

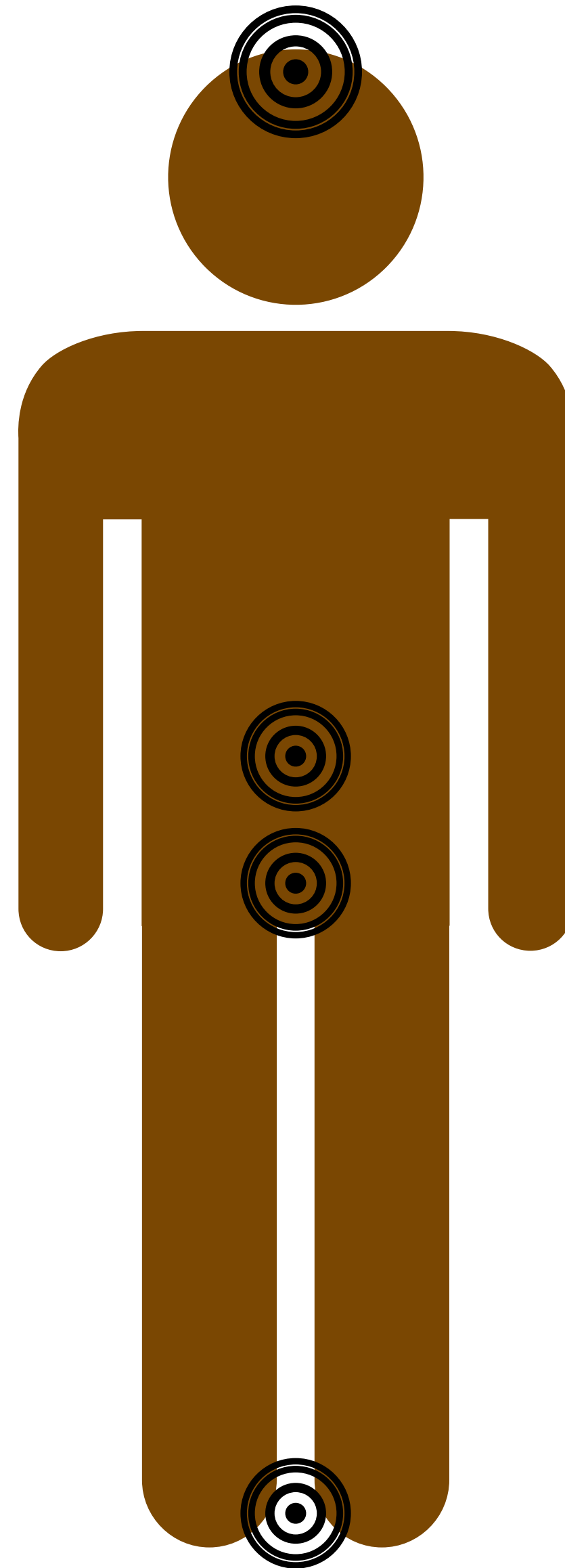
# **the future is wahine**

## **island feminisms**

**Māhea Ahia**

# Piko centered

- standpoint
  - from my hale/house, honua/world
- piko is umbilical cord
- metaphorical point of connection to past, present, and future
  - re/generation, creativity, life
  - Haunani-Kay Trask “slyly reproductive”
  - Haumea who births from many parts of her body: lolo/brain, shoulders
  - More info: [Weebly > Home > Bonus Lessons > PIKO Principles Story](#)

