“Education for the Nation”:
Forging Indigenous Hawaiian Identity
in Higher Education

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requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Education

by

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2003
Dedicated to my maternal grandparents, Benjamin Kekuikupua Kamakea Wong and Dorothy Tung Kyau Lau Wong whose stories and lives fostered my love for nā mea Hawaiʻi.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction: Beyond Paradise: Hawaiʻi as the Third World ........................................... 1
- Literature Review .................................................................................................................. 9
- Research Methodology ....................................................................................................... 56
- Viewing Hawaiian Identity through a Cultural Lens: A Discussion on Selected Elements of Hawaiian Culture ......................................................... 75
- Tempering Identity: The Influences of Hawaiian Studies on Identity Construction and Interpretation .......................................................... 111
- Identity as Discursive and Lived: Participants’ Perspectives of Native Hawaiian Identity Formation .............................................................. 144
- Forging Indigenous Identity .............................................................................................. 167
- Epilogue: No Ka Lāhui Hawaiʻi .......................................................................................... 184
- Appendix I: Hawaiian Studies B. A. Program (2000) ........................................................... 191
- Appendix II: Interview Materials
  - Cover Letter to Participants ......................................................................................... 192
  - Human Subjects Waiver ............................................................................................... 193
- Appendix III: Analytic Tools
  - Analytic Memo (Example) ............................................................................................ 196
  - Fieldnotes (Example) .................................................................................................. 198
- Appendix IV: Participant Profiles ...................................................................................... 202
- References ......................................................................................................................... 204
Chapter 2

Literature Review
Constructing the Socio-Historical and Intellectual Context

Who Am I?
My homeland was alienated through fraud
My future is uncertain, Pandemonium is the right word
For my so-called government…
I am stateless and have no right
Of appeal in my country’s high court…
Who am I?
I am that third citizen of my country…
-David Kalpolkas, Vanuatu
(Hamasaki, 1983: 14)

This chapter recontextualizes the research queries within a broader scope of Hawai’i as part of the Pacific. This chapter also discusses elements of traditional Hawaiian society and U. S. colonialism in Hawai’i. To further establish the foundation for this study, a current demographic overview is provided illustrating the socio-economic status of Hawaiians living, working, and, as will be discussed, barely surviving in Hawai’i. Finally, the discussion moves into the academic literature discussing ethnic and cultural identity formation in higher education and the interplay of culturally-centered higher education institutions and identity (focusing on Historically Black Colleges and Universities and on Tribal Colleges).

Recontextualizing the Problem

In many island cultures throughout the Pacific, it is culturally appropriate to begin any oratory with the recitation of one’s genealogy. In essence, genealogy establishes the speaker’s identity for the audience, by providing the audience with insight into the individual through her or his ancestry and lineage. Similarly, I would like to start the
discussion with a socio-historical genealogy, so to speak, to help the reader understand
the broader context of this study. As such, the narrative of Native Hawaiian identity and
education begins with a discussion of colonialism in the Pacific and its impact on Hawai‘i
and it ends with a discussion of the current socio-economic status of Native Hawaiians
since Hawai‘i’s incorporation into the United States.

Colonialism in the Pacific

For the past 400 years Oceania\(^5\) has suffered under the scourge of Western
colonialism. The stereotypic image of the “idyllic paradise” with its laid back Natives,
though, would indicate otherwise. In glancing at tourist brochures for Hawai‘i or Tahiti
or watching commercials for vacations to New Zealand, who would ever believe that the
indigenous peoples of the Pacific were fighting for their political and cultural survival?
Who would believe that a 30 year-old war resulting in the massacre of over one-third of
the population of East Timor, a war rivaling any armed conflict in Eastern Europe,
continues in this “idyllic paradise” at the hands of the once American-supported
Indonesian government (Robie, 1989)? In analyzing this colonial identity, the mere
pervasiveness and persistence, as articulated in Said’s (1979) analysis of “Orientalism,”
throughout the world illustrates the breadth and magnitude colonial power wields over
the Pacific. This contrived and oppressive image of the “happy native”, though, is just
the very tip of the proverbial iceberg with which the colonized Natives must contend with
while struggling for freedom from colonization.

\(^5\) In this context, the term “Oceania” is used as Hau‘ofa (1998) does which is to link the three primary
cultural areas of the Pacific—Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.
Functioning under the ideology that European expansionism was "inevitable, natural, and desirable," the West set its sights on the Pacific in the early 19th Century (Blaut, 1993: 19). Their initial interest in the Pacific was scientific as well as economic. During Captain James Cook's 1774 voyage to Kanaky (New Caledonia) one historian noted that the voyages in the region were "motivated as much by scientific curiosity as by the lure of gain" (Connell, 1987). Despite this seemingly benign interest, the islands of the Pacific and its Native population would never again be the same. These inaugural voyages left an indelible mark on Native lands and the Native populations of the Pacific. It opened the doors for the rest of the colonial world to penetrate the Pacific world. As such, the desire for new land and the potential for new resources intensified among the colonial powers (Trask, 1993).

Akin to the experiences of the Caribbean islands and the African continent, the Pacific was soon carved up and divvied amongst the classic imperialist powers of the West (Spain, France, Britain, Portugal, and, to some extent, Germany). This race also included a new colonial competitor—the United States. Scientific interest, needless to say, dissolved and the promise of economic fortune and military interest prevailed. The rush for the islands of the Pacific was on—each power lay claim to certain regions of the Pacific, all attempting to take possession of islands before the others could (Robie, 1989). The 19th century Pacific became a stomping ground for various segments of the West's populace—any one from the Christian missionary to the black birder (Ibid.). To the disappointment of these colonial powers, though, the economic gain was largely illusionary (Ibid.). There was nothing the colonies needed from these Pacific Islands,
apart from a relaxing vacation spot. Nevertheless, they maintained and defended their occupation of the Pacific.

Pacific Islands' cultures were transformed under the colonial regime. Traditional structures of governments and self-sufficiency economics were replaced with mini colonial governments ruled by the colonialist bourgeoisie and capitalism; customary language was replaced with the language of the colonizer; polytheism was replaced with monotheistic Christianity; military forces occupied Native lands; even citizenship was "transferred" to the colonizer under the banner of "protectorship" (Trask, 1993). The wholesale forcible transference of the Native way of life and, in essence, a mindset and worldview to its antithesis was, as Trask (1994) says, "raw, swift and deadly" for the Natives. The physical and psychological effects of colonialism were detrimental to Native identity (Ibid.).

While other parts of the world were decolonizing through the post-World War II mandate of the United Nations, decolonization did not even touch the shores of the Pacific islands until the late 1960s (Robie, 1989). At this time, a few colonies were granted independence from their colonial step-parents while other islands, like French colonies Vanuatu (New Hebrides) and Kanaky (New Caledonia), achieved independence through violence and, eventually, international recognition. Perhaps this measure of decolonization was more attributable to the waning influence and power of the colonizers than to their moral virtue and conscience, as illustrated through the sheer paucity of the Pacific's politically, though not economically, independent nations. Presently, the United States has not relinquished control over any of their Pacific colonies. Despite these
minor political shifts, much of the Pacific continues to remain under colonial rule or under the colonial sphere of influence, especially those colonies under the banner of the United States. Within the Pacific, colonies of Western nation-states are often given political statuses called, for example, territory, trusteeship, free-association, and statehood. Despite the titles, though, these areas remain economically and politically tied to their colonizer.

Accordingly, in the 20th century Oceania has moved into the era of contemporary colonialism or neocolonialism. Trask (1993) defines neocolonialism as “the experience of oppression at a stage which is nominally identified as autonomous or independent” (132). She uses the term “nominally” to distinguish that although many former colonies are politically independent, they are not economically independent. Hence the political power attained by these fledging nations can be interpreted as merely implied power because they are still inextricably bound to the colonial power economically.

