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# **Navigating Our Own “Sea of Islands”**

## **Remapping a Theoretical Space for Hawaiian Women and Indigenous Feminism**

*Lisa Kabaleole Hall*

### **WHY OUR SEA OF ISLANDS?**

Epeli Hau'ofa, Tongan artist, intellectual, and cultural critic, turned colonial descriptions of the Pacific inside out in his 1993 revolutionary refiguring of the Pacific as space of plenitude and connection, not emptiness and distance. Rather than a landscape of isolated, scattered islands, the ocean becomes the space that connects the peoples who are both land-based and traveling, communicating and interacting across great distances and differences. Hau'ofa brings islanders and island cultures to the center of his analysis. His theoretical intervention is an expression of metaphorical and literal decolonization: the refusal to think of continents as the “mainland,” as they are so often figured.

I take inspiration from the reverberations of his fundamental reframing in thinking through the historical and contemporary experience of Native Hawaiian (Kanakanā Maoli) women. Feminist theory remains integral to the process of decolonization for Hawaiian and other indigenous women because colonialism takes place through gendered and sexualized forms that reconstitute both individual and communal indigenous identities in stigmatized and disempowering ways. Whatever the disagreements are about the nature of the precolonial

status of women within various indigenous societies, there is no ambiguity about the negative consequences of the views and actions of European missionaries, soldiers, and settlers.

The deliberate destruction of non-heteronormative and monogamous social relationships, the indigenous languages that could conceptualize these relationships, and the cultural practices that celebrated them has been inextricable from the simultaneous colonial expropriation of land and natural resources. The reverberations of the past coexist with a thoroughly colonized present. Indigenous societies struggling to maintain cultural integrity and political sovereignty do not exist untouched and apart from the influence of a dominant culture whose deeply racist, sexist, and violent values are spread throughout the world through television, film, and advertising. **Indigenous feminism grapples with the ways patriarchal colonialism has been internalized within indigenous communities, as well as analyzing the sexual and gendered nature of the process of colonization.**

In the last thirty years, U.S. feminists of color have developed a substantial body of work focusing on the concept of intersectionality, where the interrelationships and co-constructed nature of analytical categories such as race, gender, sexuality, and class are at the center of analysis. **But the legacy of colonial conquest and hyper-commodification has made Hawaiian women's experiences invisible or unintelligible within both dominant and counter-hegemonic discourses produced by non-Hawaiians.** For Native Hawaiian feminists, this means a constant struggle to be seen and acknowledged. Within U.S. feminist theory we struggle for recognition within white feminist theories in which race remains a binary black—white paradigm; black feminist theories in which race remains a binary black—white paradigm; Asian American feminist theories that insist on retaining an “API” nomenclature while having no Pacific Islander—related analyses or constituencies; indigenous feminist theories that presume a North American indigenous land-base; and postcolonial feminist theories that ignore the colonial possessions of the United States and their ongoing struggles. The experience of Kanaka Maoli women is not contained within any of the islands of feminist work I am discussing but nevertheless resonates with all. Hau’ofa pushes me to think about the ways that literal and figurative mapping determine what can be seen. In this essay, then, I am mapping out the wide sea of issues in which Hawaiian women are immersed for later, more in-depth exploration.

### **STRATEGIES OF ERASURE**

My earliest graduate training was in African American studies, with the guidance of Barbara Christian, a Caribbean American feminist who was deeply invested in attending to writers, artists, and thinkers who had been left out of the exclusionary curriculum and canons of

the university system. The insights of U.S. black feminist thought have been crucial to the development of my critical consciousness even as these theorists often displayed the same kinds of omissions and erasures (in this case, directed toward non-black women of color in general and indigenous women in particular) that they brilliantly critiqued within the work of white scholars. Both Toni Morrison and Toni Cade Bambara had acute questions about the dynamics of invisibility and erasure—from the down-home query of Bambara's grandmother, "What are we pretending not to know today?" to the sophisticated analysis of Morrison's "Unspeakable Things Unspoken," where she notes:

I can't help thinking that the question should never have been "Why am I, an Afro-American, absent from [the scope of American literature]?" It is not a particularly interesting query anyway. The spectacularly interesting question is "What intellectual feats had to be performed by the author or his critic to erase me from a society seething with my presence, and what effect has that performance had on the work? What are the strategies of escape from knowledge? Of willful oblivion?"<sup>1</sup>

I will try to follow the insights of both Morrison and Hau'ofa to understand the strategies of erasure that have rendered Hawaiian women invisible, and to recenter them in a vast network of relationships with others. While racialized groups often experience extremes of hypervisibility or invisibility, hypervisibility has often been given more critical attention within ethnic studies.<sup>2</sup> Hawaiian women have been made hypervisible, while still unseen, primarily through the sexualized marketing of the "hula girl," whereby products such as dashboard hula dolls, coconut shell bras, and plastic grass skirts turn a cultural form with sacred, political, and sexual dimensions into a kitsch spectacle.<sup>3</sup> But for the most part, for Hawaiian and other indigenous women, invisibility and related tropes of "vanishing" structure our relationship with non-Hawaiian or non-indigenous others.<sup>4</sup> Putting ourselves at the center of analysis reveals new information about both the center and the periphery. Analyzing how those absences are produced by the theories of others becomes a necessary precondition to combating our own erasure.

### **U.S. COLONIALISM IS OFF THE MAP**

Having been the only Hawaiian in almost every educational setting I had been in, I left my undergraduate education in women's studies at Yale, with its decidedly weak understanding of race and empire in the United States, to go to the University of California at Berkeley and study within the newly developing graduate program of ethnic

studies. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Berkeley and San Francisco State University were the sites of pressure from students, faculty, and community members within and outside the university system who demanded that the histories of U.S. people of color be learned and taught, and who instituted ethnic studies programs and courses to do so. But in the new interdisciplinary and multiracial Ph.D. program that grew out of that history, there was then, and I am fairly sure now, **no curriculum that addressed Hawai'i or Pacific Islanders or U.S. imperialism outside the bounds of the continent as significant and foundational to understanding the development of the United States.** While the paradigm of the "nation of immigrants" was interrupted by models of "internal colonialism," within our coursework the actual colonial history of the takeover of Guam, "American Samoa" [sic], and the Hawaiian islands was absent. One of the founding members of the ethnic studies graduate program, historian Ron Takaki, structured his Hawaiian language–entitled study of labor in Hawai'i, *Pau Hana* (meaning the end of a workday), around the arrival of Asian immigrants within the plantation system. **Native Hawaiian history and issues are relegated to a few, short paragraphs.**<sup>5</sup> Throughout my undergraduate and graduate education, all the knowledge I gained and shared about indigenous Hawai'i and other Pacific islands came through extracurricular research, political organizing, and community relationships.<sup>6</sup>

