' . . . A contract worker in Lahaina Plantation was asked by his superiors, 'How many people are working here?' He answered, 'Ten, ten, wan burooku'" (Qtd. in 167)." This Japanese worker's description of the use of Pidgin as 'funny' English, an English not understandable by most plantation owners, but utilized regularly by plantation workers and overseers, illustrates the start of a language of necessity for purposes of communication between multiple ethnicities—and marks the beginning of one of the layers of insider/outsider identity in Hawaiian Locals (mostly ethnically diverse) and owners (mostly Caucasian *haole*).

From the use of this unique and special language, a community pride began to develop. A Korean mother and plantation worker characterized this type of language development as important to a Hawaiian identity, remarking to Takaki how "her children were growing up 'Hawaiians,' for they spoke 'Hawaiian English' much more fluently than their native tongue" (168). Takaki asserts that "Speaking

Pidgin-English, the immigrants and their children were no longer just Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Filipino; they were now embracing a local or regional identity transcending their particular ethnicity" (168-69). Mattos points out that these differences in speech were rooted in issues of class and race, and many might argue that this differentiation developed into a stereotype about the perceived intelligence of those who speak Pidgin today -- but still, the use of Pidgin and the blending of customs and cultures did give way to a pride in a new sort of Hawaiian identity: Locals.

These Locals were made up of numerous ethnicities that had come to or been transported to Hawai'i to work the sugar and pineapple plantations. From Hawaiians and Filipinos to Japanese and Koreans, plantation workers settled the islands and began to marry Hawaiian women (and other races), started to have mixed-race children, and created customs built around shared food, a shared Pidgin language, and shared cultural traditions; these became the unique markers of the Hawaiian Local. Takaki even found that "some [plantation workers], after returning to their places of birth, eagerly went back to the islands as their main and permanent home" (168-171), mostly due to the cultural differences between the Local and the home

country. Locals had become so far removed from the cultures of their original homes, that Hawai'i had effectively become their home—their new nation.

The development of the Hawaiian Local is rooted in resistance to Westernization. In his research on Pidgin English, William C. Smith found that despite workers of different nationalities being housed separately (156), mostly at the request of plantation owners who wanted to control the working conditions, living conditions, and rates of pay for various ethnicities, the workers found a way to share foods and languages when working in the fields and after they returned home from the fields in the evenings. As a means of survival, varied ethnicities shared with one another, and also taught one another different ways to cook, clean, wash, grow food, and more. The resistance was rooted in shared community against the Western Caucasian.

While Anderson notes that print language was at the root of nationalism (134), he also notes how the starts of nations is often "conceived in language, not in blood, and that one could be 'invited into' the imagined community" (145). Thus, as the Kingdom (Nation) of Hawai'i was finding itself challenged by outside forces, the Hawaiian nation of Locals was being built through shared customs and language,

not the bloodlines that had differentiated other cultures. This is significant because it offers the spectator a deeper understanding of the splintering of and the contemporary fluidity of Hawaiian identities. As Indigenous Hawaiians found themselves and their nation being usurped by outside political powers, and by intermarriage and cultural oppression and assimilation, the Indigenous Hawaiians also found themselves being pulled into a burgeoning community of Locals who shared the Indigineous Hawaiian's outrage at the mistreatment and lack of freedom.

Hawaiian Local identity was furthered even more deeply in Hawai'i when Theodore Roosevelt issued his letter banning those Japanese living in Hawai'i from moving to mainland California for greater opportunity (148). Roosevelt acknowledged that the problem of the Japanese in Hawai'i was not the Japanese, but "the shortsighted greed of the sugar planters" who brought over Japanese workers for their sugar cane fields. Roosevelt's purpose, though, was to keep Hawai'i an island of small plantations, and to encourage the immigration of "Europeans, no matter of what ancestry, in order that the islands may be filled with a white population of our general civilization and culture." This separation between the mainland Japanese and the Hawaiian Japanese not only affirmed the xenophobia of WWII-

era United States, but further differentiated the Hawaiian Local identity as special and unique—and different from mainland identity.

The Hawaiian islands had a unique, Local identity, and the Japanese of Hawai'i were markedly different from the Japanese Americans settling on the mainland. This could be true of other immigrants who came to the United States in large numbers pre-WWII, including Portugese and Chinese. However, while many immigrants entered the United States through Ellis Island and then housed themselves in small recreations of their homelands, composing Little Italies and small-scale China Towns, it was becoming clear that those settling in Hawai'i found a more immediate reason to band together with their other-ethnicity brethren: economic survival. There wasn't enough space in Hawai'i where a group of same-ethnicity inidividuals could hide out and recreate their homelands; in Hawai'i, everyone lived in such close quarters and close proximity to one another, that the intermingling of ethnicities and cultural traditions seemed impossible to *not* occur.

This foundation history makes clear that Hawaiian Local was and is a separate and unique regional community borne out of necessity from those residents brought to the islands to work together, and has developed over time.

However, as Mattos notes, "anyone who has spent time in Hawai'i knows that being a resident does not automatically make one a "local" (9). That the Local identity in Hawai'i is rooted in the sugar and pineapple plantation history of the islands deepens its complexities even further, because the plantations were "initially a distinction of both class and ethnicity, uniting Hawai'i's various ethnic groups in social and political opposition to the dominant *haoles*" (10). Resistance to political and economic struggle united Hawaiian Locals in the past, but in the 21st century, the Local has become an even more complex and less-easy to define term, as politics begins to play a unique role in how island residents define and label one another.

Many Locals might argue that the term Local references a common set of social rules and customs, and a unique commitment to the Hawaiian islands, (Mattos 10). While Mattos argues that a Local person is a resident of the islands, expanding the definition of Local Hawaiian should include the many Hawaiians who have left Hawai'i' during times of economic downturn, unable to return home, but who are still committed to the islands and to a way of living found only in the Hawaiian community, and who still bear the cultural markers of Local status.

Lee Tonouchi's *Pidgin Play* facilitations a representation of Hawaiian Local that affirms the Hawaiian Local and that reflects back to Locals how they might perform their Local identities appropriately. The use of and the understanding of Pidgin is one such important marker of Local Hawaiian. Tonouchi examines the contradictions in the Hawaiian Local identity using Asian Hawaiian and *haole* interchangeably as possible aspects of Hawaiian Local. Tonouchi, called "Da Pidgin Guerilla," is author of *Da Kine Dictionary*, a collection of Pidgin vocabulary from the Hawaiian community. His play, first performed at the Kumu Kahua Theatre January 11-February 11, 2007, is a collection of short performance pieces adapted from several of Tonouchi's essays, monologues and poems.³⁰

The opening section to the play, "How Fo' Be Local in Five Easy Steps" has three characters: Justin, "a local *Haole*, little bit Hawaiian" and his sister, Sunshine, are selected from the audience by Mr. Director to participate in a documentary filming. All 3 characters speak Pidgin, and the performance of authentic Local behavior accomplishes many tasks. First, the Local comes alive on

³⁰ Tonouchi's play uses Pidgin to not only affirm a unique and special Local identity, placing it into Hawai'i's identity hierarchy, but Tonouchi makes a strong case for Pidgin and other Local markers as opportunities to resist Americanization and the 'colonizing of the mind' that scholar and activist Haunani Kay Trask argues against.

stage and is thus able to transmit important behavioral markers to spectators. That Tonouchi directs the cast to be selected from the spectators who have come to see the show, illustrates a direct connection between who the spectators are, and what they're about to see: a representation of themselves. Secondly, by making fun of all racial identities, the mixed-race Local is placed in a position of importance and ranks higher than any single ethnic or racial group. Depending upon their knowledge of and length of time in Hawai'i, the spectators would be able to recognize the behaviors they see acted out by the performers, thus strengthening their affirmation of and affinity towards these behaviors within themselves. In fact, the spectators may see in the actors an ability to perform Local identity on demand, if needed, to secure a place in the Local community. Third, the insider-outsider, special and unique status of the Hawaiian Local allows for a transcending of the umbrella American identity in favor of a regional sub-community identity that vies for authenticity in contrast to other Hawaiian identities vying for power. Tonouchi's play makes a strong argument for the Hawaiian Local as THE Hawaiian.