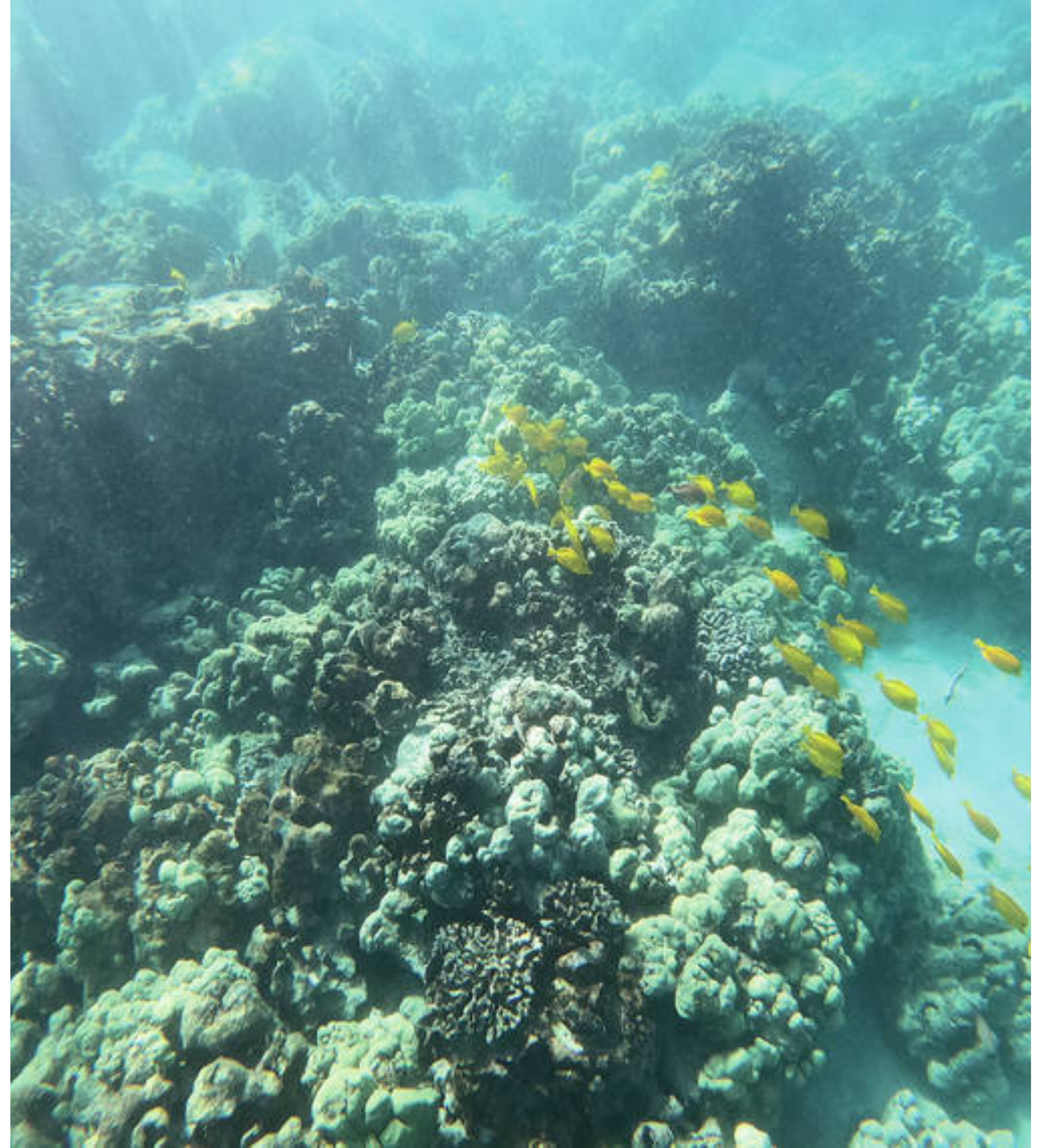


# origin stories

“I ka wā ma mua i ka wā ma hope”

Hawaiian proverb says: look to the past to see the future

- Hawaiian cosmology -
  - *He Kumulipo* = genealogy
  - life emerges from Pō (deep darkness, slime, mystery)
  - coral polyp = 1st life form
    - domain & kino lau (body form) of Hina



# wahine

- How do we define woman? Who counts?
- female, feminine, feminist
- biological reproductive capacity
- female gender assigned at birth
- characteristics: horizontal, passive, receptive, soft, nurturing
- trans-women
- feminine nonconforming she/they
- **wahine** nonbinary feminine (La‘ila‘i, Ki‘i, Kāne = wahine, māhū, kāne)
- **womanist** coined by Alice Walker in “Coming Apart” (1979) -Black women’s everyday lives

# Feminisms Timeline

- **First-wave**
- 19th century > early 20th
- Women's suffrage
- rights - political equality
- which women? white, middle class, Euro-American, heterosexual
- liberal ideology vs. Marxist class economic socialist
- now often referred to as "whitestream" feminism