In my substantial teaching experience with many different kinds of students at elite private institutions, public universities, and community colleges on the continent, I have found that most have never been taught anything about Hawai'i or its history in their previous education. Revealingly, the military and intelligence communities seem to be the only U.S. institutions that demonstrate consistent recognition of the existence of U.S. territories and possessions. The online *CIA World Fact Book* is one of the few readily available sources that succinctly and comprehensively delineate the land under U.S. control and the dates that control was taken. If I ever have students who are not from the islands in question who know anything about Puerto Rico, Guam, or American Samoa, it is because they or their families have been in the military. So the first erasure affecting Hawai'i and Hawaiian women is the denial of the imperial past and present of the United States. The mythology of the "nation of immigrants" is so pervasive and deeply embedded that students often express a sense of betrayal when they begin to rethink this dominant narrative after being exposed to the facts of U.S. colonial expansion. But given the gaps in both high school and college curricula, many students never have an opportunity to develop a counter-narrative. This produced ignorance is reflected in the contemporary public rhetoric surrounding U.S. intervention in Iraq, where both those who support and those who condemn the invasion frame the discussion in terms of the "newness" of the United States as empire builder and the issues that only now affect national identity.

The assertion of Joseph S. Nye, dean of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, that the United States is not an empire has a typically peculiar rationale:

America was briefly tempted into real imperialism when it emerged as a world power a century ago, but the interlude of formal empire did not last long. Unlike Britain, imperialism has never been a comfortable experience for Americans and only a small share of its military occupations led directly to the establishment of democracies.<sup>7</sup>

In an earlier rendition of this argument in the *Washington Post*, Nye was more specific about what "real imperialism" might be, where the first sentence of the preceding paragraph notes that, "Despite its natal ideology of anti-imperialism, the United States has intervened and governed countries in Central America and the Caribbean as well as the Philippines."<sup>8</sup> "Real imperialism," then, does not include the armed takeover of Hawaiian, Mexican, and American Indian lands and peoples. Perhaps Americans' discomfort with the idea of U.S. imperialism accounts for the widespread denial of its historical existence and on-going impact.

#### L I T E R A L M A P P I N G O F H A W A I ' I

The Newberry Library in Chicago is a rich repository of centuries of maps and atlases, which enabled me to see that representations of physical territory are an integral part of nation building and imperialism. The power to name, demarcate, and claim in the name of European and American "discoverers" relies on mapping. Although in many ways the study of cartography has become the last refuge of empiricists who claim that maps are factual representations of reality unmediated by culture, maps are always metaphorical representations. The blank slate of U.S. colonialism is demonstrated physically through mapping. The iconic representation of the United States is the outline of the forty-eight contiguous states. Sometimes, but not always, Hawai'i and Alaska appear as insets, and the territories of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and Guam, much less Wake or the U.S. Virgin Islands, are almost never shown. The physical distortion of distance and relationship inherent in the use of insets has an ideological dimension as well. Nestled next to California, Hawai'i floats comfortably near in the Pacific, a placement reflected in cheap vacation "suntrips" that give continental tourists the choice of Mexico or Hawai'i as equivalent destinations, though one is a millimeter from the continental United States and the other is more than 2,300 miles away. The distorted image naturalizes the connection

between Hawai'i and the United States. An accurate representation of the distances involved would highlight the uncomfortable question of how Hawai'i became the fiftieth state.<sup>9</sup> The only paper map I saw pictorially representing the United States as the continent and all its possessions at one time was in the aptly named 1903 Rand McNally *New Imperial Atlas of the World*.<sup>10</sup> The only other U.S. map I found that included territories and possessions was a chain-restaurant giveaway map, celebrating the bicentennial of the nation, that had a small line of print beneath the forty-eight states that named them.

## RACE AND THE ERASURE OF INDIGENEITY

The distortions of the literal and figurative mapping are foundational to the self-mythologizing of the United States, which relies on two intertwined historical distortions. First, the myth of a (mostly) empty North American continent waiting for (European) settlement and "development" is foundational to the origin story of the United States as a "nation of immigrants" developing an untamed wilderness. This origin story requires more than five hundred years of denial of contrary facts, beginning with the existence of millions of indigenous people in North America at the time of European contact and continuing in the present, with public ignorance about the more than 562 currently federally recognized tribal entities and their struggles to maintain their limited sovereignty and promised treaty rights.<sup>11</sup>

Inextricable from this denial of the existence and foundational significance of indigenous peoples is the popular conception of race as paradigmatically black and white. In the absence of an understanding of colonialism, the U.S. self-construction as a "nation of immigrants" symbolically reconfigures slavery as involuntary immigration and as such, the original racial sin of the nation. African Americans become symbolically indigenous, while all other people of color are seen as potentially illegitimate and/or illegal "aliens."<sup>12</sup> While it is certainly true that an earlier version of anti-black racism in the United States demanded (and might still) that black people "go back to Africa," I think it is fair to say that more recent waves of anti-immigrant racism have largely framed black people as solidly African American even to the extent of labeling non-U.S. people of African descent all over the world as "African American."<sup>13</sup> While succeeding waves of white European settlers took on "native American-ness" through their birth in the United States (and immediately denied it to newer European immigrants), black people have staked a foundational claim on the development and identity of the nation based on the labor of slavery and exploitation.<sup>14</sup> The historical and contemporary folk demand for "40 acres and a mule" as minimal reparations following the abolition of slavery, is a legitimate plea that nevertheless effaces the question of from where the 40 acres originate.<sup>15</sup>

In a black–white dichotomy, actual indigenous peoples disappear completely, always already vanishing.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps the trope of the vanishing native is a wishful projection of a nation whose citizens refuse the status of settler, in contrast to New Zealand, for example, a former British colony whose national identity incorporates (albeit extremely problematically) the indigenous inhabitants. This “vanishing” is helped along by a racial system in the United States in which blackness is assumed to subsume any other ancestry, on the one hand, while indigeneity must be documented and quantified to exist, on the other.<sup>17</sup>

Michael Omi and Howard Winant's classic *Racial Formation in the United States* provided a much needed framework for understanding the complexity of racialization while avoiding the analytic pitfalls of both essentialism and the dismissal of race as “merely” socially constructed and, as such, a distraction from other, “real” issues.<sup>18</sup> On the one hand, their conceptualization of racial projects is extremely useful for thinking about the historical development of a spectrum of racial formation in the United States that is the consequence of different economic imperatives for the state. The so-called “one-drop rule”, wherein any known African ancestry classifies a person as black, enlarged the class that could be denied property and legal and voting rights after the abolition of slavery, while the barriers put in the way of indigenous recognition restricted the population entitled to the rights reserved to them through treaties and/or international law.<sup>19</sup>

