Identity and Diversity in Contemporary Hawaiian Families: *Hoʻi Hou i ka Iwi Kuamoʻo*

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In the face of current political struggles, indigenous land issues, and legal attacks on programs that target Hawaiians, it is increasingly important to define what is uniquely Hawaiian about contemporary Hawaiians. In this article I suggest that one of the most salient features of the Hawaiian family is its unifying force connecting contemporary Hawaiians to each other and to the past. I examine this connection by discussing Hawaiian values and practices associated with genealogy, *aloha ʻāina* (love of the land), and commitment to *ʻohana* (family). These three cultural cornerstones form the basis of Native Hawaiian identity and strengthen Hawaiian families despite extreme challenges that accompany a progressively diverse population. In short, it is through the family that Hawaiian identity is achieved and thrives today.

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A testament to good marketing, images of Hawai'i are indelibly printed on most of the world's imagination of tropical paradise and sunshine. The notoriety usually stops there, however. Comprising substantially less than 1% of the U.S. population, indigenous Hawaiian people are often missed in most academic and popular discussions of race and ethnicity. It was only in the past few years that Hawaiians were added to the list of underserved ethnic minorities recognized by the federal government and only 10 years since President Clinton formally apologized for the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom by a group of American missionaries and businessmen more than a century ago (U.S. Public Law 103-150). Likewise, although Hawaiians have been explicitly counted in the U.S. Census since 1940, to date relatively little research systematically examines the social world and experiences of Hawaiians in modern society. It is a small wonder, then, that with exception of the work of a few scholars (e.g., Mokuau, 1990; McCubbin, Thompson, Thompson, & Fromer, 1995), today's Hawaiian families have been overlooked in much of the research on family diversity and strengths.

This article sets out to examine Hawaiian families, to link the past and the present with an eye toward the future. My primary purpose is twofold. First, I propose a set of fundamental identifying characteristics that offer connection and continuity to contemporary Hawaiian families. These characteristics form the cultural cornerstones of Hawaiian families who have survived despite tremendous change and assaults over time.

In addition to viewing the family as the locus of cultural identity transmission, I seek to heighten awareness of the cultural richness that Hawaiian families contribute to today's global society. Hawaiian culture is a living culture; it "exists despite our good intentions, ignorance or apathy. It exists because we do" (Meyer, 2003, p. 5). Rather than deconstructing the Hawaiian family, I focus on its strengths and uniqueness. In this sense, this article can be viewed more broadly as a study about a people strong in the face of adversity and whole in spite of diversity.

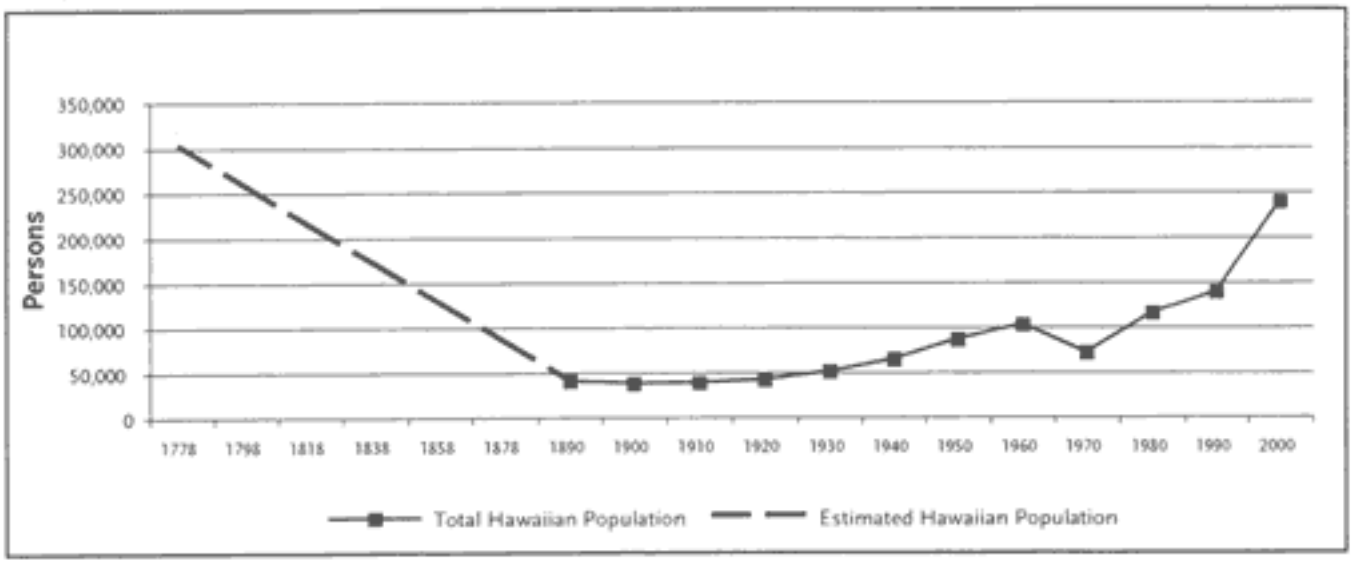
Intermarriage in early 1900s: A Chinese-Hawaiian family.
COURTESY OF BISHOP MUSEUM