Ka Po‘e Kahiko: Traditional Society

There are numerous eloquently (and some not so eloquently) written texts on Hawaiian culture and history, and many of those sources provide the perspectives from traditional and contemporary Native Hawaiian scholars.6 As such, the purpose of this section is not to offer the reader with a comprehensive overview of Hawaiian culture and history. Rather, the section intends to build the Hawai‘i context by giving the reader

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6 Some great texts on Hawaiian history, culture, and politics include Ruling Chiefs, Tales and Traditions of the People of Old, Work of the People of Old (all by Kamakau), Hawaiian Antiquities (Malo), Native Lands and Foreign Desires (Kame‘elehiwa), and Hawaii’s Story By Hawaii’s Queen (Lili‘uokalani). More contemporary works on traditional history and culture are From a Native Daughter (Trask), Dismembering Lahui (Osorio), Land and Power in Hawaii (Cooper & Daws), and Native Planters (Handy & Handy).
some very general knowledge of Native Hawaiian culture and history. This recount is an over-simplification of a very complex society which lasted for, according to anthropologists, over 2,000 years prior to the arrival of the first foreigner in 1778. In Hawaiian tradition, *na kānaka maoli ʻōiwi* (Native Hawaiians) have existed in Hawaiʻi since time immemorial.

Hawaiian tradition is replete with stories of creation, or cosmologies. Kameʻeleihiwa (1992) says that Hawaiian cosmologies are critically important to Hawaiian people because these stories describe not only the creation of the Hawaiian world but also impart Hawaiians’ worldview and, essentially, their place within the universe. Cosmologies delineate the physical and spiritual worlds, structure society, impart lessons and responsibilities, and define relationships between different entities of the Hawaiian world.

The indigenous people of Hawaiʻi describe Hawaiʻi as their birthplace. Cosmologies like Papa and Wākea and Kumulipo describe the appearance of humans as a late development in contrast to the rest of the natural world. Everything in the natural world-- islands, microscopic organisms, coral, plants, animals, gods—all enter the world

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7 In this particular creation story, Papa (Earth Mother) and Wakea (Sky Father) are responsible for creating the islands as well as a daughter, Hoʻohōkūkalani. Together, Hoʻohōkūkalani and Wākea produced Háloa-Naka and Háloa. Háloa-Naka was a stillborn fetus who, when buried, grew into the taro. The taro is the staple food for the Hawaiian people. Háloa was the first man according to this creation story. From Háloa comes the Hawaiian people. For a full analysis of Papa and Wākea, please see Native Lands and Foreign Desires by Kameʻeleihiwa.

8 Kumulipo is a 2,000 line cosmogonic genealogy that tells of the creation of the world from Kumulipo, the deep, dark source. Night and day are created and from this emerge the ocean, the land, the gods, and, finally, humans. For a more enlightened and descriptive analysis of Kumulipo, please see Beckwith’s Kumulipo: A Hawaiian Creation Story.
before humans. As such, humans are viewed as the *kaikaina*, or younger siblings, to the rest of the natural world.

Traditional Hawaiian society was composed of a number of different groups of people, each group responsible for fulfilling a particular role in society. There are very complex categories of those composing traditional Hawaiian society but to set the context, I will limit the discussion to three primary divisions. These general divisions were: *Ali‘i*, *Kāhuna*, and *Maka‘ainana*. The *Ali‘i* (chiefs) were living gods and, thus, mediated the relationship between the spirit world and the human world. Maintaining the balance and harmony, also known as *pono*, for the entire society rested on their shoulders. Through prayer, proper protocol, war, observance of the *kapu* (laws which governed Hawaiian society) and, in essence, righteous treatment of her/his people, the *Ali‘i* insured that her/his society would flourish.

The foundation of the society, though, were the *maka‘ainana*, or common people. David Malo (1961) says that the only thing that delineates a commoner from a chief is that a chief knows his genealogy and assumes his chiefly responsibilities. Nevertheless, the *maka‘ainana* were those who provided the society with the material goods and services it needed to sustain itself. As such, they were the farmers, fishermen, builders, *kapa* (traditional bark cloth) makers, and *hula* practitioners among numerous other vocations needed for a functioning, prosperous society.

Finally, the *kāhuna* were the political advisors, spiritual advisors, and vocational masters. In essence, they were the experts. A popular notion is that *kāhuna* are akin to priests or ministers. Although some *kāhuna* were strictly dedicated to religious decorum,
most kāhuna were the masters, for example, of carving, politics, genealogy, canoe making, navigation, healing, hula, and architecture. They also were the closest political advisors to the Aliʿi, making them adept in political strategy. Kāhuna were recognized as experts not only because they had reached a high level of proficiency in their craft or skill, but also because they were versed in the spiritual aspects of their particular areas of expertise—they honored the gods and were knowledgeable of the appropriate spiritual protocol.

Central to the people in traditional Hawaiian society was the ‘āina, or land⁹. Literally, ‘āina translates to “one who feeds”. The natural world provided sustenance and the Hawaiian people understood that fact (Kamakau, 1991). Culturally, land is viewed as the elder family member to humans. As an elder, the land provides for the people—specifically, food and other material goods needed to survive. In turn, the younger ones (humans) were tasked with tending to the land. The responsibility of tending the land was also reflected in the many kapu (sacred; restricted) for the ‘āina that guarded the resources during various times of the year. For example, particular fish were kapu during their spawning season so as to insure a plentiful fish population. Most of these kapu were enacted by Aliʿi to insure that the land was not over-taxed or misused. Island resources were finite and part of the Aliʿi duty was to sustain the resources. Land tenure for Hawaiians was communal—lands were shared and much of it was used for self-sufficiency farming and gathering. It was understood that control over the lands and the land divisions were left to the Aliʿi and her/his council, usually composed

⁹For Hawaiians, land also refers to the natural resources of the land.
of lesser ranking Ali‘i (Kaukau Ali‘i) and land stewards (Konohiki). But unlike European
feudalism, commoners were not tied indefinitely to the land. Hawaiians were allowed to
traverse between and within boundaries. For example, if the maka‘āinana did not like
the way her or his Ali‘i were behaving, they could move to different ‘aina or, of course,
kill the Ali‘i.10 As such, the land is critical to Hawaiian culture. The centrality of land is
something that continually emerges in contemporary society as well.

Hawaiians also greatly valued knowledge, learning, and creativity. As related in
the ‘ōlelo no‘eau (wise sayings) collected by Mrs. Pukui (1983) over the course of many
years, it is evident that Hawaiians had a high regard for enlightenment. Some examples
are: “He lawai’a no ke kai pāpa‘u, he pōkole ke aho; he lawai’a no ke kai hohonu he loa
ke aho” (#725)11 which means “A fisherman of the shallow sea uses only a short line; a
fisherman of the deep sea has a long line.” This wise saying refers to someone whose
knowledge is shallow does not have much, but someone whose knowledge is deep, does
(80). Hawaiians, as it seems, also saw themselves as great resource people: “Ua lehulehu
a manomano ka ‘ikena a ka Hawai‘i (Great and numerous is the knowledge of the
Hawaiians)” (#2814). Conversely, Hawaiians who feigned intelligence or postured it,
were held in great derision. As illustrated in the ‘ōlelo no‘eau “I ʻolāʻolā no ka huewai i
ka piha ‘ole” (#1247) which translates to “[t]he water gourd gurgles when not filled full
(A person not very well informed talks more than one who is)” (135). Hawaiian people
did not suffer fools gladly. For Kamehameha III (Kauikeaouli), he used education as the
foundation for his Kingdom. He said, “He aupuni palapala koʻu; o ke kanaka pono ʻo ia
"ko‘u kanaka" (#553). Translated, it means “Mine is the kingdom of education; the righteous man is my man” (64). The sovereign—who the people trusted—set the standard of learning for his people. During Kamehameha III’s reign, illiteracy among the indigenous citizens of the Kingdom was almost unknown (Kamakau, 1992). As illustrated through our language, learning and knowledge, all were held in high esteem.

Similar to the learning styles of other indigenous peoples, Hawaiians also, as Deloria (1990) says, “learned by example”. That is, students were expected to observe their kumu (teacher) carefully and to follow. This idea is encapsulated in the ‘ōlelo no‘eau “Nānā ka maka; ho‘olohe ka pepeiao; pa‘a ka waha” (#2268) which translates to “Observe with the eyes; listen with the ears; shut the mouth (Thus one learns)”. Another ‘ōlelo no‘eau that also imparts a similar message is “Ma ka hana ka ‘ike” (#2088) which means “in working one learns”. In a sense one learns by engaging in the activity. Learning styles for Hawaiians—which seems to carry over into modern times—is that of “hands on”.