However, in Omi and Winant's analysis, there is still a lack of attention to the way that indigenous identity in the United States both disrupts and reinforces racialization. The incorporative nature of “blackness” in the United States makes it the mirror image of the putative purity of “whiteness,” but both constructs erase indigeneity. The racial logics of the continental United States mean that a person with any amount of African ancestry and less than an arbitrarily defined amount of Indian ancestry is socially black, and a person with both European ancestry and less than an arbitrarily defined amount of Indian ancestry is socially white. The percentage of *self-defined* African Americans with known and/or mythologized American Indian ancestry is quite high; the number of *self-defined* white Americans who boast of their Cherokee great-grandmothers or other distant ancestors is also significant. But neither group situates itself in relation to contemporary indigenous nations and struggles in the present day; their indigenous roots remain a matter of nostalgia and ironically a means to solidify their “American-ness.”<sup>20</sup>

The logics that were developed in the context of American Indian classification were carried over to the colony of Hawai'i. Thus, a second crucial form of erasure of Hawaiian women lies in the racial formations of the United States. The ideology of “blood quantum,” wherein a percentage of blood must be documented to acquire and possess a legal “Indian” or “native Hawaiian” identity is restricted solely to the indigenous; other



U.S. racial categories, such as Latino, Asian, or Arab, carry no such implications. J. Kehaulani Kauanui's work on the hearings of the Hawaiian Homes Commission in 1920 shows how American ideas about race and blood were imposed over indigenous Hawaiian concepts of genealogical identity. She traces the political decision-making that created a new definition of native Hawaiian identity, requiring the formal documentation at least 50 percent Hawaiian ancestry in order to become part of a beneficiary class defined as being in need of "rehabilitation." This externally imposed and essentially arbitrary definition negatively impacts the Hawaiian community to this day, creating deep divisions between Hawaiians who are legally entitled to governmentally controlled resources—most crucially, Hawaiian Homesteads land—and those who are not.<sup>21</sup>

### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

"[T]he [Hawaiian] natives generally yielded to the superiority of our civilization, and copied its ways; for, unlike the Asiatics, they had no civilization of their own, and, unlike the North American Indians, they were capable of civilization."<sup>22</sup>

Racism permeated the development of the U.S. nation from the laws of the colonies that began the process of turning black indentured servants into a permanent class of slaves to the murderous ideologies of westward expansion and the racist restrictions on immigration and naturalization that only ended in the 1960s. As white Americans began to flood the islands in the 1800s, they were unsure whether they saw Hawaiians as noble savages, black savages, or something else entirely. Blackness and sexuality were used to stigmatize Hawaiians, including allegations of illegitimate African ancestry in the royal family. "Dusky Queen Lil" was a none too subtle reflection of the racialized disrespect meted out to Queen Lili'uokalani that appeared in the writing of U.S. pro-annexationists. Political cartoons of the day both for and against annexation show Hawai'i figured as black, savage, and often female.<sup>23</sup>

A hundred years later, in the 1960s and 1970s, in the context of worldwide movements for decolonization, many U.S. people of color organized themselves under the rubric "Third World," emphasizing a shared history and a political identity as colonized peoples. The depoliticized bureaucratization and marketing of "multiculturalism" and diversity that followed in the 1980s and 1990s solidified what I like to call the four food groups of contemporary U.S. racial discourse: Latino (Hispanic), Black (African American), Native American, and Asian/Pacific Islander.

Hawaiian women occupy a shifting categorical terrain. Within federal bureaucracies and some community-based organizations, Hawaiians are classified as "Native American" with American Indians and

Alaskan Natives, but are rarely addressed in Native American studies courses or by Native American community organizations. The Stanford University Native American Cultural Center: American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Program and the National Native American AIDS Prevention Center, whose mission is to “stop the spread of HIV and related diseases among American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians,” remain exceptions in their explicit organizational inclusion of Hawaiians. Even so, their programming and imagery remain heavily Indian and tribally oriented.

More rarely, Hawaiian women have been classified as “Black” with women of African descent in a few contexts, including the appearance of Queen Ka’ahumanu in the Afrocentric “documentary comic book” *Black Women for Beginners* and in the framing essay for Joanne M. Braxton and Andrea Nicolee McLaughlin’s anthology *Wild Women in the Whirlwind: Afro-American Culture and the Contemporary Literary Renaissance*.<sup>24</sup>

But our most common (mis)classification is as “Asian Pacific” with immigrant Asian women, a category created by the U.S. Census, and this has had the most serious repercussions of all for Hawaiian women’s political and cultural recognition. The conflation of the pan-ethnic category of Pacific Islanders and the pan-ethnic category of Asian American as “APA”/“API”/“Asian and Pacific American” and so on has had severely detrimental effects on Pacific Islanders on the continent. Within the United States, “Asian American” is an immigrant-based category and, within its framework, Hawaiians’ indigenous identity disappears. Asian Americans have taken up the use of the APA etc. construction in an attempt to be inclusive, but the crucial difference between inclusion and appropriation is whether the included benefit equally from their inclusion. Most organizations and events that use this construction do not have staff or content that focuses on Pacific Islander-specific issues. They are enabled to continue this practice in a way that would be impossible if they called themselves Asian/Latino American while having no Latino staff, constituency, or programming, because PIs are a relatively tiny and geographically concentrated population in the United States, and non-PIs have no idea who Pacific Islanders are.

The general lack of any knowledge about Pacific Islanders—whether Polynesian, Melanesian, or Micronesian—means that the construction of an “Asian Pacific” racial category in the United States has served to disguise the absence of Pacific Islanders in U.S. organizations. The tremendous disparity in the size of each group has meant that any statistics on “APA” etc. have been useless at best and radically misleading at worst for gaining accurate information about Pacific Islanders. While some Asian American groups (particularly Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans) have gained a modicum of political, educational, and corporate power, by and large Pacific Islanders have not. Before the long-fought-for disaggregation of PIs from the “API” category for

Census 2000, the huge dearth of Pacific Islanders in higher education and positions of organizational power was buried within the "API" statistics. Frustratingly, some groups have taken to re-aggregating AA and PI census data, so that they can continue to compare statistics with pre-2000 data.

J. Kehaulani Kauanui has written about the multiple statuses of Pacific Islanders within the United States: indigenous Hawaiians, American Samoans, and Chamorros from Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas; migrants from the former U.S. Trust Territories of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Belau; and immigrants from countries with "no historical or political relationships to the U.S.," such as Tonga and Fiji.<sup>25</sup> Within this complexity, Pacific Islanders have very different educational, health, economic, and social demographics as a group than Asian Americans.<sup>26</sup> This is not to claim that Asian Americans do not experience a variety of serious issues, just as Pacific Islanders do; it is to underline the ways in which the issues that face each pan-ethnic group are quite different, whether the dynamics of Pacific colonization versus Asian immigration, issues of Pacific language preservation and reclamation versus Asian struggles for ESL education, the environmental impact of nuclear testing and global warming on island ecologies, or the stereotypes and assumptions each group faces.