Diversity: Strength or Challenge?

Hawaiians were the first discoverers of the 1,500 mile-long Hawaiian archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. They migrated to Hawai'i by sea using sophisticated navigational skills and survived and flourished in the islands for hundreds of years prior to Western contact. Hawaiians evolved a complex system of resource management, developing advanced knowledge systems and skills to survive on these remote islands with limited resources.

Colonization created population diversity and ethnic mixing, which challenged the endurance and well-being of indigenous Hawaiian families. Immigration to Hawai'i brought foreigners and their diseases, among other things, resulting

Graph 1: The Hawaiian population in Hawai'i: 1778 to 2000.



SOURCE: E. C. NORDYKE, 1989. HONOLULU: UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I PRESS. ADAPTED WITH PERMISSION.

in massive population decline and, ultimately, the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom. New ways and lifestyles changed profoundly the values and behaviors of the Hawaiian people. In the late 1800s, historian Samuel Kamakau wrote:

> [T]he people of today are destitute; their clothing and provisions come from foreign lands, and they do not work as their ancestors did. . . . One cannot again find skilled persons who have a deep knowledge of the land; those who are called learned today are mere vagabonds. . . . Because of the foreign ways of the race, they have abandoned the work of the ancestors. (Harden, 1999, p. 9)

Deep fractures in the 'ohana system also were evident. Early scholars of the 1950s lamented the disintegration and disarticulation of the 'ohana, its collapse as a cohesive force and separation from the land (Handy & Pukui, 1998). The chief ruin of the Hawaiian 'ohana system, they argued, was intermarriage between Hawaiian women and White or Asian men.

Yet, in some respects, the decline of the Hawaiian population made intermarriage necessary for survival. Dying by the thousands throughout the 19th century, the 300,000 to 400,000 strong population decreased precipitously after Western contact.

In 1890, only about 40,000 Hawaiians remained (see Graph 1). In fact, White immigrants outnumbered Hawaiians as early as 1910 (Nordyke, 1989). From a demographic standpoint any immediate hope for vigorous population growth for Hawaiians was through intermarriage with immigrants. During the 1900s, the full-blooded Hawaiian population continued to decrease annually, while the part-Hawaiian population surged. Thus, the very factor that created disintegration became the lifeline of the Hawaiian race.

On the one hand, diversity and the threat of cultural homogenization raise questions about the survival of the population as a distinctive people in modern times. On the other hand, there may be more Hawaiian families today than at any single point in history. According to the U.S. Census 2000, there were 77,000 families headed by a Hawaiian in the nation, comprising over 400,000 people, 60% of whom still live in Hawai'i. The question I examine in this essay is, given their diversity, what strengthens Hawaiian identity processes in these families? The answer: ties to the land, to genealogical origins, and to family.