In Tonouchi's play, spectators are moved through a series of scenes in which they're instructed on the

stereotypical rules of being a Local, followed by racially-charged ethnic humor, the practices of being Local, and then, at the end, a staged reading of a poem that moves into a politically-driven call for "Da Pidgin Guerilla" to rise up and affirm Pidgin, and Locals, as important in the identity history of an authentic Hawai'i. In the first section of the play, Justin, Sunshine, and Mr. Director offer the rules for being Local, while simultaneously problematizing those rules, calling into question the assumptions and stereotypes that outsiders may have about Locals. For example, when Sunshine notes that perhaps Justin has gone surfing, Justin is later seen entering the theatre with a football. When asked why he's not surfing, Justin says "Who me? I no surf. I no even like going down da beach" (7). As the scene progresses, it quickly becomes clear that there are no rules for being Local—although there is a stern warning about pretending or acting like you are a Local. Sunshine says, "The fifth step on How Fo' Be Local is NO ACK" (8). When Mr. Director accuses her of acting, she says, "Whoever said we were following the script? We made up our own. It's called life" (7). Clearly, for Tonouchi, the Hawaiian Local is a fluid identity that changes and develops depending upon who is in the current community.

The second scene in the play, "Significant Moments in Da Life of Oriental Faddah and Son" examines how politically-correct language really doesn't contribute to the eradication of racism—and that the desire to shield one another from racial epithets only illustrates and contributes to one's lack of understanding between the ethnicities. In the monologue-style play, Oriental Son shares his experiences of leaving Hawai'i and attending UC Irvine, where he learns that the word "Oriental" is considered racist:

So I went UC Irvine. Das wea I wen discover dat my Orintal Faddah wuzn't really my Oriental Faddah. He wuz my "Asian American" Faddah. Dey sed I can have one Oriental rug or some Oriental furnitures, but I cannot CANNOT have one Oriental Faddah. Oriental is one term you use for da kine in animate objecks. Ass wot dey tell me. So I toll 'em "Oh, my Oriental Faddah, he hardly sez anyting. Das kinda like being one inanimate objeck, ah. Wotchoo tink?" Ho, wen I sed dat their faces when jus freeze, like dey couldn't believe I sed something as disrespeckful as dat. Tsk, "Asian American" ass why."

This example serves not only as a marker for Hawaiian Local—but argues against an arbitrary change in naming based upon erroneous assumptions about a particular regional community's ideas about labels and identities. Additionally, it illustrates a definition of Hawaiian Local that leaves the islands; Oriental Son leaves Hawai'i, and it is his markers of Hawaiian Local that name him as an

outsider on the California mainland. Oriental Son takes his opportunity on the mainland to not only poke fun at the idea of Oriental as an independent sub-group, but he also pokes fun at the self-appointed, politically appropriate Asian American subgroup's assumptions about racism.

Later in the play, he uses the words "Katonk" and "banana" to describe his fiancé, who continually corrects Oriental Faddah's use of "Oriental" with the repetition of "Asian American." Oriental Son eventually decides to affirm the use of Oriental:

I started telling all my friends "Eh, Wassup Oreintal!" "Brah, yo' mama, she so Oriental I bet she cannot see her chopsticks (make 'v' with finger) unless she turn 'em sideways!" (move 'v' across eyes). I figgah I would take back da term! If Popalo people can use da "N" word, den hakum I cannot use da one dat starts wit "O"? EMPOWERING Li' dat." (10).

This reaffirmation of the term by Oriental Son illustrates a desire to affirm the Local and his or her use of special and unique terminologies that have meanings within the sub-community that are different from any meanings imposed by Western ideologies.

Later scenes in Tonouchi's play continue to poke fun at identities—the Hawaiian Local identity in particular; in the scene "7 Deadly Local Sins or Word Count-2,999" Tonouchi's affirmation of and explanation of negative or

misunderstood stereotypes of Local people is addressed in humorous ways, thus strengthening the Local's identity with other members of his or her Local community. An example of this is in the sub section "Gluttony" of "7 Deadly Local Sins." Tonouchi addresses the unique love of Spam™ shared by many Locals, and the staple food of white rice. The speaker says: "Spam™ is like ghetto people food to dem [mainlanders]. To us it's one staple. Can eat 'em for breakfast wit da eggs. Eat 'em for lunch in da musubi like da kine you get" (12). Of rice, the speaker says, "I tink was in da papah, but I heard dat last year 486 Local people died wen dey moved mainland and dey couldn't find rice." The idea is that these staple foods, important cultural markers of Local identity, are simultaneously stereotypes and powerful affirmations of a beloved identity.

In the last scene of the play, "Pijin wawrz" Tonouchi makes his most humorous and eloquent case for an affirmation of regional, Local markers, like the use of Pidgin. His narrator shares the story of the Pidgin Protectorate: 3 locals dressed in Camouflage and who circle the state capital to fight against a ban on the use of Pidgin in the classrooms. The humorous exchange between the Locals—Jimmy, Ed, and Kawika—is reminiscent of time spent with the 3 stooges. The Narrator in the play says:

English by nature wuzn't standard. If you travel diff'rent parts of da country, everybody's English going be li'lo bit diff'rent, he wen tell. And if you compare English thru time, go compare Beowulf, Shakespeare and John Grisham III, al da englishes wuz supposedly da standard of da time, but dey all so diff'rent. Dis standard ting is jus artificial construck invented by man. Pidgin acknowledges da reality of language. In Pidgin we can look beyond correck-incorreck in terms of grammar, spelling, pronunciation, and focus on da content. Pidgin breaks down da hierarchies and instead of dismissing based on superficialities, you take da time to undahstand and get to know wea da person is coming from. We like standardize everyting cuz it makes tings mo' easy fo' process, but wot would happen if we did 'em da hot way? To counter da Pidgin Guerrilla's anti-government propaganda rhetoric, Gates Global wen create one army of standard English speaking clones to convince da people dat standardization can be achieved." (22).

The narrator's history lesson about language attempts to affirm the importance of eschewing an imagined standardization by which all intelligent ideas must be measured. Placing Shakespeare and Beowulf with John Grisham III decentralizes the power structure of Western standards of excellence and prized literature and language. Instead, Tonouchi, through his narrator, argues for getting rid of standardization in favor of stripping down the rules so that the ideas can be affirmed and celebrated. When Ed responds, he says, "we can start our own immersion program like the Hawaiians" (23). This separation of the Hawaiian Local from Indigenous Hawaiians places the Local lower on

the Hawaiian identities hierarchy—but illustrates how the importance of affirming Local as a special and unique sub-community with a history and a language all its own, is a first step toward situating Hawaiian Local higher on that hierarchy. At the end of Tonouchi's play, it is likely that spectators who are Local are appropriately and positively changed by their use of Pidgin, and by their customs and cultural traditions; and spectators who are not Locals, probably aspire to be.

The fluidity of the Hawaiian Local identity, while inclusive of the *Kamaaina* (Local) *haole*, does separate itself from the non-Local *haole*. This fluidity is explored in the humorous but well-researched history of the Hawaiian islands by writer Sarah Vowell, whose book *Unfamiliar Fishes* was just released in April of 2011. Vowell explores the origins of Hawaiian identity and its complexities for several pages at the start of her book, noting the blend of traditions as an example of the difficulties of researching Hawaiian history—but also, this blend of traditions signals the contemporary outgrowth of the Local. In the opening to her book, Vowell asks, "Why is there a glop of macaroni salad next to the Japanese chicken in my plate lunch? Because the ship *Thaddeus* left Boston Harbor with the first boatload of New England missionaries bound for Hawai'i in

1819. That and it's Saturday. Rainbow Drive-In only serves *shoyu* chicken four days a week" (1). This opening visual, the mixed-plate lunch from famed local dining spot Rainbow Drive-In, offers an appropriate metaphor for the Local residents of Hawai'i—a mix-up of ethnicities, cultures, and customs that doesn't really make a lot of sense, but goes well together anyhow.