Another example can be seen in the **very different forms the gendered racism/racist sexism that both Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face takes**. Geisha girls, dragon ladies, and delicate flowers are not the stereotypes Islander women battle. The sexualized stigmatization of "promiscuous" native women is about a perceived lack of civilization, not the orientalism that creates stereotypes of decadence and sexual artifice.<sup>27</sup> Native women's sexual appeal is seen as natural and primitive, while Asian women are seen as inheritors of ancient, non-Western exotic sexual *arts*. On the continent, large-bodied and dark-skinned Islander men are gendered/racialized as black men, with the attendant prejudice and danger of stereotypes of hyper-masculinity, not feminized with the stereotypes Asian American men face. The police violence experienced by Samoan and Tongan men in southern California, for example, has everything to do with their perceived blackness and savagery, not their emasculation.<sup>28</sup> Neither set of stereotypes is "worse" than the other, but they are not the same.

Tom Brislin's "Exotics, Erotic, and Coconuts: Stereotypes of Pacific Islanders" is one of the few articles to address the specifics of the media stereotyping of Pacific Islanders (even though he strangely continues to include Asian Americans in his analysis in a way that undermines his own argument). He describes four common popular media stereotypes of PIs: that they are "picturesque and primitive" natives, "savage cannibals," "sexy uninhibited women" eager for Westerners, or "self-inflated men who preen and strut but are easily fooled by superior

Western intelligence."<sup>29</sup> Add the retro-racism of 2006's *King Kong* and the 2003 and 2006 episodes of Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise to Brislin's discussion of 1980s and 1990s media, and we can see that little has changed in the portrayal of islanders in the mass media.

On the rare occasions U.S. media representations include Pacific Islanders, they are either an unnamed and undifferentiated generic presence or are marked specifically as Hawaiian. This equivalence between Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders is common in the work of those who use the "APA" and "API" terminology as well. But Hawaiian women cannot stand in for Pacific Islander women as a whole. The cultural, political, and language variations between the anthropologically labeled groups of Polynesians, Melanesians, and Micronesians are significant, not to mention the historical divisions within each category. The continental U.S. use of Hawaiians as representative of and/or identical to the category of Pacific Islanders as a whole is particularly ironic, since Hawaiians occupy a vexed position within the grouping. Often we are either ignored in the international arena within the assumption we are unproblematically American, or marginalized by other Pacific Islanders because of our perceived loss of culture through language loss and extensive intermarriage. The circuit of knowledge focusing on the Pacific flows through the publishing networks of the former British and European colonies. Global power politics means that Australian and New Zealand feminists read U.S. feminists' work but there is not often a reciprocal exchange. The cost of imported books and journals is a factor, as is a lack of basic awareness. The eurocentricity of the U.S. educational system means that common knowledge about Australia, New Zealand, and the many island nations of the Pacific is lacking. A few exceptions exist, however. **Through international feminist small press publishing circles, the work of Maori lesbian feminist Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Hawaiian/Maori Cathie Dunsford has had some U.S. circulation.**<sup>30</sup> More recently, Maori researcher Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* has been taken up by indigenous scholars and others interested in decolonization, and she has spent a significant amount of time lecturing in the United States.<sup>31</sup>

## HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND INDIGENOUS FEMINISM

Most significantly for Hawaiian women, the common use of "API" functions to erase Hawaiian sovereignty as a pressing contemporary issue. Our deepest bond with American Indian women is created through the shared **struggle to support indigenous nationhood as the base for the health and survival of our peoples.** Mililani Trask and J. Kehaulani Kauanui have been among the most conscientious supporters of the bonds between American Indian and Native Hawaiian women through their political work and writing.

The importance of indigenous national sovereignty is a very difficult concept to convey within a dominant society dedicated to the fetishization of individualism and deeply suspicious of group identities. In the United States, the contemporary conception of race is firmly anchored in civil rights ideologies, the idea of equality of individuals within one nation, and does not address very different concepts of indigenous nationhood. Paradoxically, the logics of some forms of anti-racist struggles can undermine group identities by advocating for a social justice based on the equal treatment of individuals. For this reason, many indigenous women are wary of the lumping together of racialized groups of indigenous, immigrant, and enslaved origin as one, homogeneous category—"people of color"—on the grounds that the specificity and particular rights of indigeneity disappear in the mix.

For similar reasons, many activist indigenous women are also suspicious of calls for solidarity on the basis of female identity and shared gender oppression across cultures.<sup>32</sup> The disavowal of feminism by some is rooted in two very different but overlapping schools of thought. The first is **that feminism is a discourse of white Western women that is really about their struggle to have equal status with white Western men**, a status that still puts them into a superior position *vis-à-vis* everyone else. Sadly, skeptics can find many examples of self-identified feminist analysis to support this view. But here it is helpful to remember Barbara Smith's acerbic declaration, "Feminism is the political theory and practice that struggles to free all women. . . . Anything less than this vision of total freedom is not feminism, but merely female self-aggrandizement."<sup>33</sup>

In the **second critical view, feminism is seen as creating an artificial distinction between men and women that is inherently divisive to the strength of the "people" or nation as a whole**. Proponents of this line of thinking do not consider Gloria Anzaldúa's response to the accusations of anti-feminist cultural nationalists, "Not me sold out my people, but they, me."<sup>34</sup> What Anzaldúa, the queer daughter of farmworker poverty, border-crossing and clashing, sexual, spiritual, and racial *mestizaje* meant by this is **the heart of the struggle for indigenous and other women of color to decolonize ourselves from all the elements that damage our lives, no matter what their origin**. In contemplating the racism within white-dominated versions of feminism and the sexism within masculinist anti-racist and anti-colonial struggles in her 1976 poem "Revolutionary Blues," Black lesbian feminist poet Julie Blackwomon (Carter) noted, "I expect to be shot in the back by someone who calls me sister."<sup>35</sup>

What is peculiar about the framing of feminism as a struggle of white women versus white men is that it manages to ignore almost forty years of texts produced by contemporary U.S. feminists of color concerned with both feminism and cultural nationalism. Who benefits by the repeated assertions of a Eurocentric trajectory and timeline to describe feminist theory and activism in the United States—assertions

repeated by women of color who themselves were profoundly influenced by a very different historical narrative and set of interventions?<sup>36</sup>

The most well-known Hawaiian activist intellectual outside of Hawai'i, Haunani Kay Trask, published her first book, *Eros and Power*, about feminist theory, in 1984, but this early work did not address Hawaiian women. In an article reflecting on sexism in the sovereignty movement, she framed the early days of her 1978 return to Hawai'i following her continental education as an experience of "double colonization" as a Hawaiian feminist.<sup>37</sup> Yet she subsequently renounced all identification with feminism, even as a growing number of feminists of color began to support her work. She continues to characterize feminism publicly as a movement of racist white women, with no real acknowledgment of the theoretical work of feminists of color, such as Angela Davis, Mari Matsuda, and Cherrie Moraga, among the many others she has appeared with on panels and at conferences over the years.<sup>38</sup> The incongruity of her position was highlighted at her keynote speech during "The Color of Violence," an enormous activist and intellectual conference at the University of California at Santa Cruz focusing on anti-violence activism among women of color, which was produced by Andrea Smith and the women of INCITE: Women of Color against Violence with the support of the UCSC Women of Color in Collaboration and Conflict Research Cluster in April 2000. The conference was so well-attended that it had to turn away huge crowds, even after moving to a venue much larger than that originally planned. Trask received a standing ovation from the overflowing audience of feminists of color and seemed greatly moved by the presentations and discussions, yet she continues to frame feminist thinking and activism as white. Malcolm and Martin remain tropes for her public speaking, but not Angela.