An interesting example of a formal educational process in traditional Hawaiian society would be in the hālau hula, or hula school. For most vocations, apprentices were chosen at young age to learn a particular craft or skill. For hula, teachers would identify students and raise them in a hālau to learn the art. Students would learn all facets of the hula like chanting, dancing, the kaona (deeper meaning) of the songs, crafting implements, prayers, and proper protocol. Once the teacher determined that the student had learned everything the teacher had to impart and felt confident in the students’

10 An account of maka‘āinana power is reflected in the story of ‘Umi-a-Liloa.
competencies, the students would engage in a final exam of sorts called ‘uniki. Puku’i (1986) relates that ‘uniki is most probably related to the word niki which literally means to “pinch” or “tie” and metaphorically refers to “the knowledge that is bound to the students” (372). This metaphor can also be extended to illustrate the end of one segment and the beginning of another, continuously lengthened yet still connected to the source. In this ceremony, students’ knowledge and abilities were challenged by their teachers. If the student passed, this signified the end of the students’ training with this particular teacher.

This style of learning changed with the arrival of the Calvinist missionaries in 1820. By positioning themselves in key places in Hawaiian society, the missionaries had a tremendous influence on the traditional learning contexts of indigenous Hawaiians. No longer did families, the community, the elders, or kāhuna by and large educate their children. Instead, Hawaiian children were put into Western-styled educational institutions, complete with indoor classrooms, desks, books, black boards, and, of course, *haole*² teachers who were extolling the virtues of Christianity and were condemning traditional ways of Hawaiian life.

One of the first ways the missionaries reconstructed Hawaiian knowledge was by creating a written Hawaiian language. For over 2,000 years, Hawaiian culture was largely an oral culture. So by changing the nature of the language from oral to written, it also transformed the ways in which Hawaiians learned. Instead of committing knowledge to memory or through doing the activity, it was committed to paper.

¹¹ In ‘Ōlelo No’eau, the proverbs are listed by number instead of page number.
Although the written language provided Hawaiians with another instrument to expand their creativity, it also truncated the language. For example, the missionaries decided to standardize the Hawaiian alphabet. So instead of including letters which were interchangeable or sounds that were regionally-based—like “s”, “t” and “k” or “r” and “l”—the missionaries decided to only include “k” and “l” in the alphabet.

Under this new educational regime in which Freire (1993) describes for all colonized people as the “banking method”, all things Hawaiian were almost entirely eliminated. The Hawaiian language was banned as a medium of instruction in public education\(^\text{13}\). As such, the decline of the indigenous culture through the schools began. As a reflection of the broader Hawai‘i society, traditional knowledge and culture moved swiftly into Western ways of knowing and valuing Western forms of knowledge (Meyer, 1998).

Colonialism in Hawai‘i

…the Hawaiian people welcome the stranger freely; rich and poor, high and low, they give what they can. The strangers call this love ignorance and think it is good for nothing.
-Samuel M. Kamakau (1869)

Hawai‘i’s colonial history is reflected in the greater context of the Pacific. Hawai‘i maintained its independence from the time of first Western contact in 1778 to the Overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893. Unlike other islands in the Pacific, colonizing powers took great interest in the economic (agriculture, specifically sugar) and

\(^{12} \text{Haole-foreign; foreigner; Caucasian}\)

\(^{13} \text{The Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction in public education was reinstated in 1986 and, thus, started the Hawaiian Language Nest Movement. An outgrowth of this movement was the establishment of the Hawaiian Immersion Program that provides K-12 education in the Hawaiian language to children.}\)

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militaristic potential of Hawai‘i, especially the United States. These interests set the stage for the eventual theft of Hawaiian independence.

In the wake of the West’s rising dominion over the Pacific in the mid-19th century, Hawaiian leaders struggled with the question of how to maintain and perpetuate Hawai‘i’s political independence in the midst of societal chaos (Kame’eleihiwa, 1992). Amidst a massive population collapse from foreign diseases like measles and small pox (and even from the common cold), increasing foreign influences, and the declining practice of traditional culture, the Mōʻi (sovereign) struggled to restore pono, or balance and harmony, to the Hawaiian Kingdom.

The Mōʻi and Aliʻi (chiefs) decided to adopt certain individualistic traits of the Western world in spite of this decision’s contrary nature to traditional Hawaiian culture, which focused on the needs of the collective. Specifically, they chose to model Western forms of government, economic systems, religion, and, eventually, their system of land tenure known as the 1848 Māhele14. As such, Westerners were placed in trusted advisory positions within the Kingdom. Aliʻi believed the way Hawaiʻi would be able to master the nuances of the Western political system and, more importantly, gain respect among the world’s Western powers was to model Western society (Ibid.). Many of these same Aliʻi witnessed the attempted coups of their Kingdom by Britain, France, and even

14 For a thorough discussion and analysis of the 1848 Mahele, refer to Kameʻeleihiwa’s Native Lands and Foreign Desires.

12 Of course, this is not to say there were not any Hawaiian Aliʻi who did not benefit from the Western governmental and economic systems.
Russia\textsuperscript{15}. Consequently, maintaining the Kingdom's sovereignty by establishing Hawai'i's place among the Family of Nations was central to their decision-making. Despite these multiple considerations, many of the decisions—especially the transformation of the land tenure system from communal to private—was still not popular among many of the Ali'i themselves and the makaʻāinana (common people). But in keeping with Hawaiian tradition, the people loved their leaders and trusted that they would make the right decision for the well being of the Kingdom. After all, Ali'i were responsible for maintaining or restoring pono to the Kingdom. And, at this time in history, pono needed to be restored.

As a result of the privatization of land, the majority of Native Hawaiians were dispossessed from their ancestral lands. Most Native Hawaiians were unable to purchase land as they did not have the capital or the collateral to complete the purchasing process. In 1850, non-Native citizens of the Kingdom as well as foreign residents who were not citizens of the Kingdom were allowed to purchase large tracts of land for virtually nothing (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1992). A portion of these initial land purchases by haole\textsuperscript{16} businessmen were used to start sugar plantations which not only expanded the Hawai'i economic system but also began the importation of foreign laborers from China, Japan, and the Philippines, among other nations. Given the tremendous growth of the sugar industry in Hawai'i, the U. S. and its supporters in Hawai'i were looking at turning

\textsuperscript{16} Many of these non-Native citizens were direct descendants of the first Calvinist missionaries who first arrived in Hawai'i in 1820.
Hawai‘i into, as Secretary of State James Blaine said, “an outlying district of California” (Trask, 1998:14).

Despite the adoption of these Western systems and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i’s rise to “most favored nation” status with British Empire and the U. S., the Kingdom of Hawai‘i was overthrown in 1893 by non-Native citizens and foreign resident businessmen, aided and abetted by the U. S. military. The overthrow was a great victory for both the businessmen and the U. S. Now the haole sugar planters would be able to sell their sugar in America duty-free and procure astronomical profits while the American government had control over a very strategic Pacific location for their military (Trask, 1993). Following the Overthrow, the Provisional Government—led by a few of the descendants of the original Calvinist missionaries—was promptly installed.

The Monarchy, lead by Queen Lili‘uokalani, and the people of Hawai‘i (both Native and non-Native) attempted to rectify the situation through protest. Later that year, President Grover Cleveland sent a commissioner, Representative James Blount of Georgia, to Hawai‘i to investigate the Overthrow. The findings of this investigation is known as the “Blount Report” and remains the most damming piece of evidence against the U. S. and its key role in the unlawful overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. At the conclusion of this very lengthy report, Blount recommended the restoration of the Kingdom and the Queen to her throne. President Cleveland expressed his support in his Presidential Address to Congress in December 1893 and characterized the U. S.’ role in the Overthrow as “an act of war”. Unfortunately for the Kingdom and its citizens,
President Cleveland was voted out of office before Congress could repair this injustice. A true American imperialist, William McKinley replaced President Cleveland. President McKinley promptly sent his own commissioner who reported that the U. S. did not engage in any illegal activity concerning the Overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. With this presidential move, the power of the Republic of Hawai‘i was secured.

Those supporting the Overthrow of the Kingdom also supported the complete incorporation of Hawai‘i into the U. S. sphere of influence. As such, they continued to lobby for the annexation of Hawai‘i to the U. S. As in the past, the majority of Native Hawaiians and non-Native Hawaiian citizens of the Kingdom vehemently and overwhelmingly protested the annexation of Hawai‘i to the U. S. (Silva, 1999). In spite of the immense opposition of the former Kingdom citizens, Hawai‘i was annexed to the U. S. in 1898 by Congressional Resolution 18. Following annexation, Hawai‘i moved from the Republic of Hawai‘i and went into a period of territorial status in 1900. During the territorial period, the president of the U. S. chose the executives of the territorial government. Consequently, the governors for Hawai‘i were usually brought to Hawai‘i from the American continent. Only after Hawai‘i’s military importance was established (and also due, in part, to the move by local Hawai‘i residents lobbying for local control over state and country governments) was Hawai‘i granted statehood in 1959.