As Vowell digs deeper, she begins to understand the word *haole* and its differentiation from Local (1-6 + 10-14), noting the importance of separating the two. Humorously referencing a 1987 surfing movie *North Shore*, Vowell points out both the discrimination against *haole*, as well as the performance of Local Hawaiian identities—and how Locals are separate and higher on the identity hierarchy than the *haole*. This special, higher status given to Locals is not only apparent when a resident flashes his or her Hawai'i ID to get a discount at a restaurant, but is made clear in numerous popular culture references as well, such as in a similar kind of surfing film as Vowell's example in her text. 2002's *Blue Crush*, is a B-level surfer-girl makes good film in which the lead character is clearly a Caucasian *haole*, but who is labeled a Local even though she bears no markers of Local identity, such as speaking Pidgin; however, she is accepted as a Local, while

her Caucasian, football-playing boyfriend is clearly the outsider in the film, and is called out by other Locals as a distasteful tourist with no appreciation for the welfare of and the sacred spaces of Hawai'i. When a group of Locals catch the football player surfing at a secret, Locals-only beach, a fist-fight ensues. Unlike *North Shore's* 1980's humorous treatment of the *haole* as a clueless idiot, post-9/11's *Blue Crush* depiction might signal the acceptance by today's pop-culture world of the difficult negotiations at play in Hawaiian identity formation—and especially in the affirmation of Local status. As more and more Hawaiian land is sold to outsiders for vacation homes, and as millions of tourists clamor to the islands each year, the challenges of maintaining a Local community are even more difficult.

While *Blue Crush* does a better job representing the presence of Locals, by employing Kauai-born actress Sanoé Lake in a supporting role, and by using Hawaiian surfers in the film, the film makes a clear distinction between the Local Caucasian and the *haole* tourist, affirming Local identity's importance, even in someone who doesn't perform all of the markers of a Hawaiian Local.

Other pop culture offerings signal this same shift—one that places the Local into the American identities spectrum, but offers varying degrees of that identity. The

newest reincarnation of the former hit television series, Hawai'i Five-O is a prime example. The original show, appearing in September 1968, was an incredible hit, and featured two Local Hawaiian actors in two of the four major roles. In fact, for a show in its time period, it was extremely ethnically diverse, even though the primary actors of the show were mostly Caucasian despite less than half of Hawai'i's population at the time identifying as Caucasian (Newcomb 1068). The 2010 version of the show, though, features no Locals in any of the four primary lead roles, but instead offers up mainstreamed versions of Hawaiian American identities. The four lead roles are cast as follows: Alex O'Loughlin, an Australian-born actor, plays the lead role, and Caucasian/American actor Scott Caan plays his plucky side-kick; the two other cast members include American-born, Asian Canadian actress Grace Park, and Korean American actor Daniel Dae Kim. One of the regular cast members, a former Sumo wrestler, is from Hawai'i, and on the show he fulfills an important role-- offering authentic Local contrast to the lead characters by way of his (very sanitized) Pidgin, as well as other Local cultural markers, such as his selling of touristy *aloha* t-shirts and Shave Ice; (shave-ice being perceived by many as an iconic (stereotyped) symbol of authentic Local Hawai'i).

These casting choices represent the larger, global assumptions about Hawaiian identity investigated in Chapter 3. For example, Five-O's lead character is purported to be a Hawaiian Local familiar with the islands and a son of the *aloha* state. He has come home from the Navy on special assignment, and to investigate the death of his father. He supposedly grew up on Hawai'i, but bears none of the markers of a Local. However, he affirms his Local status through his affinity for the islands, and his knowledge of Local Hawaiian community members, just as he simultaneously affirms his Hawaiian American identity as a member of the military. O'Laughlin's partner is a *haole* transplant from New Jersey whose unfamiliarity with the special ways of the islands is a constant source of humor on the show—and this character heartily affirms his outsider status as a non-Local—which illustrates a sort of acceptance of Hawai'i as a regional identity of America similar to other unique, regional American identities. This juxtaposition of the insider and the outsider makes clear that even though his partner has transplanted to the islands and lives on the islands, he is no Hawaiian Local yet; in fact, his humorous distaste for the customs, the weather, and the culture of the Hawaiian Local community makes clear that he affirms

affinity with another regional identity: home grown Jersey boy.

The other two squad members are cousins, Hawaiian Locals who have grown up on the islands and who joined the police force. These two characters offer yet another example of Local identities. The female squad member is an avid surfer and knows the islands and its unique spots well; while she doesn't speak Pidgin, she does offer other markers of Hawaiian Local—most notably a loving affinity for the islands and for Local customs, as illustrated in one episode when she partakes in a ritual spreading of ashes into the Pacific for a fallen Hawaiian Local hero. Her cousin has become a sort of outcast in his own community; while he is occasionally dropping the Pidgin brah into conversation, he doesn't exclusively use Pidgin to communicate. These two characters are often utilized on the squad for their abilities to blend in as insiders to Local culture—and they represent one of the largest populations on the Hawaiian islands: Asians. These examples of pop-culture's representations of Hawaiian Locals are Americanized, to be sure, but they signal a shift in the acceptance of mainstreaming Hawaiian Local as a regional sub-community not just of Hawai'i, but of the United States.

Perhaps the most commercial example of a Local Hawaiian takeover is the 2011 American Girl™ Doll. Kanani™ is advertised as an American Girl who “loves to share the *aloha* spirit of Hawai'i with others. Kanani arrives wearing a bright tropical dress, a faux hibiscus flower, a pretend kukui nut necklace, ruffled sandals . . . She's soft and huggable with long hair for styling” (americangirl.com). Kanani has long, golden-brown hair and tanned skin, but is no dark-skinned Hawaiian. It's clear that she's a Hawaiian Local. On the cover of one of her books, *Good Job Kanani* by Lisa Yee, Kanani is shown smiling, a large cone of colored Shave Ice in each hand. Kanani's love for her islands, and her desire to share the *aloha* spirit with all who come to the islands, marks her as a (an Americanized) Local whose special affinity for her birth place is seen in her actions and in her stereotyped clothing, foods, and activities. Clearly, the Local identity is a fluid and hybridized one, with residents of Hawai'i arguing varied definitions of Local status, and the tourism and commercial worlds arguing another version of Local status; thus, each party benefits in different ways, either for financial gain, or for special recognition in a hierarchy that places tourists at the bottom, and Indigenous Hawaiians at the top.

This nation of the Hawaiian Local seems to fulfill Benedict Anderson's criteria of an imagined political community (Anderson 6). Anderson argues that a nation "is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 6). Perhaps two or three decades ago, however, there might have been a more immediate connection in which it were possible to meet or to know of all of the Locals in Hawai'i. Indigenous Hawaiians often introduced themselves by stating lineage in an effort to demonstrate their genealogy and subsequently, their connection to the land of Hawai'i (Trask *From a Native*). Locals often do the same, sharing the *where from* of their lineage on the islands by stating where they went to school, or what neighborhood they came from. In fact, a common question Locals ask one another upon meeting each other for the first time is *where you go school*, in order to substantiate their claim to Local status, and their own genealogies and connections to the land and the culture of Hawai'i. This desire for insider status includes a series of performed Local markers, including the speaking of Pidgin, a knowledge of the Local history of the people and places in Hawai'i, and a shared us versus them outlook that

is rooted in a true love of the Hawaiian islands and the Local Hawaiian way of life.