### **MANA WAHINE (WOMEN'S POWER)**

One of the explanations for some activist indigenous women's disavowal of feminism is the belief that the status of women was higher within most indigenous societies before colonization; than after, *ie: the indigenous was always already feminist*.<sup>39</sup> In this context, feminism is seen as irrelevant because it is superfluous, not because it is essentially unimportant.<sup>40</sup> According to this set of assumptions, reclamation of sovereignty will automatically address issues of sexism.<sup>41</sup> But positing sovereignty struggles as separate from feminist struggles effaces three important sets of issues. First, that colonization takes place through gendered and sexualized forms. Second, whatever egalitarian sexual and gender systems that existed prior to colonial invasion and conquest have been thoroughly colonized by Christianity and capitalism. And finally, if the condition of indigenous women is improved, the health of the people as a whole improves.

One of the problems for Hawaiian women is that we are very seldom mentioned in the work of non-Hawaiian U.S. feminists; some exceptions have included Mab Segrest's essays in *Born to Belonging: Writings on Spirit and Justice*, which explore her social justice education through travel narratives; the political speeches of musician Holly Near; and M. Jacqui Alexander's collection of essays *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred*.<sup>42</sup> In thinking about the path that led her to begin research on Hawai'i, East Coast-based historian Sally Engle Merry reflected that "Hawai'i represents, I think, a space of denial in the consciousness of American history."<sup>43</sup> On a meta-structural level, the existence of Hawaiian women is foreclosed by common theoretical assumptions. Some works actively erase us, but others merely do not speak directly to us. Given the smallness of our numbers in proportion to the magnitude of the issues that surround us, Hawaiian women must navigate among and between the valuable insights of these theories, even as we are not explicitly represented within them.

There have been crucial feminist interventions by Kanaka Maoli scholars and activists who both do and do not identify as feminists. Hawaiian historian Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa's work demonstrates the crucial relationships among language, cultural survival, and decolonization for indigenous feminists. Her *Native Lands and Foreign Desires—Pehea La E Pono?* was the first to use Hawaiian-language sources in writing the history of Hawai'i and discussed both the same-gender relationships that existed among some *ali'i* (the elite class of Hawaiians) and the political dimensions of those relationships.<sup>44</sup> Previous histories relied mostly on white missionary sources, since their authors could neither speak nor read Hawaiian.

In her monograph *Na Wabine Kapu (Divine Hawaiian Women)*, Kame'eleihiwa notes there were women chiefs as early as 1375. In the religious system, both male and female gods had power and prestige. Gender was not the deciding factor in the distribution of political and social power in pre-European-contact Hawaiian society; rank and lineage were. High-ranking women served as counsel to chiefs and could fight as warriors.<sup>45</sup> Contrary to the proclamation of democracy triumphing over despotism, American colonization stripped political power and voting rights from Hawaiian women, but not without a fight. Noenoe Silva's recent history of the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, *Aloha Betrayed*, grows out of her discovery of political petitions protesting annexation by both Hawaiian women's and men's organizations. Silva's work, like Kame'eleihiwa's, demonstrates the importance of language skills, since she could delve into a rich archive of Hawaiian-language newspapers that recorded cultural and political events and Hawaiian women's resistance to colonization.<sup>46</sup>

For Hawaiian women, the imposition of Christianity within the Western legal system forced their literal renaming through both

"Christian names" and patrilineal surnames<sup>47</sup> and enforced monogamy and heterosexual marriage through the criminalization of sexual behavior. The view of missionary William Alexander that "licentiousness" was "the besetting sin of the people" and that Hawai'i was "a sea of pollution" was common among the Calvinist interlopers.<sup>48</sup> Sally Engle Merry's groundbreaking *Colonizing Hawai'i: The Cultural Power of Law* examines nineteenth-century court documents to demonstrate how "fornication" and "adultery" were defined and constructed as crimes. She notes that, from the 1830s to the 1850s, fully 73 percent of the legal caseload for all the islands was composed of offenses related to sexual behavior—namely, "adultery," "lewdness," and "seduction."<sup>49</sup>

Resistance to the criminalization of sexuality and the imposition of non-Hawaiian ideas about the expression of sex and gender has been a contested theme from the beginning of missionary contact to the present. After the overthrow, the deliberate suppression of the Hawaiian language in schools through forbidding and punishing its use meant that many Hawaiians did not and do not have direct access to the words of their ancestors.<sup>50</sup> It is only very recently that a generation of Western-trained scholars exists with both fluency in Hawaiian and a commitment to decolonization. In 2001, Hawaiian educator and activist Ku'umealoha Gomes lamented, "The history of Kanaka Maoli sexuality and spirituality has yet to be written. Historians such as Noenoe Silva, Kaleikoa Kaeo and Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa are in the process of doing that after research on 'oli [chants], mele [songs] and mo'olelo [stories] that reveal a distinct connection between Kanaka Maoli spirituality and sexuality." She highlights the inextricable relationships the historians explore between cosmology and sexuality, and the expression of those relationships through dance and chant:

For Kanaka Maoli there were no labels of HOMOsexual or HETEROsexual. However they were SEXUAL and their sexuality is intertwined with their spirituality. Kanaka Maoli today look to their ancestors in understanding their own sexual expressions. Many sexual clues are derived from relationships in nature, between and about the gods, the creation of land, the protection and perpetuation of a Nation, her people and resources: i.e. mating between Papa (earth) and Wakea (sky); the relationship of Papa and daughter Ho'okukukalani; the relationship of Pele's sister Hi'iaka and Hopoe, sexual metaphors in plants, and formations, the sky and the ocean.<sup>51</sup>

Kame'eleihiwa is currently working on a book on Hawaiian sexuality that examines key themes in Hawaiian mythology, history, poetry, and literature, including multiple partners, brother–sister chiefly



mating, and bisexuality.<sup>52</sup> She writes of the social relations embedded in terms such as *po'olua* (child of two fathers) and *punalua* (the relationship between two female lovers of a male lover, or two male lovers of a female who are not each other's lovers).<sup>53</sup> As a chanter and musician as well as an academic, she is well equipped to unpack the multiple layers of sexual and spiritual meaning embedded in *kaona*, symbolic language with double, triple, or quadruple meanings dependent on the knowledge of those who speak and hear it. The researchers collaborating with the revered Hawaiian cultural teacher and translator Mary Kawena Pukui noted, "Let the non-Hawaiian be content with reference to place or ship or blossom, to fern and rain spray. But, as Mrs. Pukui puts it, 'When the Hawaiians all start giggling, then you know it means something else.'"<sup>54</sup>