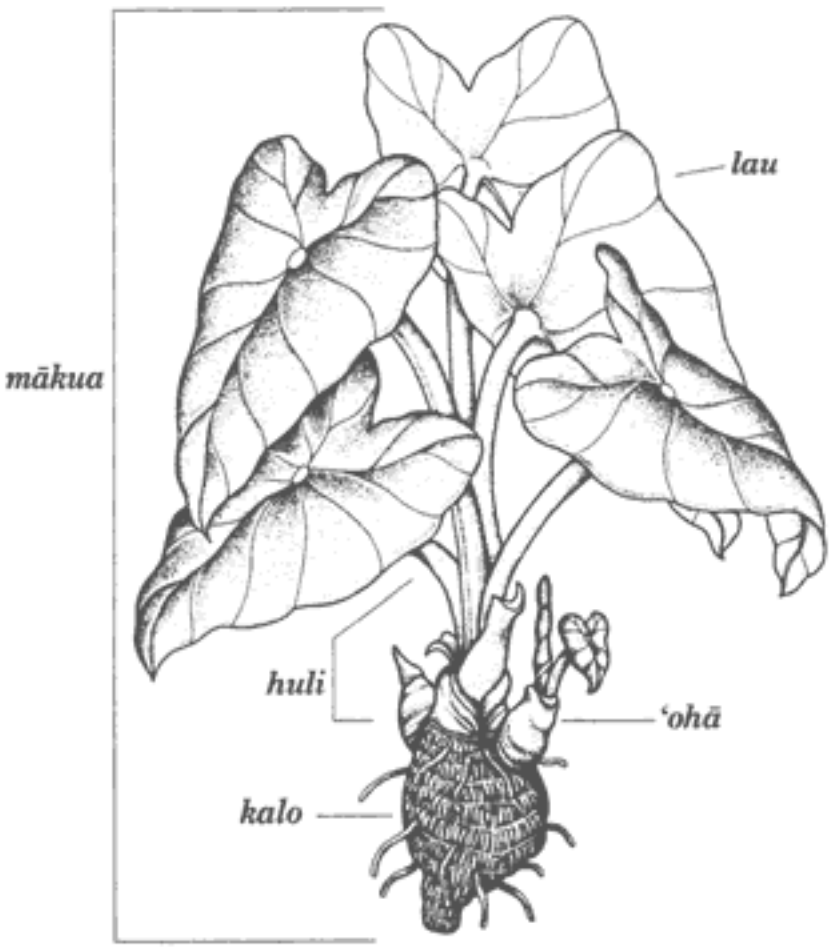
What Is a Hawaiian Family?

What makes a Hawaiian family Hawaiian? Through the work of Mary Kawena Pukui and other scholars, detailed accounts describe Hawaiian families of old, their ways, their beliefs, and their practices. Fewer studies examine Hawaiian families that thrive in the 21st century. It is true that today's Hawaiian families epitomize the great diversity of today's multicultural, multiethnic society. Yet certain features distinguish Hawaiian families as clearly Hawaiian and provide lasting continuity to the intergenerational transmission of Hawaiian identity and culture.

Although there is some debate about the etymology of the word 'ohana, none contest the centrality of 'ohana to Hawaiians.[1] No commentary on the social world of Hawaiians goes for long before the significance of family is discussed. According to Handy and Pukui (1998), the word 'ohana derives from a people who were *kalo* (taro) planters. *'Ohā* means to sprout, or a sprout, referring to a bud or offshoot from the adult corm of the kalo plant, which was the food staple of Hawaiians. *Na* at the end of a word functions as a nominalizer, thus

'ohana refers to offshoots, or the sprouts that propagate the kalo, producing the staple of life or *'ai* (food) of the land, 'āina, cultivated by generations of a given family. In addition to feeding the people, the image of the kalo plant reflects a Hawaiian perspective of family, with its sprouts that depend on the stalk that nurtures the sprouts to carry the future, with both joined in their mutual dependence on the roots.