The Current Socio-Economic Status of Native Hawaiians in Hawai‘i

According to the U. S. Census 2000, there are about 1.2 million people living throughout the state of Hawai‘i, the majority of whom reside on the island of O‘ahu. Of
this 1.2 million, Native Hawaiians compose approximately 19.8% or 239,655 residents in Hawai‘i. The two other predominant groups are Caucasians (30%) and Asian-Americans (primarily Japanese and Chinese) compose about 40%. Most Hawaiians, like the majority of the Hawai‘i population, reside in urban Honolulu.

Native Hawaiian Health

The latest census data reveals that the Native Hawaiian population continues to grow. Although Native Hawaiians have the highest live birth rate of any other ethnic group in Hawai‘i, we also have one of the highest rates of infant mortality, as Native Hawaiian mothers rarely receive pre-natal care. In addition, our life expectancy remains the shortest of any other ethnic group in Hawai‘i (Hawai‘i Medical Services Association (HMSA) Foundation, 2000). Native Hawaiians also suffer from the highest rates of certain types of cancer, heart disease, and hypertension of any other ethnic group in Hawai‘i and, in some instances, the nation (Ibid.). For example, Native Hawaiian women have the highest rate of breast cancer in the U. S. In the area of mental health, adolescents identifying themselves as “Hawaiian” had a higher attempted suicide rate than adolescents of other ethnicities (Yuen, 2000). Hawaiians also lead the state in adolescent and adult substance abuse (HMSA Foundation, 2000).

18 For a comprehensive discussion of Native Hawaiian protest to the annexation of Hawai‘i to the U. S., please see Silva’s (1999) landmark doctoral dissertation Ke Kūpā’a Loa Nei Mākou (We Most Solemnly Protest): Kānaka Maoli Resistance to Colonization.
19 For the Census 2000, Native Hawaiians were given their own category. This includes all people who identify with Native Hawaiian regardless of blood quantum. Previously Native Hawaiians were categorized with “Asian and Pacific Islanders”.

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Social and Economic Status of Native Hawaiians

The social aspects of indigenous life in Hawai’i reflect the fairly unhealthy physical status of Native Hawaiians in general. Native Hawaiians are over-represented in service industries and manual labor fields while also being disproportionately represented on the public assistance rolls (OHA, 2002). In fact, Native Hawaiians compose almost 30% of those receiving welfare benefits. By contrast, Native Hawaiians participate in employment training programs at higher rates (in comparison to their representation) than other ethnicities receiving public assistance.

Although Hawaiians are only about 20% of the State’s population, we are over-represented in the prisons. Hawaiian males account for about 39% of the State’s prison population while Hawaiian females account for over 44% of the females incarcerated in Hawai’i (OHA, 2002). More disturbingly, though, is the number of offenses committed by Hawaiian youth. Our youth are responsible for 40% of all juvenile crime in Hawai’i and compose 52% of the juvenile detention centers’ population (Ibid.). The types of crimes committed by both Hawaiian adults and youth are also quite similar in nature—most crimes are related to drugs, property theft, and domestic abuse.

Hawaiians are also not faring well in education either. The majority of Hawaiian children are enrolled in the Hawai’i public school system run by the state-controlled Department of Education (DOE). While in the DOE system, Hawaiians are twice as likely to miss 20 or more days of school, be held back a grade, perform well below both the national standard and their Japanese and Caucasian counterparts in Hawai’i on standardized testing (KSBE, 1993). Native Hawaiian youth also are the largest single
population of special education students at 16.5%. Over the last 20 years, performance trends indicate that Native Hawaiian reading skills are not only low in comparison to other ethnic groups, they are \textit{not} expected to improve (Ibid.). But, on the brighter side of this relatively grim picture, Native Hawaiian students are improving in math-related skills. Although the DOE attrition rates for high school students are among the lowest in the nation (7.0%), Native Hawaiians still account for approximately 85% of the state’s high school attrition. These trends indicate Hawaiians are the least likely to graduate from high school and even less likely to enter into some form of post-secondary education.

Over the last 20 years, the enrollment for Native Hawaiians in higher education has been relatively flat (Ibid.). For Hawaiians, participation and completion of education beyond high school is significantly low (15.2%) especially when compared to the State average (30%) and numerically comparable populations like Caucasians (42.5%), Chinese (42.5%), and Japanese (35%) (OHA, 2002).

The majority of Hawaiians (90%) participating in higher education in Hawai‘i do so in the University of Hawai‘i (UH) System. The University of Hawai‘i System is composed of three four-year campuses (UH-Mānoa, UH-Hilo, and UH-West O‘ahu) and seven two-year campuses (Kaua‘i CC, Honolulu CC, Leeward CC, Kapi‘olani CC, Windward CC, Maui CC, and Hawai‘i CC). As of Fall 2000, there were approximately 10,188 Native Hawaiians in the UH System which represents about 23% of the total UH System population (44,579). Sixty percent of those in the UH System attend community college and the remaining 40% (4,053) attend one of the system’s three four-year
institutions (OHA, 2002). On the surface, Hawaiians seem to be over-represented in higher education as compared to the population of Hawaiians in the State of Hawai‘i. But what the enrollment figures fail to illustrate, though, is that although Hawaiians enroll at greater numbers, they also have higher attrition rates—which means lower persistence and completion rates—and take longer to graduate as compared to their non-Hawaiian peers (OHA, 2002; University of Hawai‘i, 1996).

At UH-Mānoa, the system’s flagship Research I campus, the disparate rates of higher education attendance and attainment become more obvious. Although Native Hawaiians compose about 19% of Hawai‘i’s population, we only composed about 8% (1,479) of the Mānoa campus student population and Hawaiian faculty is even less represented composing only 1.5% of the entire Mānoa faculty. In comparison, Japanese-Americans compose about 19% of the Hawai‘i population yet students are 23% of the Manoa campus (OHA, 2002). Attending college in our homeland continues to be fraught with much of the same difficulties our youth experience in primary and secondary school.

Given the significance of these statistics, the Native population is not faring well in Hawai‘i. And, after 100 years of being in a Western-centric educational environment, Native Hawaiian youth continue to drop out of high school, enter into service-oriented jobs, or become incarcerated. For those Hawaiians who do manage to graduate, a high school diploma does not necessarily lead to a better job or matriculation into higher education. And for those Hawaiians who do make it to the university level, the attrition rates mirror those of Hawai‘i public high schools.
The Native Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement

Rooted in the colonial experience of Hawai‘i and stemming from the current socio-economic status of the indigenous people, the Native Hawaiian sovereignty movement is one way Hawaiians assert their historical claim to political, economic, and cultural self-determination. According to Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i (Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i, 1993; 1992), a Native initiative for sovereignty bases sovereignty on five elements. The first element is “a strong and Abiding Faith in the Akua\textsuperscript{20}.” A strong spiritual foundation is central to the strength of the nation. The second element defines its population as “a people with a common culture”. That is, indigenous people living in their homeland are entitled to sovereignty. The third element defining sovereignty is having a land base. A nation must have a definable area for its nation and people. The fourth element of sovereignty is having a governmental structure. A nation must have a mechanism to organize the affairs of its nation. The final element is determining an economic base. Essentially a nation must have a means of providing its citizens with a source of revenue. It also speaks to eliminating the dependence on other countries. In essence, these elements must be present for Hawaiian nationhood. As such, Hawaiians are actively pursuing the issue of self-determination in many different arenas insuring that economic and political venues are developed and also trying to avoid the pitfalls of neocolonialism.