In the 1990s, the state of Hawai'i became one of the heated national testing grounds to legalize same-sex marriage. The homophobia of the religious right, both locally and nationally, and the upper-middle-class white male domination of the activism of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), among other gay political organizations, combined to create a toxic framing of the issue as (white) gay outsiders versus local (heterosexual) families.<sup>55</sup> Na Mamo o' Manoa, a group of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered Native Hawaiians, and Na Mamo o Hawai'i, an overlapping group of Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, attempted to intervene from two directions, testifying at gatherings of Hawaiian sovereignty activists and filing a friend of the court brief supporting the same-sex marriage plaintiffs:

[T]he State's attempt to deny same-gender couples the civil rights and responsibilities associated with marriage is contrary to the Hawaiian tradition of recognizing and tolerating same-gender relationships. In traditional Hawaiian culture, same-gender relationships were not considered "sins"—there were no kapu (laws) against such behavior.<sup>56</sup>

They supported their argument with references to the work of Pukui and her collaborators, who noted that even the critical 1800s Christian convert David Malo wrote, "In ancient times ... moe aikane [friend mating] ... [was] not considered wrong ... [or] regarded as evil."<sup>57</sup>

*Ke Kulana He Mabu*, a film produced in 2001 by local Asian filmmakers Kathryn Xian and Brent Anbe, carried on an exploration of these themes. The directors frame the film with the questions Na Mamo member Ku'umealoha Gomes asks in her filmed interview as she recounts the story of asking Hawaiian elders if they remember how physically affectionate Kanaka Maoli of all genders used to be with each other in public, and how sexy the hulas performed at parties and public gatherings were. She asks what has changed over time, and why.

Gomes explains that this call to memory is what makes the older people rethink the way the same-sex marriage debate has been framed and softens their opposition. In this context, the call to return to tradition is a "progressive," rather than regressive one, offering a wider range of accepted cultural behavior. In a similar context, Maori feminist Ngahaia Te Awekotuku proclaims, "My challenge is this: we [Maori] should reconstruct the tradition, reinterpret the oral history of this land, so skillfully manipulated by the crusading heterosexism of the missionary ethic."<sup>58</sup>

A nation is not conquered until the hearts of its women are  
on the ground.

—*Cheyenne proverb*

Andrea Smith's *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* makes significant theoretical interventions in our understanding of the inextricable relationship between colonialism and sexual and gender violence, from her analysis of the history of Indian boarding schools to her linking of spiritual and sexual abuse. In Canada, Lee Maracle has been a forerunner in making the connections between community violence and colonial histories of abuse and degradation.<sup>59</sup> The rates of sexual abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, and all other, less obviously gendered indicators of community health—drug use, incarceration rates, suicide, and so on—remain frighteningly high for indigenous communities and peoples. Native Hawaiian women have the highest incidence of breast and lung cancer in Hawaii.<sup>60</sup> Hawaiian women's gendered human rights needs include freedom from domestic (and international!) violence, reproductive freedom, and access to education, healthcare, and employment, just to begin with. The safety of our bodies is in no way guaranteed.

So contemporary Hawaiian women face political struggles on multiple fronts. Because the political overthrow of the sovereign nation of Hawai'i was accompanied by a "civilizing" mission that explicitly denigrated the culture, history, beliefs, and practices of the Hawaiian people, the project of decolonization is inherently multifaceted. It is at once intellectual, political, artistic, and spiritual, and the reclamation of the colonized body is at the center of the work.

Material and spiritual safety are deeply intertwined. The feminist decolonization project seeks the integration of spiritual, psychological, and physical health, or rather the recognition that these elements cannot exist outside of their interrelation. The question of *how* to hold all these elements together in our thinking and activism is a question of practice. Reconstructing tradition and memory is a vital element of indigenous survival, and there is nothing simple or one-dimensional about the process of reconstruction.

In a deeply moving book forthcoming from the University of Hawai'i Press, *Ancestry of Experience: A Journey into Hawaiian Ways of Knowing*, Leilani Holmes explores the embodiment and enactment of memory, the remembrance of history through multiple sources. She creates a dialogue between Western and Hawaiian epistemologies and their relationship to bodies, physical movement, and dreams. The unusual double-columned format of her text speaks with and against itself, symbolizing internal conflicts and contradictions and multiple meanings. In one section, she meditates on the methodology of the *kaona*:

Long before Western phenomenology was a discipline, the use of *kaona* presupposed language not only as an instrument of communication, but also as a method by which speakers bring the world into existence. . . . To look into *kaona* is to ask what knowledge is, where it comes from, how it is justified, and how we know what we know . . . the learner must interrogate the "selves" she brings to her narrated experiences and her telling of others' stories. To look into *kaona* is also to interrogate one's practices and responsibilities to the knowledge that continually emerges.<sup>61</sup>

The *kaona* becomes a methodology of communication, of identity and world creation where there is no easy division between speaker and audience, meaning and context. In dominant U.S. culture, there is little or no emphasis on the idea of being responsible to knowledge; knowledge is a possession, not something to which one has an ethical relationship. But feminist decolonization efforts cannot afford to overlook an interrogation of the relationship of knowledge to both practice and responsibility.

M. Jacqui Alexander's long-awaited book *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* has this to say about the issue:

Vision can only be as effective and as sturdy as our determination to *practice*. . . . It is the daily practice that will bring about the necessary shifts in perception that make change possible. Vision helps us to remember *why* we do the work. Practice is the *how*; it makes the change and grounds the work. A reversal of the inherited relationship between theory and practice, between how we think and what we do, the heart of engaged action.<sup>62</sup>

Like Holmes, Alexander has much to say about the embodiment of spirit and memory. Memory is what fuels our visions and inspires our futures. The need to bring the past forward into our consciousness is

ongoing because colonization relies on forced forgetting and erasure. Alexander returns to this theme repeatedly in her essay about the women of *This Bridge Called My Back*, the profoundly consciousness-shifting classic work of U.S. women of color: "The women were my age, many younger than I, saying so much about so many different things, gesturing to me about a forgetting so deep that I had even forgotten what I had forgotten."<sup>63</sup>

We need to remember not in a simplistic way, but one born through political, intellectual, and spiritual struggle and *practice*. It is not enough to develop insights and analyses without enacting and embodying them in our lives. The original foreword to *This Bridge Called My Back* was written by Toni Cade Bambara, and both Jacqui Alexander and I return to her typically astute and grounded thinking:

Bambara and novelist Kalamu Ya Salaam were discussing a call Bambara made in *The Salt Eaters* through the Seven Sisters, a multicultural, multimedia arts troupe, a call to unite our wrath, our vision, our powers.