Relationships are the fundamental force underlying Hawaiian family life and identity. Family relationships are central to most other cultural and ethnic groups, but a close look at Hawaiian families reveals some important factors that differentiate them from Western or other families. These distinguishing markers include the practices and beliefs surrounding genealogy, aloha 'āina, and commitment to 'ohana. Although these features are valued by other ethnic families in Polynesia and elsewhere, they have a unique genesis and form in Hawaiian society. I discuss these features below, and then examine how they form the cultural cornerstones of today's families and shape the identity of Hawaiians.



Kalo

Kalo, the precious source of life: genealogy, aloha 'āina, 'ohana.
ILLUSTRATION BY ROBIN RACOMA, KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Genealogy: Hawaiian mythology ties the kalo to the beginning of the human race. Sky father Wākea and his daughter Ho'ohōkūkalani mated and produced a stillborn baby whom they later buried. From the baby's grave a kalo plant sprouted, which Wākea called Hāloanaka for its tall, quivering stems. Wākea and Ho'ohōkūkalani mated again and this time produced a boy, the progenitor of the Hawaiian race, and named him Hāloa after his stillborn elder. Thus, "Hawaiians knew kalo as their ancestor Hāloa, his heart-shaped leaves and genealogy entwined with their cosmos, their land, their gods, their chiefs, and themselves" (Hartwell, 1996, p. 3).

The story of Hāloa highlights the three interrelated concepts that are key features of Hawaiian families: genealogy, aloha 'āina, and commitment to 'ohana. It contains several insights worth noting. First, the genealogy was carried forward through oral tradition and still thrives in today's living Hawaiian culture. These cultural beginnings are not obscure, privileged information but are well understood by contemporary Hawaiians. The multilayered significance of kalo, and *poi* (pounded taro) made from kalo, is celebrated in popular stories, music, chants, and educational curricula. Second, the story highlights the physical and psychological ties of the family to the 'āina, whose soil produces the staple of life that nourishes the 'ohana as it grows and disperses (Handy & Pukui, 1998). Third, the story is about the value of eternal relationships, powerful enough to name a living child after a stillborn child.

In Hawaiian society, genealogy was paramount to all relationships. As with other Pacific Islander groups, knowing one's ancestral ties was an essential component of Hawaiian identity. Genealogy chants identified lines of trust and social connection in addition to telling family histories. Proverbial references liken those who did not know their genealogy to parasites, to trunkless trees, and to knowing nothing at all (Pukui, 1983). Foremost among genealogy chants is the *Kumulipo*, a creation chant linking the royal family to the primary gods of Hawaiians, to deified chiefs born into the living world, and to the stars in the heavens and the plants and animals useful to life on earth. All must be named within the chain of birth and to their representatives in the spirit world. This ancient chant, more than 2,000 lines long, was delivered orally by *kāhuna* (priests), serving to link the past to the children who would go forward in the human world (Beckwith, 1951).

Hawaiians based their social relations on genealogy and family names. Hence the Hawaiian proverb documented by Pukui: "*kolea aku i ka 'ohana* (cry 'plover' in seeking one's kinfolk). Names are family possessions. In seeking one's unknown kin, repeat the family names until they are found" (Pukui, 1983, p. 197). There was safety in knowing the family lineage, which meant the protection of family members both distant and near.

Aloha 'Āina: To Hawaiians, aloha 'āina refers to a revered, inextricable relationship between the human body, the spiritual world, and the land on which we thrive. As opposed to other peoples who see the value of land in owning it, Hawaiian elders speak of the land as a conscious and communicating entity (Blaisdell, cited in Harden, 1999; Kanahele, 1986). They describe Hawaiians as "endlessly grateful to plants for what they furnished them for everyday living" (Abbott, cited in Harden, 1999, p. 29). In her memoirs, Mrs. Nana Veary (1989) recounted an example of this respect,

> [T]o cut the tree at its base, my grandfather had to ask permission of the tree. After some time, the tree said to him, 'For what purpose would I serve you?' My grandfather said, 'I pōmaika'i nā lāhui kānaka apau.' For the good of the entire race. Only then could he cut the tree down. (p. 42)

The reciprocal relationship of caring for the land (*mālama 'āina*) as it cares for its people is much akin to a family bond (Kame'eleihiwa, 1992). To the *maka'āinana* (commoners) the land of their birth was a precious ancestor that nourished and protected them in return for their care and labor. Hawaiians belonged to the land, its value was "found in the sum of the lives, memories, achievements, and *mana* [spiritual power] of the generations who once dwelled upon it." (Kanahele, 1986, p. 208, translation added).