The exploration of multiple Hawaiian Local identities is illustrated clearly in the comedies of Hawaiian Local playwright Lee Cataluna. Cataluna's plays utilize Local characters to both affirm and to contest Hawaiian identities. Cataluna's plays feature stereotyped characters, beloved clichés, and an assumption of insider status in order to develop her storylines; her plays offer an important component to the dialogue about contemporary Local Hawaiian identity. One of her most popular plays, *Da Mayah* employs stereotypical Local characters, from the crooked politician and the crime boss to the absent-minded, plate-lunch loving secretary. Yet, despite the affirmation of Local stereotypes, the play contests some of these stereotypes, which is perhaps why the play was performed to sold-out audiences and had an extended and very successful run. Clearly, Local audiences enjoy seeing the markers of their identities affirmed, complicated, and performed on stage, even if these identities are being made fun of.

Directors of Cataluna's plays have noted Cataluna's ability to convey a distinctly Local humor. The Honolulu Advertiser's theatre critic noted about Cataluna: "She has her own unique take on what it is to be local; one of her

things is no matter how bad you are, you're still part of the community, people accept you with your faults. Her feelings toward community really come out" (Honolulu Advertiser 18). This trope is visible throughout Cataluna's plays; while there are many possible definitions of Local and ways of being Local, as seen in Tonouchi's play, Cataluna seems to argue that despite these small differences, there is a larger, more important component to the Hawaiian Local identity: community. Cataluna's Local humor is an affirmation of the differences between being a Local of Hawai'i and being other. For example, in her play *Da Mayah*, Cataluna does rely on ethnic stereotypes, but her play continues to be heralded for its portrayal of authentic Local Hawaiians despite these stereotypes. When communities are able to see themselves performed, their identities are affirmed. Additionally, when humor is used to make fun of all, the hierarchy is dismantled, and there is an equalizing of all members of the sub-community. The performance of these Local identities offers spectators an opportunity not only to affirm their place within the spectrum of Hawaiian Local, but spectators might also learn themselves how to perform important aspects of their identities.

In an interview with Cataluna, writer Lavonne Leong noted: "Someone said to me recently that local literature needs to be produced by, for, and about local people, because New Yorkers just won't get it" and Cataluna countered this opinion, acknowledging the view but arguing against it:

I understand that . . . Then again, I don't know why that's true here and it's not true for Southern literature or insider New York literature. I mean, the South is bigger than Hawai'i and New York is bigger than Hawai'i, but there's a kind of expectation that we're so unique or so misunderstood. I'm not quite sure what the difference is between [other local literatures] and ours. I used to have a quote at home by the poet W.H. Auden, who said, "A poet's hope: to be like some valley cheese—local, but prized elsewhere."

Cataluna is certainly aware that her plays are meant to connect with Local audiences. However, other writers have noted the same feeling as the interviewer—that perhaps mainlanders won't get it. In talking with playwright Nancy Caraway in 2006, I found out that her Kumu Kahua play about the aftermath of 9/11 had been revised prior to its production on the east coast; she'd removed the Local markers, such as Pidgin language and unique Hawaiian cultural references, in a revision performed specifically for the mainland. When I asked her why, she said that she didn't think mainland audiences would have understood some

of the "inside jokes" in the play that were easier for locals to understand.

Perhaps, too, the belief is that only Locals can laugh at Locals. In her discussion of stand-up comedians in Hawai'i, Darby Li Po Price investigates whether comedy functions as an opportunity for "we-ness" or "functions as an expression of hostile aggression toward groups" (121). Li Po Price finds that ethnic joking does promote a sense of connection, community, and camaraderie; but also, ethnic joking is often tamped down when being performed for tourists or *haole*. Price noted how

Tourism inhibits the expression of local and Native humor, in that a mainland audience is unable to understand or appreciate Pidgin language, local cultural references, and local perspectives. In addition, in order to appeal to mainland tourists, comedians must tone down the political, pro-Native, and anti-Caucasian sentiments that are a common part of local and Native Hawaiian culture. (127).

Cataluna's affirmation that Local comedy should be treated no different than any other regional identity is an interesting one, for Cataluna's plays focus primarily on the interactions between Locals and the ways in which they affirm or deny various aspects of their identities.

In her play, *Da Mayah*, Lester, the newly-elected mayor of Hilo, is supported by his Hawaiian Local assistant, Sandra. When Lester, who used favors to get into political

office, is confronted after the election by the individuals who supported him who now wish for him to pay them back, Lester's life is put in danger, and hilarity ensues as Sandra seeks help for Lester from her underworld cousin, Dukie, and his bumbling lackey, Stanton. The characters in the play all affirm and deny both positive and less-than-positive aspects of Local identity. Cataluna uses humor to place the Local identity into a transitional space where all community members are welcome, even if their aspects of identity are less-than-supportive of the larger Local community; in Cataluna's play, there are lessons for everyone.

At the opening of the play, Lester is giving a speech, and the lack of using an appropriate Standard American English is corrected on numerous occasions throughout the speech by Sandra. Lester, "Daayah" says "For many years, the Big Island has been facing a de Lima" and Sandra, yelling from off stage, yells "That's a dilemma!" And then Lester says, "I am proud yet boastful to have been chosen the first Mayor to lead Hilo into the new millinimum" and Sandra yells again "Millenium!" but Lester is unable to say the word correctly: "Millinimum. Millimanum. Whatever." Lester further has problems with "sufferating" instead of suffering, and "en-TREP-aners" instead of Entrepreneurs,

(Cataluna, *Da Mayah* 149-150). The speech then moves away from the script, and Lester slips into slang—"As your new Mayor, I want you, the little people of Hilo, to know that the door to my office is always opened to you - except when I'm not there. I gotta keep it locked because the crime in this town is horrible and I'm pretty sure that koa desk in there I sworth something" (150). Lester is clearly a Local who is out for himself, and who is attempting to perform Politician, but continuously slips into Local.

Sandra, his secretary, is able to traverse both worlds—the political landscape and the Locals-only landscape. Her speech is clearly slang/Pidgin, and yet, she was previously able to correct the mayor, whose speech errors were not due only to his use of Pidgin, but to his general ignorance. Thus, Sandra's Local identity is a natural one, and she works from her Local identity as a foundation, not as a way of hiding in order to fit in to another landscape. Sandra's markers as a Local go beyond just speech, but extend to her love of Local cuisine as well, in addition to her "Local time" habitual tardiness. On one occasion she arrives late to the office, saying:

Sorry sorry sorry Mistah Mayah! I know I late but I jess wen go down to pick up one plate lunch from Sun Sun Lau - cause you know, Thursdays they get their Reduced Fat tripe stew- but then I forgot was Wednesday, so I had to drive all the

way back to Dotty's and . . . Ay, Mistah Mayah. What happen to you? Yu look like you seen a ghost or something . . . You nevah eat the pasteles plate special from Tina Tunta's Lunch Wagon again, ah? I told you no buy from here. She get her pork cheap from her uncle's pig farm cause all the hogs got mad cow disease" (150-151).

Sandra not only knows where the good food is, her Local knowledge tells her where the bad food is, what to stay away from, and how to navigate the islands.

Sandra is the Local girl who knows everyone—including connections to the Hilo underworld and crime syndicate; Sandra keeps the mayor, Lester, focused and looking good for the voters, and even tries to save Lester when he confides his dark past to her, for fear of losing his political clout. When she contacts her cousin, Dukie, he doesn't want to help Lester, but he says he will help Sandra. She responds, "He's da Mayah, Dukie. I no like see him go down. Besides, would be make-ass for me. Like they say, da shit no fall too far form the donkey. And I loke my job with my long lunches and greeting dignitaries and wearing power muumuus from Puamana Crabbe every day" (157). Dukie makes clear that it is Sandra who should be mayor for all she's done for Lester, and Sandra agrees:

You damn straight I would be one great mayah. I know it. You know it. But the big problem is, the voter out there, they don't know it. And if I tried to tell them, they no would believe it. You think they going elect one middle-age Portuguese-

Hawaiian-Albanian, five-time-married, former women's wrestling promoter and part-time plus-size swimsuit model fo be mayah? Crazy!" (157-58).