KALAMU: "Do you think that fiction is the most effective way to do this?"

TONI: "No. The most effective way to do it, *is to do it!*"<sup>64</sup>

*Nana I Ke Kumu*: Look to the source.

#### N O T E S

- 1 Toni Morrison, "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 28 (Winter 1989): 11.
- 2 Especially given the predominance of a black-white paradigm in which there is often a hidden or explicit presumption of stark physical differences between the two categories. See Marlon Riggs' 1987 documentary "Ethnic Notions" for an extended examination of cultural artifacts—knicknacks, advertising, cartoons, performance, and film—that exemplify the racialization of black people in the United States over time as hypervisible.
- 3 For a longer discussion of this, see Lisa Kahaleole Hall, "'Hawaiian at Heart' and Other Fictions," *The Contemporary Pacific* 17, no. 2 (2005): 404–13.
- 4 From policy to poetry, see Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing America: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1982); and Dippie, *Not Vanishing* by Chrystos (Vancouver: Press Gang, 1988).
- 5 Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii, 1835–1920* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984).
- 6 In particular, the 1990s organizing and cultural work of J. Kehaulani Kauanui, Sharon Nawahine Lum Ho, Paul Kealoha Blake of the East Bay Media Center, Hinano Compton, Teresia Teaiwa, Patrick Makuakāne, kumu hula of Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wēkiu, the Bay Area Pacific Islanders' Cultural Association, the Hayward Hula Festival, the Ohana Cultural Center,

and La Pena Cultural Center in Oakland, California.

- 7 Joseph S. Nye, "Is America an Empire?" *Korea Herald* (January 29, 2004).
- 8 Joseph S. Nye, "Ill-Suited for Empire," *Washington Post* (May 25, 2003).
- 9 For a history of the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i and the subsequent annexation of the islands by the United States, see Noenoe Silva, *Aloha Betrayed* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005). For a discussion of the illegality of the vote for statehood and the current legal status of the Hawaiian Kingdom, see Keanu Sai, "American Occupation of the Hawaiian State: A Century Gone Unchecked," *Hawaiian Journal of Law and Politics* 1: 46–81.
- 10 *New Imperial Atlas of the World* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1903). See also D. Graham Burnett and Raymond B. Craib, "Insular Visions: Cartographic Imagery and the Spanish American War," *The Historian* 61, no. 1 (Fall 1998): 101–18 for a succinct essay on cartography and U.S. imperialism.
- 11 [www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/FRN02.pdf](http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/FRN02.pdf) (accessed January 6, 2009).
- 12 See, for example, Arturo Madrid, "Aliens, Misfits, and Interlopers: The Racialized Imagining of the U.S. Latino Communities at the End of the Twentieth Century," in *Race in 21st Century America*, ed. Curtis Stokes, Theresa Melendez, and Genice Rhodes-Reed (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001); Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: La Frontera* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987); and Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996).
- 13 Even to the absurd extent of referring to African diplomat Kofi Annan as African American. A colleague's children were recently stymied as to how to refer to the various black players of the many World Cup teams after being corrected on their original usage of "African American" to refer to all. "African" was offered as a second choice but, of course, did not really encompass the Peruvian team, for example. In addition, see Rachel L. Swarns, "'African-American' Becomes a Term for Debate," *New York Times* (August 29, 2004).
- 14 See, for example, Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger L. Nichols, and David M. Reimers, *Natives and Strangers: A Multicultural History of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); and Lawrence Levine, *The Opening of the American Mind* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).
- 15 See Chapter Two of Andrea Smith's *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Boston: South End Press, 2005). A productive discussion of these issues occurred at the colloquium "Feminist Perspectives on African American and Native American Reparations," March 19–20, 2004 at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- 16 From the media analysts to the poets to the historians, see Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1978); Chrystos, *Not Vanishing* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Press Gang, 1988); Dippie, *The Vanishing American*; Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980. Reprint, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).
- 17 Eva Maria Garroutte, *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* (Berkeley: University of

- California Press, 2003) contains a very readable discussion of how indigenous identity is measured. Ian Haney Lopez's *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996) is a good resource for non-indigenous racial issues.
- 18 Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1994).
  - 19 Haney Lopez, *White By Law* and Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*; Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); and David E. Wilkins, *American Indian Sovereignty and the U.S. Supreme Court: The Masking of Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997).
  - 20 The self-definition of these individuals is what I am underlining here. I am *not* referring, for example, to the struggles of the Cherokee and Creek freedmen who are of African descent but are currently fighting to maintain their tribal identities and relationships, or to the dilemmas of self-defined "mixed-bloods."
  - 21 See J. Kehaulani Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2008); "A Fraction of National Belonging: 'Hybrid Hawaiians,' Nationalism and the Search for the 'Pure Blood,'" in *Beyond the Frame: Visual Representations of Women of Color*, ed. Angela Davis and Neferti Tadiar (Palgrave Press, 2005), 153–68; "The Politics of Blood and Sovereignty in Rice v. Cayetano," *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, special issue on "Putting Law in Its Place in Native North America," guest editors Susan Gooding and Eve Darian-Smith, 25, no. 1 (2002): 110–28; "For Get' Hawaiian Entitlement: Configurations of Land, 'Blood,' and Americanization in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920," *Social Text*, 59 (1999): 123–44.
  - 22 Richard Dana, 1860 letter to the *New York Tribune* in Rufus Anderson, *The Hawaiian Islands: Their Progress and Condition under the Missionaries* (Boston: Gould & Co., 1864).
  - 23 See Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 173–80; and the 1993 documentary produced by Na Maka o ka Aina, "Act of War: The Overthrow of the Hawaiian Nation."
  - 24 Sandra Sharp and Beverly Hawkins Hall, *Black Women for Beginners (Writers and Readers Documentary Comic Book, 58)*. Writers & Readers Publishing (August 1993), 103–16; and Andrée Nicola McLaughlin, "A Renaissance of the Spirit: Black Women Remaking the Universe," in *Wild Women in the Whirlwind: Afro-American Culture and the Contemporary Literary Renaissance*, ed. Joanne M. Braxton and Andrée Nicola McLaughlin (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990), xxxi–xlix.
  - 25 See J. Kehaulani Kauanui, "Asian American Studies and the 'Pacific Question,'" in *Asian American Studies after Critical Mass*, ed. Kent Ono (New York: Blackwell, 2004), 123–43.
  - 26 See Vicente M. Diaz and J. Kehaulani Kauanui, "Native Pacific Cultural Studies on the Edge," *The Contemporary Pacific* 13, no. 2: 315–42.
  - 27 See Lisa Kahaleole Chang Hall and J. Kehaulani Kauanui, "Same-Sex Sexuality in Pacific Literature," in *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay and Lesbian Experience*, ed. Russell Leong (New York: Routledge, 1996), 113–19; and J. Kehaulani Kauanui and Ju-Hui (Judy) Han, "Asian