Hawaiians honored places through chants, proverbs, and stories. Almost every significant activity of life was fixed to a specific place. Hawaiians researched and understood geographic and oceanic topography in great detail and precision. And, no place with any—even the smallest—significance went without a name (Kanahele, 1986).

Commitment to 'Ohana: Whereas genealogy connected Hawaiians to the ancestral past and aloha 'āina connected them to the land, commitment to 'ohana connected them to each other. 'Ohana not only refers to the physical structure of Hawaiian families but also encompasses the concept of commitment to others (Kanahele, 1986; Mokuau, 1990). Commitment extends to immediate and extended family members and the broader community. In practice, and to this day, it represents reciprocity and inclusion. This sense of commitment stems from practices in traditional Hawai'i, where families relied on each other for all aspects of social, political, and economic life. The well-known saying goes, "'*ike aku, 'ike mai, kokua aku kokua mai; pela iho la ka nohona 'ohana*. Recognize and be recognized, help and be helped; such is family life. Family life requires an exchange of mutual help and recognition" (Pukui, 1983, p. 130).

Hawaiian scholars describe the 'ohana as the community within which economic life moved (Kanahele, 1986). The 'ohana was the fundamental unit of the *ahupua'a*, the basic land division where Hawaiians lived and worked communally (Handy & Pukui, 1998). From mountain peak to ocean, the ahupua'a included families composed of extended relatives by blood, marriage, and adoption. Made up of multiple *hale* (houses), or *kauhale* (house groupings) the 'ohana connected its members geographically and by the bonds of ancestry, birth, and sentiment to a particular locality (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972). Living members were protected by ancestral *'aumakua* or guardian spirits who functioned to "help protect you and your family, to give you wisdom, vision to move ahead safely through life, to succeed" (Brandt, cited in Harden, 1999, p. 56).

With both spirit and natural worlds, commitment and interdependence were required for the healthy functioning of all families in the ahupua'a. Reciprocity governed social relations between households, in which constant sharing and exchange of foods, articles, and services occurred, particularly between those of the uplands and the shoreline regions (Handy & Pukui, 1998). Hawaiians were known for being an inclusive people, even by Captain Cook, who described them as friendly, open, and accepting (Beaglehold, 1955).[2] Accordingly, including others in the 'ohana was valued highly and manifested in practices of foster parenting and taking in unrelated kin, known as *'ōhua*, as part of the 'ohana. Adoption was also common, and prior research identifies at least three different forms of such practices in early Hawaiian society (Howard, Heighton, Jordan, & Gallimore, 1970). Above all, adopted or otherwise, identity came from contributing to and being part of the collective rather than from individual traits or accomplishments.

The Modern Hawaiian Family

> [T]he indigenous voices of the Hawaiian house seemed on the surface to be silenced. The village and sacred monuments of the ancient people were being covered with thousands of acres of sugar and pineapple fields. Former fishponds and taro lo'i were being plowed under for housing subdivisions or shoreline resources. The material culture of a civilization was being catalogued and labeled in the sequestered halls of scientific laboratories or being placed on exhibit for tourists in deathly quiet museums. Archives were becoming the only repository for knowledge about those people of old who were classified as a "passing race." (Grant cited in Pukui et al., 1972, p. xvii)

This passage, written about the Hawaiian people around the time of statehood, bespeaks the widespread sense of loss of Hawaiian customs and traditions. At the time, Hawai'i was successfully remade for tourism and romanticized by Hollywood stars such as Gidget, Elvis Presley, and John Wayne through popular films such as *Big Jim McLain* (1952), *Gidget Goes Hawaiian* (1961), *Blue Hawaii* (1961), and *Paradise, Hawaiian Style* (1966) (Wood, 1999). Obscured behind the tropical Disneyland Hawai'i that captured the American eye, the indigenous Hawaiian people continued their search for the way forward. Their success founded the Hawaiian renaissance of the 1970s, which saw the reemergence of respect for and practice of traditional ways, knowledge systems, beliefs, and customs.