It is clear in Sandra's speech that she is Local, but she sees herself as an outsider in the political world, where Locals are absent or invisible, having no power. Even though Lester, too, is a Local, he is somehow different from Sandra's Local, and so the markers of good Local become an affirmation of speech and culture, a cunning wit and intelligence, and a real care and love for the community. Despite Sandra being the brains behind the mayor, Sandra is still placed far outside the traditional power structures of the Hawaiian government. But Sandra does wield power in her position as an invisible, behind-the-scenes Local.

When in the office with the mayor, Sandra chastises Lester for making decisions without talking to her first.

SANDRA: What did you do, Mistah Mayah?

LESTER: Nothing.

SANDRA: Lester! (*Sandra whacks him on the back of the head*) Lester, what did you do?!

LESTER: (*Rubbing his head*) Ow! I hate it when you do that. It rattles my fillings. You're going to give me brain damage.

SANDRA: No can. You gotta have one brain first. Now spill it. How are you funding the Director of Protocol position?" (164-65).

As Lester shares the programs he's cutting to pay for the position for a hoodlum who has dirt on him, it becomes clear that Lester, although a Local himself, is clearly an outsider when it comes to having the welfare of the Local populace in mind. Lester's defense: "After all, I'm the mayor" is repeated regularly. Sandra, however, clearly is connected to the Local community. She knows everyone personally, and the good and the bad are still welcomed into her Local community. While she acknowledges that the Mayor isn't too smart, she still is loyal to him because he is a part of the Local community, in the same way that she is loyal to her cousin, although he is an underworld crime boss—he's still a Local.

In Scene 8, the spectator sees Sandra taking on for herself all of the duties needing completion in the programs that were cut by Lester for his own, selfish gain, thus demonstrating her Local loyalty. Sandra is seen "[rushing] across the stage with a fire hose coiled over her shoulder. She's holding a large cat travel carrier. Her cell phone rings and she stops to answer it.

SANDRA: This is Sandralene Leialoha Ferriera... Oh! Howzit Mrs. Medeiros. How you? No, no more hand-van. No worry, I going take you to your doctor's appointment. But first, I gotta' feed the kitties at the Huane Society, put out one fire in Panaewa, and pick up one old ice box from the

side of the road in Mountain View. no, I gotta' go put out the brush fire first. Big, you know. I cannot come pick you up first. Why, what you cooking? I'll be right there." (171).

This humorous take on the multiple definitions of Local both affirms and contests the stereotypes inherent in Local identity. Sandra is simultaneously lazy and hard-working, as exhibited by her willingness to stop fighting fires in exchange for some Local delicacy, and she is also simultaneously compassionate and driven by self-interest too, late when it suits her as she lives on Local time and focused on outcomes when she sees something that needs doing; speaking Pidgin and having an awareness of the correct way to speak to a larger populace. Sandra also uses whatever tools are at her disposal, going through regular channels until she can't, and then taking advantage of help from relatives, even if those relatives have questionable pasts and motives, as her cousin Dukie does.

When Dukie is able to take care of the Mayor's problem at Sandra's request, the mayor rewards Dukie with a prestigious security position that requires cutting Sandra's position in half. Lester says, "It's not like I'm firing you. I'm just downsizing my staff a little to make room for a valuable new addition. And honey, you know you need some downsizing." (175). Sandra is nonplussed. She

argues with the mayor, and the spectator finds out exactly how much Sandra has been doing for the mayor, from writing his speeches to making the county budget; "And even though we haven't been in this office very long" she continues, "every decision, every plan, every idea that came from the mayah's office that made a real difference for this town, it all came from me. All of it" (174). Sandra accuses her cousin, Dukie, of selling out, but he says that he "cannot live the thug life forever" (175). Although she understands, she's still upset by his lack of loyalty.

The Mayor and his relationship with Sandra is contrasted with Sandra's cousin, Dukie, and his relationship with his bungling hit-man, Stanton, whom he fires, just as the Mayor dropped Sandra to Part-time. Both Sandra and Stanton don't question the reasons why they're working so hard to make someone else look good; they simply do the jobs they're asked to do, and when the boss can't make it happen, whether that's funding a city program or killing a thug, they make sure it happens anyway, because they see it as something in the best interest of their community. When Stanton and Sandra meet up, Stanton affirms "Like we both work for guys dat no appreciate us." Stanton's big dream is to "drive around those sampans in Hilo town. Show everybody all da sights. Act all Mister

aloha and stuff." But Stanton sees the important connection between the "tourist crap" they get fed, and "the real stuff about Hawai'i" (183-184). Clearly, Stanton is one of the good Locals, not just out for himself, but interested in contributing to his community in a positive way.

Later, when Stanton and Sandra are confronted by Dukie, Sandra and Stanton decide to move to Honolulu together. At the end of the scene, Dukie is ill from eating food from Tina Tutu's, and Stanton says "Wid all da good plate lunches in this town, I don't know why he insists on eating that pilau pastels. Not when get so much good stuff . . . like ox tail soup, spam musubi, kal bi ribs, 3 choice Korean plate, wor won ton, opihi saimin . . . "(191). The boundaries between Local identities are varied. There are good Locals and bad Locals—and if you are a Local insider, you're one of the good ones: you know where to eat, who to talk to, and how to care about your community; but if you're out for yourself, you're an outsider, Local or not. You're still welcomed into the community, but more as a black sheep that everyone shakes their heads at.

Even though Dukie has fired Stanton and kicks him out of Hilo, it is Stanton who takes Dukie's collapsed body to the emergency room. Then Lester, too, takes ill, and dies in a heap on the floor, and it is Sandra who cries over his

casket—albeit in a *performance* of sorrow—but still, she's the only one there. Sandra yells at Lester's casket:

"Ganfannit you bastard! What the hell were you thinking? Oh, I so mad. Look the mess you left behind. If you wasn't dead already, I would fricken kill you for this!" (195).

Stanton shows up, and Sandra and Stanton console each other, and in talking, discover that they're uncertain whose body is in the casket. The scene is treated humorously, with Stanton looking first at the wrong side of the casket—the feet, and then looking at the top and realizing they're at the wrong funeral. Later, Sandra has a realization about her dealings with Lester:

He never gave a rip about anyone ever. I know how he treated me was wrong, but I have to admit I let him get away with it. I had the choice to leave, but I stayed. But what really boils my onions is that he neva give a rip about the people of this town. Here he was, the first mayor of Hilo, and he never once asked himself, "How am I going to make a difference in this town?" "How am I going to make life better for these people?" Not once! I get so sick of these fricken politicians acting like they going save the world during campaign time and then once they get in office, spending all their energy working on ways to stay in office and get free golf clubs and free trips to Asia and secure a future serving as a do-nothing board member of a wealthy trust. These people supposed to be public servants, not have public servants! (199).

This realization helps Sandra see the importance of affirming her Hawaiian Local identity. In the end, it is

Sandra standing at the podium and giving the address as the mayor, due to a Hilo charter naming the Administrative Assistant mayor in cases of death by botchulism.

Cataluna's humorous take on Local politics challenges stereotypical notions of the Local. What is clear is that Locals must care for their communities, not themselves. Cataluna's characters work in the governmental system, but clearly, they are outsiders, as they've made up their own rules and charter, and they routinely go outside of the confines of governmental protocol in order to achieve positive outcomes for the Local community. The Locals who do not care for the community above themselves are dealt a deadly blow—literally—but are never revealed as traitors by their fellow Locals. The differentiation between outsider tourist and Hawaiian Local is a complicated one, in light of the political and cultural resistance of Indigenous Hawaiians and of sovereignty groups in the last three decades. It is clear that in Hawai'i, beyond the glossy tourism brochures, there is a complicated series of conflicting definitions of Hawaiian.