Although Hawaiians have a long history of resistance to colonialism, this resistance visibly resurfaced within the broader society in the 1960s. Inspired by the Civil Rights movement on the U. S. Continent (and, often times, from Hawaiian veterans

\textsuperscript{20} Akua-gods/goddesses; God; spiritual being(s)
returning to Hawai‘i from the Vietnam War), Hawaiians took another look at their own history and culture. In reassessing their current socio-economic conditions, they found that their conditions were related to U. S. colonialism (Trask, 1999). Starting in the 1970s, Hawaiians participated in civil disobedience activities by occupying the island of Kaho‘olawe—an island used for bombing exercises by the U.S. government and its allies since the 1930s—and created new programs in education, employment and training, and health focused on the needs of the Hawaiian community. In particular, Hawaiians developed schools addressing the learning needs of Hawaiians through the promotion and perpetuation of Hawaiian culture like the Hawaiian Language Immersion Schools. Always foundational to many of these initiatives, though, was the sovereignty. As such, over the course of the next three decades the indigenous people of Hawai‘i continued to peacefully protest and doggedly lobby state, federal, and international entities, like the United Nations, for Native Hawaiian rights to sovereignty and self-determination.

The movement was bolstered in 1993 with the 100th Commemoration of the Overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Especially important that year was the passage of Act 103-150, also known as the “Apology Bill”, by the U. S. Congress and signed into law by President Bill Clinton. The Apology Bill outlines the U. S.’ complicitous role in the Overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom and calls for a “process for reconciliation” between Native Hawaiians and the U. S. government. Currently, Hawaiians are still in the process of determining what reconciliation will look like.

Currently, there are numerous initiatives for sovereignty in Hawai‘i with support from abroad. Hawaiians are conceptualizing the Native government in a number of
different ways: State within a state (State of Hawai‘i recognition); nation within a nation (federal recognition, similar to American Indians and Alaska Natives); and complete independence from the U. S. Hawaiians are forging connections with other indigenous peoples on the U. S. Continent and in the international arena. Through networking, Hawaiians learn about the experiences of other indigenous peoples and learning from those experiences. As we learn more, the debate within the Hawaiian community about what sovereignty should look like continues, thus, illustrating the vibrancy of the movement. Bits and pieces of sovereignty, including those Hawaiian culturally-centered educational systems, are being exercised throughout Hawai‘i.

**Identity and Higher Education**

In this section of the review of literature first I look at the different conceptions and theoretical frame works scholars have formulated regarding the issue of identity, specifically ethnic and cultural identity. In particular, I delve into definitional issues of identity while also exploring models of ethnic identity. This discussion culminates into examining identity within the educational experience. A few germane studies linking identity formation and/or expression with same ethnicity higher education institutions are also discussed. Finally, I connect these ideas using post-colonial theory, a theoretical frame that not only contextualizes the Native Hawaiian colonial experience but also lends itself to problematizing current issues adversely impacting Native Hawaiians.

**Concepts of Self and Community: Definitional Issues**

Looking at how identity formation is presented across various disciplines provides the researcher with insight into the multiple understandings and theoretical conceptions
that are available. Of course, there is no single definition of identity that emerges. Generally speaking, identity refers to an individual’s understanding of one’s self, one’s community(ies) and the representation of this “self” to others (Hall, 1993). The literature also indicates that identity is complex, multidimensional, evolving, dynamic, contextually-based, and co-constructed (Appelbaum, 1998; Hall, 1993; Matsuda, 1996; Churchill, 1994; hooks, 1992).

A great deal of what is known and understood about identity is derived from the fields of anthropology and psychology. According to anthropologists, identity is deeply rooted in the daily, symbolic interactions of groups of people. Linnekin and Poyer (1991) state that identity is a “fundamental and universal reality of social life” (3). Their collection of works on identity in the Pacific points out that identity theory runs along a linear continuum. At one end of the continuum is the biological conception of ethnic identity. According to this primordialist view, ethnic identity is genetically based. Western paradigms of group identity rely on this theory of inheritance and on a psychological model of a discrete, bounded individual (Ibid: 7). The emphasis on biological inheritance is largely based on the works of famed genetics pioneer, Mendel. In this perspective, identity is immutable, static, and inherited.

In the U. S., it is clear that the federal government uses this essentialist view to legislate Native identity, especially in regards to allocating resources. For Native people in the U. S., the appropriation of resources is based on genetic composition, referred to as “blood quantum”. That is, the U. S. government imposes strict definitions on who will be eligible for resources based on how much indigenous or aboriginal “blood” (genetically
speaking) one possesses. For American Indians, the 1887 Dawes Act—which dealt with land allotments for Indians—is the marker that legally defined American Indians. Churchill (1994) says that in setting the boundaries of American Indian identity in terms of a rigid 25% blood quantum is “a sort of statistical extermination” of Native America (93). By defining American Indians in a strictly biological sense, Churchill continues, Native America, as a whole, will disappear by 2080 (Ibid.). As such, by “exterminating” American Indian beneficiaries their lands and natural resources will revert back to the U. S. government.

Similarly, the U.S. government also uses blood quantum to legally define Native Hawaiians. Hawaiians have a similar land allotment act called the Hawaiian Homestead Act of 1920. This piece of legislation defined “native Hawaiians” as those with 50% “aboriginal blood”. And, as such, only Natives with 50% blood quantum were eligible to lease lands allotted by the federal government for homesteading, agriculture, and pastoral activities. Through this Act, the federal government created what we refer to in our community as the “small ‘n’ native Hawaiian” or the “beneficial class”. Those with 49% or less blood quantum are, thus, considered “part-Hawaiian” and, most importantly, not eligible to lease land or access to other types of resources. Akin to Churchill’s analysis, Kame‘eleihiwa (1992) and Trask (1998) also assert that it was the federal government’s way of eventually eliminating the “Native” element in Hawai‘i. As such, essentialist notions of identity have been and continue to be used to define certain populations for the purpose of allocating resources and, what American Indian and Hawaiian scholars also assert, creating divisions within the Native communities.
At the other end of the continuum, identity is strictly situational and contextual. Circumstantial theories of identity favor the idea that social and political forces shape identity. Identity becomes salient only when one group of people come into contact with other cultures. In essence, identity is solely defined in contrast to the “other”. Similarly, Churchill says that “Indian” identity is an abstract concept Europeans used to define the Native people who they were encountering at the time of first Western contact (Barsamian, 1996). Lamarckian theory also asserts that identity is largely based on social relationships in determining an individual’s essential characteristics. Contextual factors, he asserts, are at least as important as biology in determining who you are socially (Linnekin & Poyer, 1991: 8). Churchill also notes that identity is defined in terms of kinship and other social groups as well as racial and lineal descent (Barsamian, 1996). Sahlins (1976) further supports this notion by saying that cultural identities “are made as well as born” (9). Hence, identity formation is never solely an individual endeavor. Rather, it is co-constructed by the individual, culture, and society.

In examining the Mendelian and Lamarckian views of identity, the theme that ties these two disparate ideas together is that identity is constructed internally as well as externally. Walker (1987) and Holt (1974), like Churchill, view identity as an amalgam of genealogical as well as contextual factors. For Maori (Natives of New Zealand), Walker (Ibid.) says, identity is determined by a “distinctive genetic pool derived from Polynesian origins” in addition to clan names, cultural practices, and geographic location (131). Holt (1974) also echoes this sentiment by indicating that “being Hawaiian” is a virtual mix of genetic factors, like parentage, as well as contextual factors like history and
culture. Hence, in this view, identity is multidimensional. In this sense, ethnic identity, like race and culture, is a “hybrid” and is composed of various contextual and circumstantial factors (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993). In sum, these varying views on defining identity provide the researcher with more tools from which to analyze how Native Hawaiian students interpret their identities.

The politics of identity emerge as an important area of study for education because it speaks to social power. Identity illustrates *who has the power to define whom, when, and how* (Ibid.). For colonized peoples, like Native Hawaiians, identity becomes, by and large, externally defined. According to wa Thion’o (1986), the process of defining what constitutes “Native” (collectively speaking) is determined by the colonizing power and not the Native. As such, he continues, the colonizer uses tools, education in particular, to fashion the collective identity of colonized peoples as the colonizer sees fit. By taking away tools for self-definition (e. g. banning Native language), he says, the colonizer begins to shape Native identity in his own likeness. Similarly, Reyhner (1994) asserts that Native American identities have been historically repressed or forcibly eliminated, especially in schools. But this inability of colonized populations to define themselves in society and its social institutions, including educational institutions, adversely impacts the colonized. This is vividly illustrated in the continued lack of educational achievement and attainment in both the Native Hawaiian and Native American communities.