# Feminisms Timeline second wave



- Second wave

- 1960s

- liberation struggles

- Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Gloria Anzaldúa - race, non-white feminisms



- legal and social equality

- end male supremacy and gender inequality

- now criticized for essentialist descriptions of women

- radical - reorder society, end male supremacist capitalism

- separatist and lesbian feminisms



# Feminisms Timeline

## third wave

- Third wave
  - 1990s - riot grrrl punk WA
  - individuality, diversity
  - difference feminists - psychological differences
  - social conditioning - gender constructions





# Feminisms Timeline

## fourth wave

- Fourth wave
  - 2010s
  - technology
  - rise in social media to call out sexual harassment & violence against women
  - #MeTooMovement





# Feminisms Timeline

- First wave - suffrage, rights of cis-het white middle class women
- Second wave - 1960s gender social equality
- Third wave - 1990s individuality difference diversity
- Fourth wave - 2010s technology, gender violence
- ecofeminism - mystical relation of women to nature
- Postfeminism
- Postcolonial
- Black, intersectional
- Transnational
- Indigenous, Native

# Indigenous feminisms

- culture unites our genders in a shared oppression
- colonialism is a greater threat
- connections to land as familial
- native kinship
- native epistemologies & ontologies (ways of knowing and being)
- critiques of heteropatriarchy, heteropaternalism, settler colonialism, nation-state

# **“Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy”**

**by Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill (2013)**

- settler colonialism - structure: settlers stay, erase & replace (Patrick Wolfe)
- gendered process
- participates in Indigenous dispossession
- critique “white stream” feminisms
- US is based on white supremacy and heteropatriarchy so everyone is radicalized and gendered and has a relationship to colonialism
- What are the 5 central challenges that authors raise?

# Key Terms

“we define **Native feminist theories** as those theories that make substantial advances in understandings of the connections between settler colonialism and both heteropatriarchy and heteropaternalism.<sup>5</sup> Native feminist theories focus on compound issues of gender, sexuality, race, indigeneity, and nation” (11)

- they avoid identity-derived labels: Native feminism(s), Native feminist(s)
- not limited to those who are Indigenous, feminist and/or woman identified
- stigma persists against the “f” [feminist] title in Native communities
- crucial Native insights that have been hidden (due to 500+ years of colonialism) and must now be accounted for within feminisms (generally)
  - not tokenized or tacked on

# Terms

- heteropatriarchy and heteropaternalism
- relies on male/female binary
- male = strong, capable, wise, composed vs. female = weak, incompetent, naïve, confuse
  
- settler colonialism - structure
- make itself seem normal and without origin (vs. historical construction)

# First Challenge

- problematize and theorize intersections of settler colonialism, heteropatriarchy, and heteropaternalism (15)
- organizes citizens into nuclear families
- controls gender and sexual roles into “proper” modern sexuality
- supports the nation-state
- redefines peoplehood - 50% blood quantum vs. genealogical claims
- pressures Native women to reproduce the race by mating Native

# How do we decolonize decolonization itself?

- de-center the nation-state, governance beyond the nation-state models
- eradicate both heteropatriarchy and settler colonialism
- imagine new models based on Native liberation strategies
- decolonize gender/womens studies, ethnic studies, Indigenous studies
- How else?

# second challenge

- **refuse erasure but do more than include (17)**
- inclusion into hierarchical power
- can control and absorb dissent vs. transform
- identity labels can end up being one more [ethnic] subset of whitestream
- assumption that all women should define themselves by gender first, before race or indigeneity (HKT criticism that sovereignty outweighs gender for her)
- Audre Lorde: “There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives” (qtd 18)
- categories of “man” and “woman” are creations of hetero-pat and colonialism
- tropes of grief, ceremony, nature connections



# third challenge

- **craft alliances that directly address differences (19)**
- issues of difference are respected
- issues of land and tribal [lineal/island group] belonging are not erased
- relationships to settler colonialism are acknowledged
  - allies must do the work to learn history, critique colonialism, acknowledge/leverage privilege
  - commit to structural changes for the liberation of all
  - avoid “savior” complex, “playing Indian” or making self indigenous, call out appropriation
  - be Native led