- Pacific Islander": Issues of Representation and Responsibility," in *The Very Inside: An Anthology of Writings by Asian & Pacific Islander Lesbians & Bisexual Women*, ed. Sharon Lim-Hing (Toronto: Sister Vision, 1994). Also consider the popularity of both the book *Memoirs of a Geisha* by Arthur Golden (New York: Knopf, 1997) and the film made of it.
- 28 To see how different the issues really are, try to imagine substituting Pacific Islander men for Asian American men in David Eng, *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2001) or in David Mura, *Where the Body Meets Memory: An Odyssey of Race, Sexuality, & Identity* (New York: Anchor, 1996), for example.
- 29 Tom Brislin, "Exotics, Erotic, and Coconuts: Stereotypes of Pacific Islanders," in *Images That Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media*, ed. Paul Martin Lester and Susan Dente Ross (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), 106.
- 30 Most accessible to U.S. audiences are probably Ngahua Te Aweko-tuku, *Mana Wabine Maori: Selected Writings on Maori Women's Art, Culture and Politics* (Auckland: New Women's Press, 1991) and Cathie Dunsford, *Cowrie* (Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 1994).
- 31 Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books, 1999).
- 32 For example, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, "You May Consider Speaking about Your Art . . .," in *I Tell You Now: Autobiographical Essays by Native American Writers*, ed. Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 55–63. See also Laura Tohe, "There Is No Word for Feminism in My Language," *Wicazo Sa Review* 15, no. 2 (2000): 103–10.
- 33 As cited in Gloria Anzaldúa, *Making Face, Making Soul: Haciendo Caras*, 25 (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990).
- 34 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 21.
- 35 Julie Blackwomon (Carter), "Revolutionary Blues," in *Lesbian Poetry*, ed. Elly Bulkin and Joan Larkin (Watertown, Mass.: Persephone Press, 1981), 132.
- 36 Becky Thompson has an interesting discussion of how racism affects commonly accepted periodizations of U.S. feminism in *A Promise and a Way of Life: White Antiracist Activism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).
- 37 Haunani Kay Trask, "Fighting the Battle of Double Colonization: The View of a Hawaiian Feminist," *Critical Perspectives of Third World America: Women, Race and Class in a Cultural Context* 2, no. 1 (1984): 196–213.
- 38 Haunani Kay Trask, "Feminism and Indigenous Hawaiian Nationalism" in *Feminist Nationalism*, ed. Lois West (New York: Routledge, 1997), 187–98.
- 39 In "Who Is Your Mother: The Red Roots of White Feminism," first published in the community-based lesbian feminist journal *Sinister Wisdom* in 1984; however, Paula Gunn Allen used this idea as a means to *appropriate*, rather than disclaim, feminism and its U.S. roots.
- 40 See Kauanui, "Native Hawaiian Decolonization and the Politics of Gender," *American Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (June 2008): 281–87.
- 41 M. Annette Jaimes's more recent work has moved away from her earlier views, expressed in her article written with Theresa Halsey,

- "American Indian Women: At the Center of Indigenous Resistance in North America" in *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*, ed. M. Annette Jaimes (Boston: South End Press, 1992). See also Haunani Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii*, 2nd ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).
- 42 Mab Segrest, *Born to Belonging: Writings on Spirit and Justice* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2002); and M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006).
- 43 Sally Engle Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i: the Cultural Power of Law* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- 44 Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, *Native Lands and Foreign Desires—Pebea La E Pono?* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1992).
- 45 Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, *Na Wabine Kapu* (Honolulu: Ai Pohaku Press, 1999).
- 46 Noenoe K. Silva and J. Leilani Basham note, "When Kanaka 'Oiwī (Native Hawaiians) first encountered the opportunity to learn reading and writing, they immediately grasped the value of doing so, and became literate in far greater proportions than Europeans or Americans of the early nineteenth century." Noenoe K. Silva and J. Leilani Basham, "I Ka 'Olelo No Ke Ola: Understanding Indigenous Hawaiian History and Politics through Hawaiian Language Sources" (paper presented at the Interinstitutional Consortium for Indigenous Knowledge (ICIK), Pennsylvania State University, May 27–28, 2004).
- 47 See Houston Wood, *Displacing Natives: The Rhetorical Production of Hawaii* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999).
- 48 James M. Alexander, *Mission Life in Hawaii: Memoir of Rev. William P. Alexander* (Oakland, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1888), 175.
- 49 Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i*, 22.
- 50 See Kame'eleihiwa, *Native Lands and Foreign Desires*; and Silva, "Talking Back to Law and Empire: Hula in Hawaiian-Language Literature in 1861," in *Law and Empire in the Pacific*, ed. Sally Engle Merry and Donald Brenneis (Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research Press, 2003).
- 51 "Kanaka Maoli Spirituality and Sexuality," *GLCC's Outlook* (June 2001), <http://thecenterhawaii.org/PDF%20files/Outlook%20Issues/2001/June%202001%20Outlook2001.pdf>.
- 52 Kame'eleihiwa's presentation at Ka 'Aha Hula 'O Halauaola, the 2001 World Hula Conference held in Hilo, Hawai'i, on these themes also included the performance of a mele ma'i—a chant genre that celebrates an individual's genitalia.
- 53 This is also discussed in E. S. Craighill Handy and Mary Kawena Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Kau, Hawai'i* (North Clarendon, Vt.: Tuttle, 1991), 60.
- 54 Mary Kawena Pukui, E. W. Haertig, and Catherine A. Lee, *Nana I Ke Kumu: Volume II* (Honolulu: Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, 1972), 85–86.
- 55 The HRC is a well-funded national gay rights organization that demonstrates how dominant members can construct a single-issue politics that disenfranchises the less powerful members of its



- constituency. Its focus on Beltway power politics and being seen as bipartisan led to its notorious 1998 endorsement of New York Senator Al D'Amato, an anti-choice politician known for blocking (non-gay-related) civil rights and anti-hate crime legislation. In 1995, D'Amato had to apologize on the Senate floor for his appearance on the Don Imus radio show, where he used a mock Japanese accent to impersonate Lance Ito, the Japanese American judge overseeing the ongoing O. J. Simpson trial.
- 56 [www.qrd.org/qrd/usa/legal/hawaii/bachr/1997/brief.na.mamo.o.hawaii-05.13.97](http://www.qrd.org/qrd/usa/legal/hawaii/bachr/1997/brief.na.mamo.o.hawaii-05.13.97).
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Te Awekotuku, 37.
- 59 For example, classics such as *I Am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism* (Vancouver: Press Gang, 1996) and *Bobbi Lee, Indian Rebel* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1990).
- 60 Intercultural Cancer Council Fact Sheet, "Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders and Cancer" (2001).
- 61 Unpublished manuscript, Leilani Holmes, *Ancestry of Experience: A Journey into Hawaiian Ways of Knowing*, 168.
- 62 Emphasis in original; Alexander, 279.
- 63 Ibid., 260.
- 64 Ibid., 279.