Aside from using the racist eugenicist notions of genetic inferiority as a rationale for poor academic success of Native peoples, there seems to be an incongruous “fit”
between educational institutions and Natives. This disconnect indicates that educational institutions are centers of social power because they help to define marginalized populations. In essence, education has a critical role in influencing how we think, understand, and interpret ourselves and others. Consequently, the importance of examining identity in the context of education is invaluable to recognizing, understanding, and bridging this divide. This study explores notions of Hawaiian identity focusing on uncovering how a Native-centered approach to higher education, a very influential tool for defining identity, influences the identity formation of Native students. Understanding how this type of educational environment shapes identity could not only provide Native Hawaiians with a tool to assert more agency in self-definition (and a sense of empowerment), it will also question the current relevancy and efficacy of current mainstream, Western educational institutions for communities of color.

Models of Ethnic Identity Formation

Much of the past scholarly literature conceptualizing ethnic identity formation treat this phenomena as a static or linear and, often times, discuss it in binary terms. At one end of the spectrum is this “Native” identity while at the other end is a “Western” or assimilated identity, the implication being everyone falls somewhere along this line or at one the two extremes (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). In recent years, there have been new approaches to conceptualizing ethnic identity formation. Specifically, there are models which discuss the complexity of ethnic identity by integrating contextual factors into the discussion (Helms, 1995; Hall, 1993, 1986). Although over the past 30 years there have
been a number of ethnic identity formation models in the literature, I have selected a few models to examine which represent the larger discussion of ethnic identity formation.

In her review of ethnic identity formation models, Appelbaum (1998) provides a succinct outline and analysis of ethnic identity models. She begins with a discussion of two-dimensional models. As previously mentioned, two-dimensional models of ethnic identity consider the relationships to both Native and mainstream cultures independently, or what Keefe and Padilla (1987) call, “bipolar”. Similar to the psychological disorder, bipolar outcomes indicate that a person can only have one of two identifications and may vacillate between the two extremes. On one end of the continuum is “Native” while on the other end is “American/Western”. In this model, the authors point out that strengthening one cultural identification necessitates a weakening in the other. Consequently, ethnic identity formation is limited to two separate identifications.

Instead of binary/bipolar outcomes such as “Native” or “Western”, Berry, Trimble, and Olmedo (1986) assert that a two-dimensional model can be useful as yields four outcomes. Again, ethnic identity is conceptualized linearly, Native at one end Western at the other. Identification with both extremes constitutes a bicultural identity. But identification with neither group implies marginality. And identification with either mainstream culture or Native culture means assimilation (into Native or Western culture). Although this model allows for different outcomes, these four outcomes are relatively fixed and static. As previously mentioned, the identifications are limited to two constructs—Native or Western—while “outcomes” are limited to identities formed along this continuum.
The multidimensional model acknowledges the need to negotiate one's identity in Western culture. This model "acknowledges that some native traits may be abandoned in favor of those from the mainstream culture while other native traits are strengthened" (Appelbaum, 1998: 16). Some theorists refer to this model as "selective acculturation" because it mediates identity between multiple cultures (Lowe, 1996). "Selective acculturation" takes into consideration the idea of contextual influences on identity. Subjects assert their agency in negotiating identity depending on contextual factors. Although Appelbaum views "selective acculturation" as, perhaps, "abandoning" certain cultural traits, I see it as a much more purposeful choice—not so much abandoning one trait for another but rather choosing which tools, so to speak, to use in different situations. As such, central to the idea of a multidimensional model of ethnic identity formation is the issue of context.

One conceptual framework for racial identity that provides more in-depth contextual considerations is Helms' (1995) People of Color racial identity model. According to Helms and Cook (1999), racial identity models describe interpersonal reactions "for overcoming varying conditions of racial oppression" (81). These models illustrate the ways in which students encountering issues of race and racism deal with these issues. In discussing Helms' model, Alvarez acknowledges that "a racial identity profile consisting of multiple and interrelated racial identity statuses may be a more accurate description of an individual's racial identity" (2001: 5). Here racial identity is conceptualized as multidimensional. Part of this intersectional view of racial identity is

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21 Although this is a racial identity model, I believe it can still be applied to the discussion.
also understanding that students may already have a dominant racial status (e.g. identification with one particular ethnicity, race, or viewpoint). Nevertheless, Helms (1995) asserts that her model is quite broad and applicable to the experiences of different people of color (hence, the name).

Given these caveats, Helms (Ibid.) organizes her “People of Color Racial Identity Model” into six distinct developmental stages, moving from the least complex “statuses of identity” to the most sophisticated. These statuses are Conformity, Dissonance, Immersion, Emersion, Internalization, and Integrative Awareness. Alvarez (2001) provides an analysis of Helms’ model. Conformity is characterized by a “colorblind racial perspective” (Ibid.). Dissonance—a separation of the subject from the dominant culture—is an indication that racial identity formation commences. Dissonance may be caused by experiences of differential treatment. Immersion/Emersion statuses develop in response to the anxiety and confusion caused by the Dissonance status. As a result, Alvarez (Ibid.) indicates, students feel the need to “replace White-imposed definition of themselves and their group with a positive, racially affirming definition of oneself coupled with an exploration of [ethnic specific] history, culture, and values” (10). Interestingly enough, Alvarez says that for Asian American students, this stage also brings about a “dualistic racial worldview”, embracing all that is defined as “Asian” and denigrating all that is “White”. Emersion is related to the Immersion stage, as it provides a sense of community with others in the racial group. The next stage is Internalization. Internalization is characterized by reassessing the binary, dualistic views of race of the former stage while also forming a more personally meaningful identity. Integrative
Awareness is the final, most mature stage of racial identity in this model. It is defined by a sense of “racial self-esteem rooted in a positive, self-affirming definition of oneself” (Ibid.: 13). This model is very useful in starting to ground the conversation on identity formation. It provides general ideas of what kinds of behaviors should be expected in each stage.

Although these models have provided many studies with useful analytic frames, they are still problematic. As mentioned at the onset of this discussion, ethnic identity models tend to look at identity in almost absolutist and essentialist terms. These models fix identity to one point along a continuum and fail to incorporate the idea of multiple identities (more than just bicultural or dual) or identity as a continuously evolving entity into the analysis. Although Helms (1995) “People of Color Racial Identity Model” provides the most complex discussion of identity formation (and contributes an extremely useful heuristic device), it still limits the discussion to “a person’s progression through increasingly mature statuses of racial identity” (Alvarez, 2001:6). As discrete stages, there is no room for movement between stages or the possibility of skipping stages. In a sense, ethnic identity formation models tend to, as Hall (1996) says, essentialize racism. They eliminate historical specificity. Finally, these ethnic identity formation models are limited to discussions of individual psychology. In looking at ethnic identity as a strictly individually internalized process eliminates the possibility of enacting identity on a more collective and active level, especially in regards to push political movements. Finally, given the population of this study, ethnic identity models are based on the experiences of
ethnic minorities and not indigenous peoples. Consequently, these deficiencies need to be addressed in future scholarship on identity.

In placing Native Hawaiians within the broader “indigenous” construct, the discussion needs to shift from discussing Hawaiian identity in terms of ethnic identity formation models into a more contextualized (e.g. history, culture, political status) discussion of identity. As such, conceptions of ethnic identity which move away from rigid ethnic identity formation models are found in the literature of Cultural Studies. Ethnic identity models, the literature asserts, confine the discussion of identity and the experiences of subjects within set parameters (Hall, 1996). As discussed above, ethnic identity models confine the discussion into fixed outcomes or stages, regardless of socio-racial or socio-historical context. In effect, it essentializes the experiences of different groups of people into one experience of racial oppression.

By contrast, Hall (Ibid.) suggests that we need to reconceptualize race and ethnicity within a larger frame. First, he emphasizes historical specificity and critiques the need to “homogenize race and racism” (Labrador, 2000: 10). For Hall, it is clear that racism, although its forms and effects can be similar in different places, is not the same everywhere. As such, trying to contain the discussion of identity does not illustrate the specificity and nuance of different experiences with race and racism. The nature of race and racism change across time and space. Second, Hall underscores the importance of non-reductive approaches. That is, he believes that in the analysis of identity, for example, multiple facets of identity should be examined like class, sexual orientation and gender. By privileging, for example, race over class (or vise-versa) in the analysis,
mistakenly “produce a single and exclusive determining principle of articulation” (1996: 436). In essence, the analysis becomes an over-simplification of the problem. Finally, Hall brings in the cultural and ideological as critical factors in interpreting the dynamics of race, ethnicity, and class. Consequently, Cultural Studies—as exemplified by the work of Stuart Hall—provides the exploration and analysis of Native Hawaiian identity in Hawaiian Studies with a broader space for discussion.