The renewed commitment and energy inspired by this movement carries forward to the present. Today's families may look different in modern society. But they are not so different, because they hold dear the same cultural values and practices that have withstood multiculturalism and the challenges of time. The cultural values found in genealogy, aloha 'āina, and commitment to 'ohana continue to define and connect Hawaiian families today.

Genealogy: Few may be able to recite complete family histories, yet genealogical traditions thrive in contemporary Hawai'i. The *Kumulipo* is still delivered at very special events. For example, Nana Veary (1989) recounted it being chanted for her 80th birthday by Ka'upena Wong in 1988. Everyone cried who heard it that day, including Mrs. Veary, who, as a child of seven, had last heard it performed by her own mother. She reflects on all the different Hawaiians who were there to celebrate, together "united by a common thread that reached back to the very beginning of Hawai'i" (Veary, 1989, p. 20).

Today's genealogies are contested terrain, however, where great premium is placed on the lineal descendency of Hawaiians. Sociopolitical requirements for indigenous access to land and other native rights force Hawaiians to provide official papers documenting their lineage or a certain blood quantum. This requirement is problematic not only because it devalues the cultural significance of genealogy but also because it places the burden on Hawaiians to "prove" on paper knowledge that was transmitted orally. Hawaiian scholars also argue that blood quantum requirements mechanically attempt to deny the strong genealogical relationships and identity processes that "connect people to one another, to place, and to the land" (Kauanui, 2002, p. 122; see also Halualani, 2002).

In everyday activity, nonetheless, it remains fairly common social practice to identify one's lineage and the place where one was raised, especially in introductions. Some find it in the lighter genealogy requested by local Hawaiians, which begins with "what school you wen grad?" Although an unusual question to some, for many it initiates the process of orally connecting people to each other through family and social relationships, as opposed to occupations or lifestyles. Among Hawaiians, Kame'eleihiwa (1992) also points out the continued symbolic poignancy of ancestral lineage and names, which link Hawaiians to an honored past while leading the way to a wiser future.

Aloha 'Āina: In today's society, many fewer Hawaiian families physically work the land. Those who do face the expenses and frustrations of modern-day farming and fishing (Hartwell, 1996). Yet, aloha for the 'āina remains a critical element of Hawaiian life. The symbolic connections to ancestry, history, and cultural values are firmly embedded in individual and collective definitions of place and identity (Kana'iaupuni & Liebler, in press). Considerable scholarship goes into document-

ing thousands of place names in Hawai'i to preserve the rich legendary and historical significance of places to Hawaiian cultural identity (e.g., Nakuina, 1990; Pukui, Elbert, & Mookini, 1974).

Today a fast-growing commitment gains momentum in Hawaiian educational efforts to rekindle in children and others the deep communion that Hawaiians shared with the land. It encompasses charter schools, community-based initiatives, private nonprofit organizations, such as Kamehameha Schools (see www.ksbe.edu), and others. For example, culture-based charter schools, such as Kanu o ka 'Āina, offer science in outdoor learning laboratories with a focus on endemic flora and fauna (see http://www.kalo.org/). The Waipā Foundation is another example, working with small groups of students to revitalize a Hawaiian ahupua'a as a stable land base and community (see http://kauainetwork.org/waipa.html). Ka'ala Farm in the Wai'anae community engages a full range of Hawaiian educational initiatives on its taro fields, from drug rehabilitation to the transmission of cultural knowledge. Organizations like the Polynesian Voyaging Society (http://leahi.kcc.hawaii.edu/org/pvs/), Kai Makana (http://www.kaimakana.org), and numerous fishpond restorations, such as Paepae o He'eia, Moloka'i Fishpond Operation, and others, combine experiential aquacultural and marine learning with the perpetuation of and respect for Hawaiian culture.