The difference between Hawaiian Local, visitor, and Indigenous Hawaiian is a politically important one. An example of this insider/outsider demarcation occurred in 1990 and in 1991, when the University of Hawai'i found

itself embroiled in an academic-freedom issue with identity at the root of the disagreement. Trask, Professor of Hawaiian Studies, was brutally criticized on the campus and in the larger media for her negative remarks in response to a white student's characterization of the word *haole*. Trask relates the story in her book, *From a Native Daughter*, in which a student at the University of Hawai'i, Joey Carter,

[complained] in a public letter to the student paper, *Ka Leo*, . . . that words like '*haole-dominated*' society and '*puppet-haole* governments' are racist; that '*haole*' is like the word '*nigger*'; that white repression, persecution, and domination of nonwhites is '*supposed*' (as opposed to actual); that he was chased and beaten by locals because of his skin and eye color; and finally ending his complaint by asserting that people are individuals (as opposed to members of historical groups) who '*classify*' themselves as they like. (170).

Trask goes on to pick apart Mr. Carter's erroneous assumptions about Hawaiian identity, and affirms her belief that this type of backlash from *haole*—whether they live in the state or are on a brief sojourn as tourist or student—ignores the Indigenous rights of Hawaiian people and their desires for self-government and independence (Trask 175-180). For Trask, Hawaiian Local cannot replace the importance of a continued fight for indigenous rights. Clearly, definitions of Hawaiian, Local, and *haole* are contested and affirmed by many groups for a variety of purposes, and exist in many forms and hybridizations.

In the current decade, Locals are of many ethnicities, and are bound together not only by Hawaiian Creole (or Pidgin) usage, but by customs borrowed from numerous ethnicities, and by food, music, clothing, and other contributions from multiple ethnic groups (Mattos 13). However, more and more Indigenouss, according to Mattos, actively seek to separate themselves from the Hawaiian Local identity in order to affirm an indigenous (Native) Hawaiian identity (14) in an effort to reaffirm Hawaiian Cultural identities, paving the way for reaffirmation of political power. Trask's discussions in her book affirm this view. Such a separation makes it even more difficult to determine aspects and markers of Hawaiian Local identity. What is clear, though, is that Hawaiian Locals have shared customs and a shared understanding of the importance of Local community.

CHAPTER 6: FINDING AN ALOHA STATE OF MIND

"In our sovereign suns, drunk on the mana of Hawai'i."³¹

When King Kamehameha III was briefly dethroned by the Royal Navy in 1843, the King appealed to Queen Victoria, who sent word from England affirming her support of the Hawaiian Monarchy and thus ending the tense, if brief, standoff. The Hawaiian flag was raised above the islands once again on July 31, 1843, and King Kamehameha III spoke these words: *Ua Mau ke Ea o ka 'Äina i ka Pono*— "The sovereignty of the land is perpetuated in righteousness." Today, the phrase is Hawai'i's state motto, and the word 'life' is used in place of 'sovereignty.' Clearly there has been a great deal of contestation and affirmation of various aspects of the multifarious Hawaiian identity.

The plays, performances, and representational practices examined in this dissertation are but a handful in a rich and diverse contemporary Hawaiian theatre that illustrate the varied and multiple identities being negotiated in the *aloha* state on the stage and on the streets. The simultaneous contestation of and affirmation of these identities illustrates the fluidity with which these identities operate, and complicate any binary definitions of Hawaiian. Identity is negotiated and turmoil

³¹ Trask, Haunani Kay. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i Press, 2002.

is engaged inside the in-between spaces, the interstices, the liminal stairwell or bridge where numerous understandings of identity can investigate one another and negotiate meanings and contestations. These multiple meanings are impacted by racial and ethnic lineage, and also by historical contexts, spatial relationships, political manipulations, and economic ties.

The unique political and historical positioning of the Hawaiians separates them from other ethnic-American identities, thus offering an even greater degree of complicated investigation into ideas of identity formation. The lack of redress for the Indigenous Hawaiian has no doubt been a primary factor in the fluidity and contestation of Hawaiian identities, as evidenced in the representational practices examined in this study. The theatre and performance practices examined here illustrate the many ways in which Hawaiians attempt to develop greater complexity and understanding of their Hawaianness, and are often able to resist Americanization or complicate the efforts of the tourism industry that wish to usurp the power of Indigenous Hawaiians and Locals to affirm, contextualize, reframe, and reinscribe their own political and cultural identities.

An examination of this unique regional population and the ways in which that population negotiates its status as a colonized people within a politicized, statehood identity offers important insights for theatre practitioners and scholars, as well as for Americans in general. An investigation into Hawaiian identities and the performance of and representations of these identities serves various purposes. Firstly, practitioners and scholars might expand their notions of Asian American and Pacific Islander (or Oceanic) communities, and about the role that performance and other representational practices plays in constructing and in further contesting the formation of these identities. Lee argues "The concept 'Asian-American' implies that there can be a communal consciousness and a unique culture that is neither Asian nor American, but Asian American" (16). However, there are multiple embodiments of Asian American. An examination of how these multiple embodiments interact might force practitioners to reconceive the ways in which Asian American theatre is defined and explored, thus making room for more localized identities such as varied Hawaiian identities.

Secondly, Enlarging the scope of Asian American theatre practice might, as Lee argues, force those theatres "to cope with new questions about the nature of individual

and collective identity;" thus, the many different ways in which 'Asian American' can be conceived [will provide] a tension that drives theatre practice," (17). Enriching Asian American theatre practices in particular, and American theatre practice in general, offers an opportunity for the scholar to negotiate his or her own multifarious identities as observer, practitioner, historian, ethnographer, and social scientist. Like the Indigenous Hawaiians, the positioning point of the scholar's investigation becomes more crucial.

Finally, Hawaiians are still seen as 'outsiders' in contrast to the 'insiders' of mainland America. An examination such as this one that underscores important historical events that led to Hawai'i's inclusion in mainland America broadens foundational understanding of Hawai'i and its people, and contextualizes the place of Hawai'i in the history of the United States. If Jon Stewart's response to Sarah Vowell from earlier in this study is any indication of the ideas that average Americans may have about Hawai'i, then simply incorporating historical footnotes may go far in developing contact-empathy between the state of Hawai'i and those unfamiliar with the rich cultural, political, and historical factors at work in the presentation of varied Hawaiian identities.

My title for this study, *An Aloha State of Mind*, is meant to complicate the context of Hawai'i's membership in the United States—the *Aloha State*—and is also meant to complicate the stereotyped notions that global citizens may have about the Hawaiian islands and the people who live there—the imaginary *state of mind*; additionally, the title is meant to complicate the gaze of the researcher. When the identities of a community are constructed for them, as many of the Hawaiian identities have been constructed, it seems natural that members of that community, disenfranchised and marginalized over time, may want to tear at the borders of those identities and to obscure them through various avenues. Performance and theatre seem like natural outgrowths of the identity formation processes of the Hawaiian people, a community rooted in history-sharing through oral traditions that also connects the body with the voice, as seen in the traditional hula practices and the contemporary musical performances.

Haunani Kay Trask contextualizes the important differences of the historical positioning of contemporary Hawaiians by quoting Native Hawaiian historian Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa: "The Hawaiian stands firmly in the present, with his back to the future, and his eyes fixed upon the past, seeking historical answers for present-day dilemmas.

Such an orientation is to the Hawaiian an eminently practical one, for the future is always unknown whereas the past is rich in glory and knowledge" (Qtd. in Trask 164). However, the contemporary Hawaiian is not enslaved to this past; instead, by honoring the past and the ways in which past is (re)membered, Hawaiians are able to maintain and affirm a particular and distinctive Hawaiian identity in the face of an increasingly global planet.