**Identity in Higher Education**

Drawing from the different educational experiences of communities of color, the focus is on the contextual factors affecting identity formation and expression within higher education. In this body of literature, I will explore studies of two culturally-centered institutions: Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Native American Tribal Colleges. For the purposes of this study, I am defining “culturally-centered” institutions as those higher educational institutions that explicitly focus on serving particular ethnic populations. Specifically, this discussion will attempt to explain how these particular types of educational environments help to shape the identity of its targeted populations.

Studies on HBCUs provide much of what we know regarding identity and higher education. According to Roebuck and Murty (1993), HBCUs are “Black academic institutions established prior to 1964 whose principle mission was and still is the education of Black Americans” (3). HBCUs are by no means homogeneous. Although the majority of HBCUs are four-year institutions located in the Southern region of the United States, they vary significantly in size, mission, and student population. 

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22 Hall defines culture as “the actual, grounded terrain of practices, representations, languages, and customs.”

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United States, they are still institutionally diverse. For example, HBCUs include public and private, two-year and four-year, and single sex as well as co-educational institutions. In spite of these differences, though, the tie that binds these unique institutions together and, by the same token, distinguish them from other higher educational institutions is their commitment to keeping a very "close identity with the struggle of Blacks for survival, advancement, and equality in American society" (Ibid.). As such, these institutions provide a culturally supportive higher educational environment for Black students and Black faculty.

Of the many studies focusing on African-American students at HBCUs, Allen (1991) provides some of the most compelling evidence that a culturally supportive environment produces positive higher education outcomes. Using the National Study of Black College Students, a longitudinal database, he examines the differences between African American students attending predominantly White schools and predominantly Black ones. In his study he found that although those students who attended predominantly White institutions performed slightly better (in terms of grade point average) than their counterparts at HBCUs, they were less socially and psychologically adjusted to their higher education institution. Allen also found that Black students attending HBCUs were far more confident, felt more supported, and had higher career and academic aspirations than their counterparts at predominantly white institutions. This seems to illustrate that although Black students do not perform academically as well as their counterparts in White institutions (perhaps a function of student input), the

confidence and level of adjustment these students experience from being in a Black college would seem to pay off in the end. That is, the benefits of psychological comfort and emotional support lent to Black students at HBCUs will be more important to students once they enter the “real world” versus the higher grade point averages earned by their Black counterparts attending predominantly white institutions.

Similarly, Roebuck and Murty (1993) indicate that HBCUs provide their targeted students, Black students, with a psychologically and emotionally supportive educational context. They list eight elements that exist in HBCUs that result in having students feel more supported emotionally:

1. Provide an accepting environment with emotional support
2. Are repositories for Black heritage
3. Foster ethnic pride
4. Foster self-esteem
5. Enhance opportunities for the development of leadership roles
6. Furnish healthy social relationships
7. Offer programs designed to meet the unique needs of Black students and the Black community
8. Educate Black students with learning difficulties (8)

Based on these elements the authors explicitly indicate that the role of HBCUs is not solely related to the academic preparation and the career development of Black students but also to their personal/emotional development. Similar to American Indian Tribal Colleges, to be discussed later, these institutions of higher education are cultural and political centers for the Black community. In essence, the education of the individual is also an education for the community. The approach HBCUs take in educating its students is holistic—academics are but one part of the institution’s commitment to Black students. HBCUs also incorporate cultural and emotional support into its institutional
commitment to cultivating ethnic identity. In short, these institutions approach educating its students through supporting, valuing, and fostering the individual student’s ethnic identity while also connecting this identity to the larger Black community. Notions of building individual identity are interconnected to that of the broader community through institutional involvement in the Black community as well as by the institutions encouraging students to involve themselves in the community.

Allen (1991) also supports this notion by encapsulating these ideas in terms of the goals of HBCUs. These goals are very similar in nature to the aforementioned list that emphasizes positive reinforcement of Black identity through academics, role modeling, psychological support from the institution, and through encouraging community involvement. As reflected in past scholarship, fostering community relationships is an integral part of the higher educational environment and, in turn, encouraging positive identity formation of Black students in higher education. Hence the educational environment offered to Black students at HBCUs is far more inviting and supportive of Black students’ higher educational experiences.

Earlier studies by Beckham (1988) and Steward et al (1990) also report similar findings in their research on Black students on predominantly White higher educational campuses. Beckham (Ibid.) indicates that the educational environments for Blacks at predominantly White institutions are so alienating, Black students report feeling like “strangers in a strange land” (515). Similarly, Steward et al (1990) report that even if Blacks are academically well suited for the institution, they still remain interpersonally disconnected from the rest of the campus. Consequently, the literature reflects that Black
students feel a very real sense of estrangement from the educational environment on predominantly White campuses. In contrast, HBCUs are clear in their active support of Black identity.

Examining American Indian Tribal Colleges also provides more insight into identity and higher education. Tribal Colleges provide one solution to the failure of the American educational system to adequately educate and provide reasonable access to higher education for American Indians (Oppelt, 1990). They are original and highly specialized institutions each serving a particular community in the Native American sphere.

The impact tribally-chartered institutions have had on their communities belies their relatively short existence. In 1971, the first Tribal College—Navajo Community College—was established in Arizona. Since then the Tribal College movement has grown to include over 30 institutions in 11 states. Although the expansion of these colleges have been extraordinary, they have also encountered their share of problems, primarily financial but also political (Carnegie, 1989). Nevertheless, these institutions have created an advantageous environment for American Indians to succeed in academia, an area in which they have historically, like Native Hawaiians, failed. Consequently, the battle Tribal Colleges wage for their survival is critical to the survival of the communities they serve. Moreover, they are extant examples of educational sovereignty and self-determination.

Like HBCUs, Tribal Colleges provide a particular population with a unique higher educational environment. At Tribal Colleges, American Indian experiences and
cultures are valued and represented throughout the system from mission statements to
curriculum to the institutions’ architecture (Carnegie, 1989). Although each institution
has its own individual mission statement, Tierney (1992) encapsulates the similarities of
these missions into an overarching goal that distinguishes Tribal Colleges from
mainstream higher education institutions. The goal of these institutions “is to provide
education and training commensurate with tribal aspirations for self-determination” (116).
In short, Tribal Colleges are higher education institutions with a purpose: maintaining
tribal sovereignty. In addition, Tierney also identifies four main objectives of Tribal
Colleges:

1. To provide service to their local communities
2. To provide vocational education that develops skills for particular employment (i.e. the predominant industry on the reservation will determine what type of vocational training will be more readily available)
3. To offer courses toward cultural enrichment
4. To offer courses to help students to transfer to four-year institutions (Ibid.)

These objectives reflect Tribal Colleges’ vision of education for their people. Like
HBCUs, Tribal Colleges explicitly state their commitment to community development in
terms of economic, political, and cultural issues. Instead of separating the institution
from the community, Tribal Colleges incorporate themselves into their particular
community. Hence, the educational context here is, essentially, tailored for the unique
aspects of the reservation community it serves (Belgarde, 1994).

In centering the American Indian community in its higher educational institutions,
Tribal Colleges also provide students and their communities with a means for
constructing and perpetuating Native cultural and political identities. In using tribal values, beliefs and experiences as an educational and philosophical core, they demonstrate to students, American Indian communities, and the American mainstream that Native ideologies and worldviews are symbolically and concretely cardinal to their educational institutions (Carnegie, 1989). For Navajo Community College, the importance of the four compass points in Navajo culture is reflected in the architecture of their central building on campus. For example, the points at which the various disciplines are held in are also pertinent to the function of each direction in Navajo culture. As such, Navajo culture is also seen throughout the campus. Academically, “Native perspectives” are infused throughout the curricula. The faculty has creatively employed the use of cultural values through which various subjects are taught (Reyhner, 1994; Oppelt, 1990). Again, using Native beliefs and experiences as mechanisms for teaching and learning reflect the value these institutions place on Native cultures and transform sometimes very foreign material into relevant and meaningful terms for Native students. At these institutions, students’ experiences and cultural identities are central to their educational experience (Tierney, 1992).