Yet, the 'āina is certainly a charged site of historical and contemporary struggle. Hawaiian scholars decry the dispossession of land as one of the key devastating forces that haunts the Hawaiian population today (Kame'eleihiwa, 1992; Osorio, 2002). While Hawaiians died by the thousands around them, American and French missionaries sought strategies to own the land, eventually winning their way. As John Weeks described, "while we gazed to their heavens, they stole our land from beneath our feet" (Kame'eleihiwa, 1995, p. 108).

Thus, the importance of aloha 'āina to Hawaiian identity is empowered not only by ancestral ties but also by the collective memory of a shared history. Hawai'i, the place, connects the Hawaiian diaspora through "social relations and a historical memory of cultural beginnings, meanings and practices, as well as crises, upheavals, and unjust subjections as a dispossessed and (mis)recognized people" (Halualani, 2002, p. xxvi). Unsurprisingly, given its prominence in Hawaiian culture, land plays a fundamental role in Hawaiian activism and ongoing struggle for self-determination.[3] The 'āina is also important to the intergenerational transmission of Hawaiian identity. Research shows that the deep cultural value

Restoring cultural respect and traditions: Seventh-grade students learn about paddling and canoe building at Kahuwai Village on the island of Hawai'i.
2004, MICHAEL YOUNG, KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Hawaiians place on physical connections to the land, to family, and to ancestral ties, and the underpinning effects of colonization, all heighten the role of place in Hawaiian racial identification processes in today's families (Kana'iaupuni & Liebler, in press; Oneha, 2001).

Commitment to 'Ohana: Perhaps most vital to contemporary Hawaiians is commitment to the 'ohana. Shared living arrangements, work, caregiving, and income are basic to the daily survival of many families today. Reciprocity and inclusion remain key behaviors defining social relationships. Loyalty to wayward family members and the practice of *hānai* (adoption) are vestiges of the inclusive traditional Hawaiian 'ohana. Howard et al. (1970) discussed how adoption practices remain prevalent and highly salient to families, despite drastic cultural change. Typically involving children of relatives and especially prevalent in the Hawaiian Home

Lands (comprising families that qualify by blood quantum to live in lands set aside for Native Hawaiians), hānai relationships today include both temporary, shorter adoptions and relatively permanent arrangements. Adopted members are treated socially and emotionally as family, despite the specific nature of their kinship links (Howard et al., 1970).

Reciprocity practices also thrive through the exchange of gifts, the sharing of food, and keeping open, hospitable homes. The sense of commitment extends beyond the family, where kinship terms convey familial relationships to neighbors and community members (auntie, uncle, and *tutu*; Veary, 1989). Pukui describes in detail the emphasis on hospitality and the rules governing it, including greeting people with aloha and the importance of inviting passers-by to enter into the home to eat. She related,

> [W]hen the guest was ready to leave he said to his host, "I am going (E hele ana au)." Then the host was expected to reply, "You may go (o hele)." . . . Once a foreigner complained that a guest kept telling him that he was going but made no move to do so. Later he learned that the man was too polite to do so without his host's permission. Yet the foreigner was too polite to say the "depart then," for which his guest was waiting! (Handy & Pukui, 1998, p. 186)