Additionally, Hawaiians can simultaneously affirm various other embodied versions of Hawaiianness, or contest and reinscribe these various embodied versions, knowing that identities are malleable and fluid over time and experience. It is clear that Hawaiian history and cultural productions cannot be examined through the simplified anthropological and social sciences tropes of the Westernized positionality. Offering a transparent and positioned examination in the same interstices in which Hawaiian identities must negotiate with one another highlights the value of multiple identities coexisting with one another. While new (reinscribed) identities come with new challenges, honoring this fluidity is paramount to the maintenance of a core Hawaiianness.

As a nation and as a people, the Hawaiian community is, has been, and will be impacted over time by numerous

scientific, social, and historical factors. However, if the consensus is that cultural and political identity are simply productions of unknown and severed past connections, or that cultural productions are wholly contingent upon environmental factors, there is no room for an open mind—for shaping an understanding of the spiritual and metaphysical connections that may be housed deep inside bodies and brains that as are still unknown to scientific discovery.

For Hawaiians, ancient connections to the spirit and the metaphysical through the body are well-known. The *ha*—the breath of life that is symbolic of a connection with the spiritual world of the ancestors—is revered in Hawaiian culture. It is a literal and figurative method by which ancestors pass on the life-knowledge of their people to the next generation. This isn't simply superstitious mumbo-jumbo. Numerous medical doctors today are beginning to affirm mind-body connections and their impact on health and well-being, as seen in practices of meditation, conscious breathing, and yoga. When cultural histories and identities of native and indigenous people continue to be viewed through egocentric, cloudy, scientific and social science lenses funneled by Western world view, it's impossible to completely examine the rich and varied

cultural identities as products in and of themselves, rather than as reactions to mainstream, oppressive forces.

It has been almost 119 years since the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. Linnekin argues that "Hawaiian society was remarkable for the lack of resistance it presented to outsiders and for its seeming readiness to incorporate alien elements, (*Children* 239). This limited view cannot account for the unrecognized-by-Western-gaze manner in which Hawaiians have or have not resisted. Westerners may be incapable of understanding the multiple methods by which the Hawaiian people resisted assimilation and colonization. In the 1890s of the West, American Cowboys saw Native American ghost dances as calls to war, not as calls to the ancestors of the past. The pursuit of "a real Hawaiian tradition" is difficult, (Linnekin, *Child* 239), but not for reasons of invented authenticity, as suggested by Linnekin and others. The reasons are found inside the observer. How far is the observer willing to let go of his or her Western positionality and examine through means other than *thick description*? If the non-Native scholar is to offer anything to an investigation of indigenous people, it may be in the deemphasis of mainstream methodologies.

The question, *what does it mean to be a Hawaiian* is even more complex than has been investigated in this study, because the answer to the question is ever-changing and ever-evolving based upon the present and the future. Theatre and performance are key dynamics in reframing how cultural identity might be investigated. Theatre and performance practices offer an opportunity to investigate the many ways identity configurations are decentered (Dolan 84). But if scholars are to undertake such decentering investigations, new methodologies, new vocabularies, and new 'academy-approved' contexts and positionalities need to be employed. As Lee notes:

Traditional theories of theatrical presentation have not allowed for a discussion of how the perception of race and ethnicity affects cognition and meaning in the theatre. In order to understand the emerging ways of constructing not only what is Asian American, but what is more generally racialized or ethnicized, I suggest that we begin by developing a more complex critical vocabulary and a theoretical position from which to talk about the theatre. (26).

Lee's call for "a more complex critical vocabulary" and a new positioning is important if Hawaiian practitioners, and the ways in which practitioners (re)construct meaning, is to be investigated fully within the context of historical traditions, and outside of those contexts. If, as Linnekin believes, "Tradition is always changing, not simply because

of internal or external social change, but because it is interpreted anew in each generation," (*Children* 241) this new vocabulary and context need not engender a presupposition in the "inevitable invention" that she and other scholars and historians accuse indigenous cultures of practicing. Linnekin underscores how

This interpretation does not invalidate the reality, or even the authenticity, of modern Hawaiian tradition. The point is simply that such authenticity is always contextualized, always defined in the present. Tradition comprises that which is interpreted as being traditional in the present. The past is never received mechanically, without reflection and without alteration. (*Children* 241).

Connections to the past, and the ways in which past is experienced in present, can be found elsewhere than those places Western scholars have always looked.

For Hawai'i's Local theatre practitioners, performance is a cultural and political intervention strategy. Their actions on stage, by live bodies and by live voices, helps to reframe identity configurations and also to mitigate constructed meanings and appropriated identities that other institutional forces thrust upon them. Sometimes the theatre actions reinscribe stereotypes and contest historical records, but always, they recontextualize the *aloha state of mind*.

Today's Hawaiian identity is a fluid and contested space. My desire in this examination was to investigate and to present this unique regional population and the ways in which its theatre and performance practices negotiate its status as insider and as outsider to American mainstream identities. My hope is that other scholars will begin to see Hawaiian theatre and performance practice as a rich site of investigation into dramatic production, and also into representations of identity formation and in definitions of American identity, bringing to light new playwrights and performers, new production methods, and new composition processes that have not been investigated prior.

For myself, this study has raised even more questions that might be developed further. Throughout my research, I continued to find more performers, playscripts, and contextual studies that I was unable to include in this brief examination. However, there are several avenues that deserve more attention. For example, I am particularly interested in how the Pidgin play presents Local identity contestations, especially in the context of a spectator-audience made up primarily of Locals. How do Locals engage in performances so closely related to their own identities, and do these Local, pidgin performances translate to non-

Local spectators? A comparative study of Local plays with another unique, regional identity's sub-culture, like the Cajuns of South Louisiana or the Gullah of North Carolina, might be useful in examining how sub-cultures work to affirm or contest stereotypes within their larger cultural frame.

Another interesting avenue of exploration is centered in the composition process involved in the writing of the plays and performance pieces included here, and in other performance arenas in Hawai'i, including the Honolulu Children's theatre, and especially within the Kumu Kahua production framework. Kumu Kahua began early on to develop Local playwrights through classes and through close, community-oriented development of playscripts, and because of its pioneering work in Local theatre, it deserves further archiving and documenting. The notes and communications I found in the Kumu Kahua archives speak to an organization that worked to develop any idea that came their direction into a performance piece, so dedicated were they to the development of the Local playwright. I am interested in how Local and indigenous playwrights approach Western theatrical practices, and then deemphasize the boundaries of Western playwriting modes.

For example, many of the plays I was unable to include in this study developed their stories through a series of tableau-style scenes, and often the characters speak directly to or interact directly with spectators; Kneubuhl, too, has had her work take several varied and differing forms, from the chorus-style presentation found in her play *Emmalehua* discussed in this study, to the scenic history plays, such as *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu*, and then into the street pageant and living history forms she's gravitated to in her later work. I am interested in how these compositions are developed, and then also the process of rehearsing and staging these performances. In limited live viewings of the plays at Kumu Kahua Theatre, I've seen creative use of the stage as an opportunity to bring the past worlds of ancestors into the present world of the actor and spectator; this deserves more investigation. Of course, several key playwrights deserve special critical attention.

Further, a more exhaustive examination of Kneubuhl's work, in particular, or Lee Cataluna's body of work, would yield exciting critical commentary from various positionalities; perhaps through the lenses of feminist literary critique, for example. Also, the preservation of the Kumu Kahua archives and an examination of Kumu Kahua's

further development in the decade since Mattos's dissertation was published would be an important and valuable act of scholarly preservation.