Given the relative newness of Tribal Colleges, studies are not readily available. From the few studies that have been conducted on Tribal Colleges, the data illustrate that when student input characteristics are controlled for, American Indian students in Tribal Colleges persist at the same rates as their counterparts in non-Indian institutions (Machamer, 1999). However, American Indian students attending Tribal Colleges report

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23 In this context, “Native” refers to American Indians.
feeling very satisfied with the deliberate American Indian focus at their institutions. Like HBCUs, though, the meaningful difference between Native students attending Tribal Colleges versus non-Native higher education institutions emerges in the feelings of satisfaction from the cultural support provided by Tribal Colleges. In the end, the cultural support afforded by Tribal Colleges provides students with a more positive sense of self. Nonetheless Tribal Colleges still suffer from a lack of financial and academic resources which may make a difference in student outcomes. Similar to students at HBCUs, students at Tribal Colleges are more inclined to feel integrated and adjusted to their educational environments (Tierney, 1992). In turn, this increased support seems to encourage positive higher educational outcomes for students.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities and American Indian Tribal Colleges are merely two examples of higher education institutions that use students' experiences and cultures as a basis for learning. In taking a brief look into these two culturally centered educational environments, we can surmise that ethnic and cultural identity is not only positively valued and supported through various institutional mechanisms, it is also utilized in the teaching and learning processes. As such, identity development in these environments is mediated by the incorporation of cultural elements, like the importance of community, into the educational institution. Moreover, the impact these institutions have on their students is very positive, especially in terms of emotional and psychological growth (Allen, 1991). In short, students in HBCUs and Tribal Colleges are, essentially, more happy, comfortable, and confident than are their counterparts in predominantly White institutions. Also, Reyhner (1994) contends that by using culturally appropriate
curriculum and instruction, many students are achieving educational success. Nevertheless, the need to more fully understand the complex dialectic between higher education contexts and identity remains. How does this educational context influence identity formation?

**Theoretical Framework: Post-Colonial Theory**

Post-colonial analysis is derived from the experiences of colonized people. The vast majority of scholars working within this framework are members of former or present colonies. These intellectuals analyze and articulate their colonial experience through a somewhat personal lens—they examine the effects colonization has had on their homelands, people, and, in essence, their own lives. Said (1979) notes that this "personal dimension" is an essential ingredient for understanding one’s "infinity of traces"—or historic composition of one’s self within a colonial context—while wa Thiong’o (1986) says that without this personal involvement the “quest for relevance” and meaning derived from the research or other work is lost and, therefore, meaningless.

As described in the literature, the primary feature of post-colonial theory hinges on three tenets: historicizing, recontextualizing, and problematizing (Tanaka, 1996). wa Thiong’o (Ibid.) describes this process as “decolonizing the mind” while Fanon (1963) looks at this framework as developing a “national consciousness.”

Historicizing looks at the history of an area through the worldview of the colonized. History transcends the mere telling of a story and is, thus, no longer told through a seemingly objective colonial perspective. Rather, post-colonial theory preferences the eyes, ears, and voice of the Native, the colonized. On one level,
historicizing the colonial experience allows for the Native to dispel political mythologies and ideologies established by the colonizer (Stannard, 1991). Stannard (Ibid.) analyzes this political construct as a system specifically designed to justify and maintain ideological and actual subjugation of Native people in the eyes of the "civilized" Western mindset. For example, it was under the colonizer’s worldview that Natives from the Americas were characterized as “baby killers”. In turn, this rationalized the exploitation of Native land and people. On another level, post-colonialism also analyzes the power construct in the colonial world in reference to the colonized. In this analysis, the colonizer’s power over the colonized is reflected in the binary terminology distinguishing each: the colonizer becomes the “first world,” or the world of civilization, and the Native becomes the “third world,” or the world of barbarism and savagery (Mohanty, 1988). In essence, the colonizer dehumanizes the colonized Native culture and “massively affirms his superiority” (Fanon, 1963: 35). Consequently, transmitted history becomes filtered and defined through the eyes and words of the colonizer. Historicizing is an attempt at reclaiming the Native perspective of his/her historical experience. As such, the Native Hawaiian narrative is central to building the analysis. Not only does this frame provide a way to structure the Native colonial experience, it also provides a frame for analysis that places the Native experience and voice at CHS. For this study, historicizing situates Hawai‘i and the experiences of its Native people.

Recontextualizing places the Native history into the present-day context by recasting this experience from the perspective of the colonized. In essence, placing this history into the current context provides Natives with perspective on assessing the
colonial damage. In what ways have an indigenous society, culture, and people been transformed? The monolithic Native identity as one prominently projected by the colonizer is actively resisted by the Native (Churchill, 1994; Walker, 1986). Instead, the Native constructs her/his own understanding of self in the present context given the social and historical factors. This re-telling of the story, though, also empowers Native voices to move on to the next level of thought and action. Recontextualizing is key in helping to frame the questions this study will answer and, moreover, it places this study quite squarely in the current social context.

Problematizing attempts to identify contemporary answers to the problems of the cumulative colonial experience. How can the colonized rectify their political and social displacement? Wa Thiong’o asserts that this process begins with reclaiming culture, beginning by using one’s Native language. Reclaiming and revitalizing Native culture and history lead to furthering Native political struggles for land, sovereignty, and self-determination (Churchill, 1993). For this project, problematizing Hawaiian identity in higher education will address queries on both the individual and collective levels. How is the Center for Hawaiian Studies attempting to problematize colonialism? How do individual Hawaiian Studies graduates interpret and convey notions of Hawaiian identity? How do individual Hawaiian Studies graduates understand their educational experience? How are Hawaiian Studies graduates using their Hawaiian Studies education? From this renaissance of Native culture and understanding of colonization—in essence, gaining this "national consciousness"—colonized people begin to look for sources of empowerment, sources that can alter or reverse these present and persistent adverse socio-economic
conditions. Like HBCUs and Tribal Colleges, this study explores the influences of Hawaiian Studies on Native Hawaiian identity as a possible means to empower Native Hawaiians through education.

For the purposes of this study, this broad frame provides the researcher with room to explore Native Hawaiian narratives. Central to the usefulness of this particular theoretical understanding is its ability to encapsulate this study of identity and higher education and situate it in the larger Hawai‘i context. That is, post-colonial theory allows the researcher to undertake the research process in a more holistic manner and discuss the implications of the study in terms of the present Hawai‘i context. Allen (1991) provides a critique of higher education research regarding this idea. He indicates that current research ignores the relationship between the minority status of the student in higher education and the larger society. For Matsuda (1996), examining these relationships is a responsibility of researchers. She relates that scholars must address the meaning of research “high talk” and acutely examine the impact of theoretical discourse on a community. In essence, post-colonial researchers attempt to enact praxis while also trying to assume a responsibility for their research.

**Summary**

The preceding chapter provided the historical, demographic, and intellectual foundation for this study. The Hawaiian Islands are a part of the larger Pacific, often referred to as Oceania by indigenous Pacific Islander scholars and writers. Similar to much of the Pacific, missionaries and explorers made their way into the relative bliss of Hawaiian society and transformed the Hawai‘i landscape—physically, psychologically,
demographically, politically, culturally—forever. Hawaiians, as with the rest of Oceania, continue to deal with the impact of colonization on the indigenous population. Despite being incorporated into the U. S., the statistics indicate that Native Hawaiians are not faring well in our own homeland. Hawaiians continue to drop out of school, receive public assistance, become incarcerated, or die from various diseases—despite federally-funded and privately funded programs and services geared towards improving the conditions of Native Hawaiians. Given these conditions, coupled with the history of colonization, the movement for sovereignty is very strong.

In the words of Horace Mann, education is viewed as one of the "great equalizers" of our time. For Hawaiians, a culturally-centered education is also viewed as a possible means of improving the socio-economic conditions of Hawaiian people. In looking at examples of culturally-centered educational institutions, like American Indian Tribal Colleges and Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the research indicates that these colleges are far more connected to the populations they are designed to serve. Moreover, American Indian and African-American students feel far more comfortable and satisfied in their higher educational experience. Looking at Hawaiian Studies will provide information into identity formation within a small culturally-centered context, similar to the learning contexts of Tribal Colleges and HBCUs.

Because this study incorporates contextual factors, like history, political climate, and research positionality, it will be framed within Post-colonial theory. Post-colonial theory preferences the voices of the colonized. As such, the frame allows for the contextualization of this study within history and contemporary society. In essence, the
problems facing Native Hawaiians did not surface overnight. Consequently, the post-colonial approach allows for the complete story to be told from the perspective of the colonized.