Hawaiian social workers and healers describe how these family practices are made explicit in reemerging traditions such as *ho'oponopono* (conflict resolution), which focuses on restoring and maintaining good relationships among family members and supernatural forces, including ancestral spirits (Meyer, 2003; Mokuau, 1990). Recent trends in the medical community suggest the reviving use of Hawaiian healing practices steeped in both traditional knowledge and spiritual understandings (Spoehr et al., 1998). On the home front, many families carefully cultivate cultural knowledge in their children, in turn building greater resiliency in future generations of Hawaiians (Howard et al., 1970; Kanahele, 1986; Kana'iaupuni & Else, in press; McCubbin, Thompson, Thompson, Elver, & McCubbin, 1994). These family ties extend beyond Hawaiian bloodlines, enriching neighborhoods and communities and improving well-being. Research

shows that families with greater social support in their communities have more confidence, commitment, and control, and stronger Hawaiian identification than do those with weaker community support (McCubbin et al., 1994). Together, these cultural connections improve the health and well-being of Hawaiian families by strengthening their relationships to each other, to their communities, and to the spiritual and natural worlds.

Discussion

It is true that Hawaiian families have been challenged significantly and that today Hawaiians face critical issues associated with poverty and its companions, including high rates of incarceration, substance use, and domestic violence, coupled with low educational attainment and occupational mobility. A closer look at Hawaiian families, however, reveals great strength and flexibility. The Hawaiian family is the cultural repository of a population that has withstood the onslaught of decimation, dispossession, and destruction, including nearly a century of being punished for speaking its own language in its homeland. Hawaiians were called sinners for expressing themselves through their own traditional dances and chants and are still stereotyped as the slow children in schools. As a people, we have endured mass commercialization of our culture, commodification of our land, and the ongoing political battle for recognition as an indigenous people. All of these challenges have affected our families and yet we survive. Our families are strong.

Today, more so than ever, it is increasingly important to define what is uniquely Hawaiian about contemporary Hawaiians in the face of political struggles over indigenous land and access rights, and legal attacks on the programs that serve Hawaiians. This essay shows how the unique cultural values and practices associated with genealogy, aloha ʻāina, and commitment to ʻohana define Hawaiian families past and present. These cultural cornerstones also serve as key connections linking multiracial families and children to each other and to their Native Hawaiian identity, despite extensive and long-standing multicultural and multiethnic mixing. Recent studies suggest that these links extend to Hawaiians living outside Hawai'i as well as those in Hawai'i (e.g., Halualani, 2002; Oneha, 2001).

In summary, one of the most vital features of the Hawaiian family is its unifying force connecting contemporary Hawaiians to each other and to the past. The Hawaiian family offers a source of strength and hope in today's society, a society that all too often predicts cultural extinction for our people; a society where Hawaiian artifacts are placed on exhibit for tourists, while the needs of the indigenous people who form the basis of the tourist industry are ignored.[4] This discussion documents how Hawaiian families embody the core values and beliefs of traditional indigenous society and our living Hawaiian culture. The fluidity and strength of the family enable Hawaiians to withstand extreme challenges while retaining our uniqueness and identity in an increasingly diverse population. In short, it is through the family that Hawaiian identity is achieved and thrives today.

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Notes

1 To the dismay of linguistic and historical scholars, a recent article argued that *'ohana* is a contemporarily concocted word with no proto-Polynesian linguistic roots, most likely invented by taro growers on the island of Hawai'i (Whitney, 2001). The author subsequently apologized for his lack of evidence but maintained his original point that the changing definition of 'ohana is only one example of the continued distortion of Hawaiian culture over time. What he says may be true. In any living culture, definitions change. The important question is, who does the changing?

2 When forced to return to Hawai'i by stormy seas, formerly friendly relations became tense, erupting in a mass struggle at Kealakekua Bay, Hawai'i, in 1779. Captain Cook reportedly drowned or may have been killed by Hawaiians during the fighting.

3 Land is a catalyst for political solidarity among other Polynesian groups, too. Although defined by the unique sociopolitical history and context of place, indigenous ties to the land are used to strengthen many independence movements in the Pacific, including Hawai'i, Vanuatu, French Polynesia, and New Caledonia (Lindstrom, 1999).

4 "Ignored" may make light of what some call intentional dismissal by colonizers. As Halualani (2002) argued, "the myth of extinction is less a scientific projection of what will happen based on factual population counts and cycles than it is a discursive reality brought into being, perhaps more expeditiously through governmental policy and administration" (p. 66).