Finally, the recent and lively trend toward Hawaiian Solo-performance excites me greatly. This study began, for me, in an investigation of Solo Autobiographical performers and the ways in which they construct identities on stage. That investigation led me to Hawaiian Local Kimberly Dark, a solo-autobiographical, queer performer. She was someone with whom I had early conversations when I was still investigating Solo-autobiographical performance as an avenue for my dissertation research, and her plays and performances were a rich site of investigation and critical inquiry. I am interested in how she, and other solo-performers and performance poets in Hawai'i, such as Lee Tonouchi, are complicating and splintering unified assumptions about Hawaiian identities in their work. The refutation of a unified and collective Hawaiian experience, and even the refutation of collective Asian or American experience, as seen in these solo and solo autobiographical works, might speak to new directions on the horizon for a Hawaiian theatre and performance practice poised for mainstream exposure.

In closing, I'd like acknowledge the difficulty that marginalized and colonized populations have experienced as a result of discourse models developed via post-modernism, feminist and performance studies. Discourse is a valuable and important mode of philosophical inquiry; however, the the ongoing argument that nations are created arbitrarily, or that racial distinctions are performed rather than inherited, has done no favors for marginalized and colonized populations. In truth, such discourses have made it nearly impossible for colonized people to reassert political and cultural power in the face of new theoretical discourses that announce they never existed in the first place, or that if they did, there was never any core identity/nation formation to begin with. It must be added, too, that the arbitrary definitions of racial difference offered by varied interpretations of blood quantum, are so inconsistent in their application to multiple indigenous populations, that a clear understanding of the multiple factors involved in understanding identity politics makes the whole enterprise suspect from the start.

It was my intention to place some of these questions into the interstices for engaged and heated discussion, but I also acknowledge the desire that many indigenous people may have—that they be left alone by the scholars and

historians. It is Trask's desire that Hawai'i be abandoned by tourists and Westerners so that Hawaiians might develop agency to reclaim their nation and their lands. I empathize with this desire. I have relied heavily on Trask's ideas about the role of the outsider in Hawai'i, and I know that this choice may open heated dialogue about the various purposes in presenting the material in a way that attempts to privilege certain Hawaiian identities above others, rather than simply present the information and allow the reader to develop his or her own ideas about identity and privilege in relation to varied embodiments of Hawaiianess. I feel strongly that employing a transparent research methodology that affirms the impossibility of an unbiased accounting is paramount. Personal biases and assumptions, whether the research makes these invisible or visible, are always present. My desire was to place these biases and assumptions up front for the reader, and then move forward with the presentation of information.

This dissertation is certainly written out of a desire to understand and to know more about a place that informed my own identity very deeply; I am aware, though, of my label as non-Native Settler. Trask offers how "Hawai'i, once the most fragile and precious of sacred places, [is] now transformed by the American behemoth into a dying land.

Only a whispering spirit remains," (*From a Native Daughter* 19). I know this is true. My own trips back to Hawai'i have illustrated, just in the last 15 years, the incredible economic and physical changes to the islands. My hope is that this dissertation might offer a more broadened understanding of the complicated factors at work in Hawai'i, and of the importance of respecting the unsanitized versions of history that some of these playwrights, and that indigenous Hawaiian historians, elders, and researchers have brought to light.

However, investigation of these various versions should include the positionality of the scholar-historian so that the context of such a study is understood. I don't think this necessarily negates the findings; infact, it may broaden the scope of understanding for multiple readers, in that the findings come through a particular lens that might be placed into communication with other positionalities. Those who care to affirm some of my findings about the privileging of some identities over others, might embrace numerous ways of supporting the Hawaiian people and their cause through actionable interventions. These might include monetary donations to organization like Kumu Kahua Theatre, and to the preservation of important sites of Hawaiian history, such as 'Iolani Palace.

Additionally, readers might support the Hawaiian people by sharing knowledge and critical investigations in your own manner of contributions, or even simply by supporting the Local and indigenous writers and artists in Hawai'i. If you are a teacher, teach a Hawaiian play or a collection of Hawaiian short stories or poems, or examine the complicated context of Hawaiian identity formation through other means in your classroom. If you are a traveler to Hawai'i, investigate alternatives to the Tourism machine by staying with a Local family and contributing to the Local economy by patronage to mom and pop restaurants and businesses. These are all good things to do.

My personal desire is one rooted in selfishness, however. I wish to affirm the rights of Hawai'i to reassert nationhood, and also wish to affirm my own connection to a place and a culture that helped form the ways in which which I view myself and view the world. I have considered deeply the materials I've read and have investigated on this dissertation journey. From them, I have learned that I, too, continue to perform fluid and contesting versions of identities—one of which I might label 'Hawaiian.' I hope that someday, I, too, may have a place in Hawai'i as a

different kind of native daughter whose own multiple and
fluid identity is still searching for home.

*The mist of my heart
travels to Waimanalo,
embracing there
the salt of the sea.*³²

³² Trask, Haunani Kay. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i Press, 2002.

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APPENDIX: PERMISSIONS³³



Kirsten Ogden kristenogden@gmail.com

FW: inquiry for Carl's Jr.

bmansfield@ckr.com <bmansfield@ckr.com>
To: kristenogden@gmail.com

Tue, May 17, 2011 at 3:37 PM

Hi Kirsten - Regarding using images from our commercial for your dissertation, as long as the images are not being reproduced for anything that will be used outside of an educational setting, we agree to your intended usage.

Thanks,
Beth Mansfield
Director, Public Relations
CKE Restaurants, Inc.
[805/745-7741](tel:8057457741)

Customer Comments:

Date & Time :05/16/2011 15:48:17
Subject :Initial Comments 05/13/11
Comment :Email; Hello,I am a PHD student and am writing a dissertation. I would like to have permission to use stills captured via internet from one of your commercials for my dissertation. The commercial is the Hawaiian Burger commercial that features a surfer in his ride eating the pineapple burger, with the hula doll on the dashboard. Please contact me as soon as possible: kristenogden@gmail.com * End of Comments

Sync Record Information

SR Number :480754-839738077
Entered :05/16/2011 15:18:21
Visited On :
Meal Type :
Priority :2-Follow Up Required
Source :Email

Reason Code 1:

Reason :Inquiry
Category :Company
Sub Category:Advertising
Property :Television
Descriptor :Requested Information

Customer Information

³³ These permissions were received via email. Specific contact information and telephone numbers have been removed to protect the privacy of senders and recipients.

Name :Kirsten Ogden
Email :
Address :
City :Studio City
State :CA
Zip :91604
Phone :

Account Information

Account Name :Not Specified - Carl's Jr.
Store Number :1100000
Concept :Carl's Jr.
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VITA

Kirsten Enise Ogden was born in Orange, California, and grew up in Honolulu, Hawai'i, and in San Francisco, California, and spent almost every summer of her life in Baywood, Louisiana. She received her Associate Arts degree from Skyline College in Liberal Studies in 1992. After briefly studying acting at the American Conservatory Theatre Academy in the bay area, she earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1995 from San Francisco State University after developing an interdisciplinary major that married psychology, creative writing, theatre, and African diaspora studies. In 1998 she earned the Master of Fine Arts Degree in literature and creative writing from the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, where she taught acting, directing, creative writing, and improvisation. Kirsten taught high school in south central Los Angeles as part of the Teach for America program from 2000-2002, and currently works with the *Kenyon Review's* Young Writers at Kenyon summer creative writing workshops. Kirsten has additional training as a screenwriter from the 2-Year Professional Screenwriters Training Program, Writers Boot Camp, in Santa Monica, California, and additional acting training in Meisner technique from The Acting Corps in North Hollywood, CA. A playwright, poet, essayist, and fiction writer,

Kirsten has had numerous plays produced on university and community stages, and her screenplays have placed in several international contests. She has worked as an actor, director, writer, dramaturge, and educator. She anticipates the Doctor of Philosophy in theatre (English minor and gender studies emphasis) from The Department of Theatre at Louisiana State University in August 2011. Currently, Kirsten lives in Los Angeles, California, and is a tenure-track Professor of English at Pasadena City College.