# fourth challenge

- **Recognizing Indigenous Ways of Knowing (21)**
  - complex, knowledgable, full of both history and desire [past/future]
  - avoid New Age idealisms, Romantic notions (noble savage)
  - avoid “authenticity” tropes. Rhetorical sovereignty (Scott Richard Lyons) means Natives determine their own communicative needs, define selves
  - Land is not property or “resources”
  - land/ocean
  - ancestral gender reciprocity, gendered “traditions”
  - sovereignty, gendered critiques, implications for queer theory

# fifth challenge

- **Question Academic Participation in Indigenous Dispossession (25)**
- How does academia participate in dispossession of Indigenous peoples' lands [UHM land grant institution], livelihoods, futures?
- curriculum, jobs, Native representation, concepts, epistemologies/ontologies (ways of knowing and being)
- critique Manifest Destiny's gendered, heroic male dominance of the world
- resist master narratives: Native erasure, lost to the past, unseen present, impossible futures
- We must ask ourselves, how are we complicit as students/teachers? How can we divest from these practices?
- critiques of "settler sexualities"

# Why Island Feminism?

## Marina Karides (2017)

- How can we use islandness as an analytical category?
- What intersections are relevant?
- What has feminism not attended to that is specifically island centered?
- How has island studies ignored feminist critiques?



*A feminist spatiality embraces not only a politics of ubiquity (its global manifestation), but a politics of place (its localization in places created, strengthened, defended, augmented, and transformed by women). Feminism is the politics of becoming in a place. In this admittedly stylized rendering, feminism is not about the category “woman” or identity per se, but about subjects and places. It is a politics of becoming in place. (2006: xxiv)*

J. K. Gibson- Graham

# **“island positive”**

## **“island critical”**

- response to “Othering” tropes: isolation, backwards
- island/continents, archipelagos
- geological, ecological features (flora, fauna)
- migration, tourism, economic development, artistic production
- island studies neglected critique of social inequalities and hierarchies
- island specificity has been overlooked
- “island women” and “island men”

# Karides' goals

- a) the goal of encouraging more feminist research on island contexts that applies an Island Studies perspective;
- b) studies of islandness and island societies that include feminist orientations;
- c) cataloguing and documenting shifts in gender and sexuality on islands resulting from the impact of globalisation in forms such as tourism, militarism, and development; and
- d) an appraisal of concepts and theories of islands through the lens of feminism

Karides emphasizes intersectional (gender, sexuality, race, nation, class), post-colonial, and indigenous, queer theory

**“Adding islandness as a socio-ecological quality that intersects with other social forces creates an opening to evaluate inequity and diversity on and around islands”**

# critiques

clinging to hierarchies of power

use of “island ways” to explain away inequities

“Feminist human geography presently attends to the production of masculinities (Berg and Longhurst, 2010), hetero-normative domination or the queering of hetero-normative spaces (ie Talburt and Matus, 2014; Doan, 2007), and broader evaluations of gender and space. Yet to reiterate, islandness and gender or sexualities hardly have been conceived together, as intersections of inequalities, for informing the making of island place or the retention of island cultures, or appreciating how islanders experience continents” (36)

**How can we use islandness as an analytical category?**



# the future is wahine?

- Real world situations at UH Mānoa
- 2018 backlash by kāne to stickers and slogans appeared saying “The Future is Wahine”
- “Team Laho” - unofficial men’s alliance on campus resisting perceived exile, dismissal, superseding of female-centered perspective
- 2018 UHM Re-Mapping Conference panel, Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua discussed criticisms of her remarks on Haunani-Kay Trasks call for kāne parenting
- it became clear, not enough of our kāne understand what tenets of feminism include, especially Indigenous feminisms
- // All Lives Matter, pushback to #MeTooMovement, anti-mana-wahine sentiments (mis/terminology, appropriation)

**How do we create a wahine future?  
Is that something we even desire?**

## Discussion prompts:

- How can we use islandness as an analytical category?
- What qualities of islandness are relevant to gender/sexuality studies?
- What has feminism not attended to that is specifically island centered?
- What could an island feminism contribute and teach the world?
- What challenges do you foresee?

